The Collected works
Of
Tawfik Hamid

Observations
on Radicalized Islam

2009-2011

Understanding Radical Islam

Understanding Radical Islam

BY:

Dr. Tawfik Hamid

Authors Note

Dr. Hamid would like to thank all those who assisted him to make this work available.

He would like to give special thanks to:

Blake Musser for his invaluable assistance to Dr. Hamid while producing this final product. Mr. Musser's suggestions, creating the references, and creating the final structure for this collection has been instrumental in producing this product.

Introduction

The field of Islamic radicalism is a complex area of research. It includes security, political, sociological, psychological, technological, and other dimensions. This is a collection of Op-Ed's written by Dr. Hamid. These articles address the phenomenon of Radical Islam from several angles and address these different dimensions to suggest some approaches to deal with radicalization.

Glossary

Al-Azhar: the most reputable Islamic University in the world.

Al-Buchary: the most authentic Hadith (sayings of prophet Mohamed) book in Sunni Islam.

Apostates: a Muslim who converted from Islam to other faith or rejected one of its basic fundamentals.

At-*Targheeb* Wat-*Tarheeb*: Targheeb is to encourage Muslims on applying Islamic edicts and Tarheeb is to warn them with hell fire if they did not do so.

Baha'i: a relatively modern faith that believes in global peace.

Bukhari: same as Al-Buchary (Al- means 'the')

Burqa: Islamic face cover for women.

Caliphate: worldwide Islamic empire that implement Sharia (Islamic Law).

Fatwa: statement by Islamic scholars to establish and Islamic religious edict and rule.

Hadith: words and deeds of prophet Mohamed during his live (it does not include the Quran which is seen as the words of God himself)

Hijab: Islamic head scarf for women.

Hizb Ut Tahrir: an Islamic organization in the UK.

Imam: Islamic leader or scholar

Jizia (Jizya): a form of humiliating tax that Non-Muslims MUST pay to Muslims when the latter are majority and controlling the country.

Mecca: Most holy city in Islam

Minhaj Al-Muslim: a bestselling Islamic book for Islamic jurisprudence that is printed and distributed worldwide.

Mulla: Islamic scholar or leader

Niqab: an Islamic dress for women that covers completely her face and body

Glossary Continued

Sahih Albuchary: same as Al-Buchary

Sahih Al-Bukhari: same as Al-Buchary

Salafi: a form ofregressive and literal way of thinking within Islam.

Sheikh: Islamic scholar.

Shia: the biggest sect in Islam after Sunni Islam. It exists is several parts of the world, however, it is more common in Iran, Iraq, and eastern parts of the Arab peninsula.

Sufi: a Mystical and Non literal way of thinking within Islam (Note Sufi Movements does not necessarily follow the ultimate Sufi way of thinking)

Sunna: words and deeds and biography of prophet Mohamed

Sunni: a person who follow the Sunna of Mohamed

Sura: A chapter of the Quran is called Sura. The Quran has 114 Sura(s)Each chapter is divided into verses.

Tabari: a well-known and highly reputable Islamic book about the biography of prophet Mohamed

Umma: Islamic nation that includes ALL Muslims worldwide.

Wahabbi: a sect of Islam that has been created and is currently very influential in Saudi Arabia. Its aim is to implement Sharia rules in the country.

Table of Contents

Contents

Islamic Culture

How Pew Surveys In The Muslim World Can Give More Accurate Results

It is fair to say that the methodology and statistical analysis of Pew surveys in the Muslim world follow correct scientific methods. However, the results of the survey can be significantly affected by the type and the wording of the Questions (as the survey itself acknowledged.

This can be illustrated in the recent Pew survey in Egypt that was released on April 25th. The results of this survey could have yielded much more accurate description of the situation in Egypt if the following points were addressed.[1]

1- Better selection of the words of the survey:

One of the questions of the survey asked the participants to give their opinion about the future law in Egypt. The question offered 3 possibilities:

a- If they would prefer the laws in the country should strictly follow the teachings of the Quran.

b- Only follow the values and principles of Islam

c- The laws should not be influenced by the Quran.

The results showed that 62% of the participants wanted the law to strictly follow the Quran. These results would indicate for many that the overwhelming majority of the Egyptians will choose an Islamic party like the Muslim Brotherhood to rule the next government. To the contrary, the result of the survey showed that only 17% of the participants in the survey wanted the Muslim Brotherhood to rule the next government (compared to a majority of 57% wanted Non-Islamic parties to rule the government).

The use of the word "Sharia Law" rather than using the word "Quran" was a better indicator of the percentage of the population who truly want to see full implementation of Sharia Laws in the country. For example some Muslims (especially Sufis) may see the Quran mainly as a book for doing

---

[1] Egyptians Embrace Revolt Leaders, Religious Parties and Military, As Well. (2011, April 25). Pew Research Center. Retrieved from http://pewglobal.org

rituals; others (such as the Quranics) may reject several elements of Sharia Laws such as stoning for adulteries as it is against the Quran. In fact, some progressive Muslims currently try to 'strictly' use verses from the Quran to support freedom of religion (Quran 2:256, 18:29) and to stop the traditional Sharia principle of killing the apostates. This, again, illustrates the importance of making a distinction in the questions between "Sharia Law" and the "Quran".

Ideally, the questions should have been even more specific by asking the participant if they want to see the Egypt controlled by Sharia Laws such as the case of Saudi Arabia, Iran, Somalia, and the Taliban or that they are content by the Sharia inspired Law that they already have in the country. The results of such a specific question can clearly demonstrate if Egypt will turn into another country that is ruled by Sharia Laws (which may will grave consequences on the economy as such a choice will be a big blow to tourism industry) or the country will be secular with Islamic flavor as in the case of Turkey (in this situation tourism Industry can survive with its positive impact on the economy).

2- Asking some questions in a specific context:

According to the survey 54% of the participants wanted to annul the peace treaty with Israel. This is a useful piece of information that is compatible with the level of growing Anti-Semitism in the country. However, the result did not clarify if the majority of the Egyptians would still support ending the peace treaty with Israel if this step will cause significant damage to their economy. For example, a person who might be working at a Hotel or as a Taxi driver may support ending the peace treaty with Israel as an abstract concept but may have different response if he recognized that this decision can damage tourism in the country and thus affect negatively his personal income or job.

To illustrate this point in the Egyptian culture it is useful to use a well-known Egyptian joke that says that a Muslim farmer asked the Sheik (Religious Scholar) of his village that what Islam says if a dog touched a wall. The Sheik answered him by saying that "the wall must be destroyed". The farmer then informed the Sheik that he has asked this question as a dog touched the wall of the house of the Sheik himself. The Sheck-according to the story said to him "in this situation all what is needed is to clean it with small amount of water"!!! The point here is that asking the same question in a different context may yield a completely different answer.

It was also important to ask the participants of the survey if they would also support ending the peace treaty with Israel even if this decision

would cause serious damage to the economy of the country and their personal income as well. If the percentage of those who want to annul the peace treaty with Israel decline significantly when they consider the impact of the decision on their economy this could be used to start information and educational media campaign to clarify to the population in Egypt the negative impacts of ending the peace treaty with Israel on the economy of the country and their personal welfare.

3- Put clear definition to the used terminology:

According to the survey 31% percent sympathize with the Islamic Fundamentalists. The word "fundamentalists" need to be clearly defined in this situation as it might mean for some "terrorists" and for others it might mean those Muslims who want to force women to wear the Niquab (full face cover). The former case is frightening as it simply means that 31% of the population would support terrorism. This could be true, however, a clear definition for the word MUST be given to understand the true way of thinking within the society.

In addition, the survey demonstrated that 50% of the participants consider religious freedom as one of their top priorities. Again, the expression "Religious Freedom" MUST be clearly defined as it might mean for some people in the Egyptian society the right of every individual to choose his faith and believe and for others it might mean the freedom of Muslims to implement suppressive Sharia Laws.

In general, the survey was very beneficial however; some improvements on the questions are needed to yield more useful results.

Understanding Islamic Culture Vital in Dealing with Its Problems

In an Op-Ed published August 27th in the New York Times, Thom Shanker mentioned that the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Adm. Mike Mullen, has written an intense critique of government efforts at "strategic communication" with the Muslim world.[2] The critique comes as the United States is widely believed to be losing ground in the war of ideas against extremist Islamist ideology.

The issue is particularly relevant as the Obama administration ordered fresh efforts to counter militant propaganda, part of its broader strategy to defeat the Taliban and al-Qaida in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

"To put it simply, we need to worry a lot less about how to communicate our actions and much more about what our actions communicate," Mullen wrote in the critique, to be published by Joint Force Quarterly, an official military journal.

Members of Congress also have also expressed concern about the government's programs for strategic communication, public diplomacy, and public affairs. Both the Senate and House Armed Services Committees have raised questions about the Pentagon's programs for strategic communication - and about how money is spent on them.

Understanding Islamic culture and types of Muslims is vital to develop effective strategic communication approaches. A simplistic visual analysis of Islamic culture can be illustrated using five concentric circles that represent categories.

The outer circle consists of "cultural Muslims," who follow their religion in a somewhat superficial manner. They consider their religion a part of their culture, but do not necessarily read much about their faith or practice their religion actively. Islam simply forms a framework identity for the social activities they engage in or identify with.

The second circle is occupied by "ritual Muslims" who mainly practice the five pillars of Islam and are against violent edicts of Sharia laws (such as stoning adulteries and killing apostates).

---

[2] Shanker. T. (2009, August 27). Message to Muslim World Gets a Critique. *The New York Times.* Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com

The third circle represents "theological Muslims," who study in greater depth Islamic texts and are interested in implementing Sharia law to replace the secular law of the land. This group can represent major threat to values of liberty and the stability of the free world once their percentage exceeds certain threshold in the society.

The fourth circle represents "radical Muslims" who accept and promote using force to subjugate others to their beliefs.

The final and innermost smallest circle represents terrorists, who represent only a very small fraction of Islamic society but who are ready to sacrifice their lives to attack others and have the potential to do major harm.

Our ultimate goal must be to transition terrorists through the various stages, or circles on the bull's eye, so that they leave the center and reside in the circles closer to the periphery. In addition, we must prevent the transition of individuals from outer circles towards the center. This suffocation type strategy of the most inner circle is important to achieve a viable long term solution.

Based on the former analysis we need to tailor our strategic communications to suit each group as follows:

Cultural Muslims: Simple logic and working with this group to promote common values of humanity can work effectively to win hearts and minds of this group.

Ritual Muslims: Showing compassion, respect of word and giving care is extremely effective tool to win this group to our side against the extremists. The state department can play an important role in strategic communications with these two groups.

Theological Muslims: Respectful critique of the violent edicts of Shariah law is important to deal with this group as on one hand ignoring such violent aspects will only allow the growth of violent and radical believes in the society and, on the other hand, disrespectful critique create irrational emotional response (such as anger) rather than a sane rational constructive response. The government should not be directly involved in this form of critique. Other organizations or groups can contribute to this part of the strategic communications.

Radical Muslims: Tactics to create a state of psychological defeat are vital to weaken this group as traditional diplomatic approaches are interpreted by them as weakness and thus aggravate the problem of Islamism. U.S. Intelligence agencies can play major role in this part.

Terrorists: One of the crucial ways to deal with this group is to prove to them that their acts of terror or suicide bombing bring the opposite of what they want to achieve. This can create strong deterring message that can weaken them psychologically and makes many of them think twice before launching an attack.

Parameters to characterize each of the above groups (or Muslim categories) are needed to be able to:

Understand the structure of different Islamic societies

Measure the degree of radicalization within Muslim communities

Evaluate the effect of anti-radicalization measures used by governments to solve the problem of radical Islam. The more we shift toward center and away from the periphery, the less effective our measures to weaken Islamic Radicalism are, and vice versa.

Dealing with Islamism phenomenon without addressing the above mentioned Muslim categories is a primitive approach that does not allow us to deal with the problem effectively.

Differences between Islam, West Must Be Addressed

President Barack Obama issued a special Ramadan message to the Muslim world. The president emphasized the importance of [what the United States and the Muslim world hold in "common."](#) This is a great approach and concept to bridge the gap between civilizations ONLY if the areas of difference are not destructive. For example, emphasizing common values between the free world and the Nazi regime, such as the building of a strong economy, would not have bridged the gap between the two systems unless the latter had denounced its barbaric and anti-Semitic values.

The same principle applies to the current friction between the West and Muslim worlds. The problems that currently exist between the latters are not because of the "common values" but rather because of the difference in specific values that pose a threat to human civilization. Those who criticized Islam after September 11th did not do so because Islam promotes charity, fasting, and praying. The criticism was mainly about specific violent teachings in mainstream Islamic theology and the deafening silence of the Muslim world and its religious scholars against such teachings. These values that totally contradict the principles of freedom and liberty of mankind include:

1-   Declaring wars on non-Muslims to spread Islam

2-   Killing Muslims who convert to other faiths (Redda Law)

3-   Women until death for having extramarital sexual relations

4-   Permitting the beating of women to discipline them

5-   Allowing polygamy, pedophilia, slavery, and gay killing

The West did not criticize Buddhism as it did with Islam because the areas of difference between the West and Buddhism are not destructive. The areas of difference between faiths regarding perception of the creator, percentage of charity, type of prayers, and fasting do not pose a threat to others. On the contrary, the above-mentioned areas of difference with the Muslim world pose a major threat to the security and the freedom of the free world.

Emphasizing the common values between religions without addressing the areas of destructive differences will not solve the problem or bridge the gap

between the West and Islam. This is simply because the common values are not the cause of the problem.

Bridging the gap between the West and the Muslim world will not occur until the Muslim world and its scholars admit that these values (see points above) are unacceptable, and find other ways to understand the religious text that do not justify such crimes in the name of religion.

The Muslim world has the responsibility to reciprocate the president's invitation to improve relations between the U.S. and the Muslim world. The Muslim world can play positive role in building bridges with the West by:

1- Sending greetings from leading Islamic scholars and organizations to Christians at Christmas and to Jews at Hanukkah.
2- Denouncing Redda Law, thereby allowing Muslims to convert to other faiths without any punishment, just as non-Muslims can freely convert to Islam in the West without any punishment.
3- Change and suspend the traditional teaching that Muslims must wage wars on non-Muslims to offer them one of three options: convert to Islam, pay jizia (humiliating tax paid by non-Muslims to Muslims), or be killed.
4- Publish new theologically-based books of Islamic jurisprudence that stand against beating women, slavery, killing apostates, and other violent edicts of Sharia.
5- Stop dehumanizing Jews in mainstream Islamic teaching.

As long as the Muslim world insists on teaching violent principles or refused to reject them as mentioned earlier, the gap between it and the West will only increase, and the efforts to bridge the gap of civilizations will be inefficient.

Once the Muslim world puts an end to these destructive points, the voices that emphasize the "common values" will be able to succeed in their great mission to make our world better.

Sharia Law

The US Must Suppress Sharia Law To Uphold Freedom Of Religion

A popular new law that bars Oklahoma courts from considering Islamic law, or Sharia, when deciding cases was put on hold Monday after a prominent Muslim in the state won a temporary restraining order in federal court.[1] This ruling was issued in the name of freedom of religion and minority rights.

U.S. District Court Judge Vicki Miles-LeGrange ruled that the measure, which passed by a large margin in last Tuesday's elections, would be suspended until a hearing on November 22nd, when she will listen to arguments on whether the court's temporary injunction should become permanent.

"Today's ruling is a reminder of the strength of our nation's legal system and the protections it grants to religious minorities," said Muneer Awad, executive director of Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) in Oklahoma, who filed the suit last Thursday, claiming the law violated his constitutional rights.[2]

"We are humbled by this opportunity to show our fellow Oklahomans that Muslims are their neighbors and that we are committed to upholding the U.S. Constitution and promoting the benefits of a pluralistic society," Awad said.

Awad's statement blatantly misrepresents the realities of Sharia law.

Sharia Law advocates the opposite of freedom of religion and minority rights. For instance, one of the fundamental principles of Sharia Law is that Muslims who leave Islam, i.e., apostates, should be killed. Allowing Sharia Law to pertain in US courts completely ignores the rights of the Muslim apostate minority and in so doing endangers their lives.

Imagine that a Muslim apostate was in the courtroom in the US. If an Islamic Mullah insisted that Sharia law mandates that this apostate be killed, would the judge allow this ruling of Sharia Law? If the judge stopped the killing process, according to the ruling by US District Court Judge Miles-LeGrange, the judge would be limiting the religious freedom of the Mullah.

---

[1] Barnes, E. (2010, November 08). Oklahoma's Ban on Shariah Law Blocked: Supporters Blame State Attorney General. *Fox News.* Retrieved from http://www.foxnews.com/us/

[2] Muslim's Lawsuit Says Okla. Amendment Violates Constitution Posted. (2010, November 04). *Counsel on American-Islamic Relations.* Retrieved from http://www.cair.com

The judge must suppress the "religious freedom" of the Mulla in order to give the apostate his constitutional rights to freedom of religious beliefs. It is impossible to have it both ways: the man will live if the Constitution is regarded as the law, or he will die if Sharia is allowed to overrule the Constitution.

The US courts MUST draw a clear line between parts of acceptable parts of Sharia that are considered personal issues, which are usually not debatable in court rooms, such as washing before prayers and those foundational and fundamental parts of Sharia that promotes violence, discrimination, and gender inequality. These Sharia rules include killing apostates, beating women, stoning of women for adultery, killing homosexuals, accepting slavery, and inequality in inheritance between a man and a woman.

Some may argue that Sharia can be accepted in US courts as there are many interpretations of Sharia Law. This naïve approach ignores the fact that differences in Sharia interpretations are not about the acceptability of violent edicts but rather about details of their implementation. For example, the four main schools of Jurisprudence in Islam are Shafii, Maleki, Hanbali, and Hanafi. Without exception, including in contemporary times, none of these schools of Islamic jurisprudence have ever condemned the punishment of stoning. The views of the four schools of jurisprudence differ only with regard to insignificant issues such as the size of the stones that must be used.

Those who promote the acceptance of Sharia Law in the US need to realize that, not one single approved Sharia Law book clearly rejects the Redda Law (Killing of Muslims who convert to other faith or deny a fundamental part of the religion). Islamic Sharia texts rejecting this inhumane practice does not now exist, and has never existed. The Redda Law is still taught as fundamental part of Sharia, practiced by radical Islamic groups, and is considered the law of the land in countries such as Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Others may argue that Sharia in the US should be allowed only to influence American courts with regard to regulation of family matters. While this arena may sound innocent, the family practices that Sharia allows and even encourages include beating women, polygamy, and forcing underage girls to marry older men. Women and girls within Islam need American laws to protect them from the injustices of Sharia.

In short, it is impossible to uphold the US constitution and Sharia Law at the same time. It is impossible to accommodate both systems together because the one protects freedom and equality of humans and the second advocates violence and domination.

The Cruelty Of Sharia Law Is Not A Western Perception But An Islamic Reality

President Barack Obama's adviser on Muslim affairs, Dalia Mogahed, has provoked controversy by appearing on a British television show hosted by a member of an extremist group to talk about Sharia law, the Daily Telegraph reported on October 8, 2009. [3]

Ms. Mogahed, an appointee to the President's Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, said the Western view of Sharia is "oversimplified," and that the majority of Muslim women around the world associate Sharia with "gender justice."

The White House adviser made the remarks on a London-based TV discussion program hosted by Ibtihal Bsis, a member of the extremist Hizb ut Tahrir party.

Hizb ut Tahrir believes in the non-violent destruction of Western democracy and the creation of a global Islamic state under Sharia law.

Mogahed said: "I think the reason so many women support Sharia is because they have a very different understanding of sharia than the common perception in Western media". Her views on this matter are similar to the conclusions that she made of her survey in the Muslim world which she summarized in her 2007 book Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think, co-authored with John L. Esposito.

What matters in this story is not that Mogahed's comments were said to a Hizb ut Tahrir member, but rather the lack of factual reality about Sharia law contained in her statements and conclusions.

At the theoretical level, Sharia books teach and instruct the followers of Islam to implement cruel and inhumane treatment for women, such as beating wives and stoning them for committing adultery. Endorsements of polygamy and underage marriage are also established teachings of Sharia Law. These concepts, which clearly discriminate against women, are unchallenged in the mainstream Sharia books.

---

[3] Gilligan, A.& Spillius, A. Barack Obama adviser says Sharia Law is misunderstood. (2009, October 08). *The Telegraph.*

It would have been much better if Dalia Mogahed, instead of blaming Sharia cruelty on Western perception, had mentioned to the audience the name of even a single approved Sharia book that stands clearly against these inhumane teachings.

In Mogahed's survey, female Muslim respondents might well have said that Sharia represents justice partially because criticizing Sharia Law can create major trouble for these women in their societies. In addition, based on traditional ways of teaching Islam, denying a well-established and approved Islamic law (called in Sharia: *"Maaloom Mina Al-Deen Bil Darura,")* such as any of the former laws, makes the critic an "apostate," who deserves to be killed by the Muslim society and who will then "go to hell to be tortured forever". Such a fear of punishment can impede an honest critique of Sharia law in the Muslim world, thereby casting doubt on the accuracy of the conclusions driven from the survey.

Asking a Muslim living in a Muslim society about his views about Sharia is like asking a German living under the Nazis or a Russian during Stalin's era about their views regarding Nazism or communism, respectively. Can we expect to receive honest answers to such questions? The fear of punishment for criticizing the system can completely override people's free will and impede their ability to give honest responses.

When I was young and living in the Muslim world we used to brag that Islam is the ONLY religion that gives women their rights, and that polygamy, beating women, and stoning them for adultery represents wisdom that is beyond our human comprehension. Our fear of criticizing such teachings or interpretations prevented us from being able to give an unbiased evaluation of Sharia law. The research of Ms. Mogahed should have sought to eliminate this element of fear or to use indirect evaluation methods; given that she did not, it is hard to draw reliable conclusions from of her research. There is no single piece of evidence in Mogahed's book that suggests that the fear factor was considered in the evaluation process or that her statistics were corrected for this bias.

It is also important to note that the questions that were asked of Muslim women as described in this book were rather non-specific; thus, it is difficult to use them to give an accurate evaluation of Sharia. For example, there is no single question in the above mentioned book that asks specifically about the mentioned violent edicts of Sharia law.

It can be extremely inaccurate to evaluate the reality of Sharia by simply doing a questionnaire asking for the views of Muslims about it. As an analogy, what if we asked Bin Laden about Sharia law? He would likely tell

us that "it represents justice." In his view, the killing of infidels is justice! The same concept applies to Ms. Mogahed's questionnaire.

For example, when Muslim women in the survey say that Sharia represents justice, this does not necessarily mean that those women consider beating women, polygamy, or stoning for sexual misconduct to be forms of injustice. The questions should have been tailored to ask about specific laws such as beating or stoning of women, rather than general points.

Furthermore, at the practical level, all the current systems that implement Sharia Law-such as those in Saudi Arabia, Iran, Taliban-controlled Afghanistan and Pakistan, and parts of Somalia-legalize the above-mentioned barbaric teachings against women. It would have been better if, instead of trying to convince her Western audience that Sharia law is fair to women, Ms. Mogahed had given the audience one single example of a country that applies Sharia law and at the same time forbids polygamy, beating of women, or stoning. In fact, the Muslim countries that do not legally discriminate against women or justify cruelty to them, such as Turkey and Tunisia, are only those countries that refuses to implement Sharia Law, relying instead on secular laws.

To conclude, if all approved Islamic Sharia books and all the systems that apply Sharia accept or practice the previously mentioned barbaric treatment of women, then how come Ms. Mugahed is trying to sell the idea that Sharia law is fair to women? As mentioned earlier, the view of some Muslim women that Sharia law represents justice could stem from extreme fear of criticizing an Islamic law, or it may represent a form of cultural pride that prevents many Muslims from openly criticizing their traditional teachings. If all Muslim women were to say that Sharia Law is just in its treatment of women, this would not make it true, as the terrorists would also claim that Sharia law legalizing fighting infidels to subjugate them to Islam is a just law. Some people's perceptions about Sharia Law do not change its fundamental nature. The only way to change the Western perception about Sharia is to change its reality.

Is Sharia Law Un-Islamic?

In the last few decades implementing Sharia law has become a point of focus and discussion in many parts of the world.[4]

Acknowledging the role of Sharia was addressed by both terror groups such as the Taliban and by civilized countries such as the United Kingdom, where the Archbishop of Canterbury backed the introduction of Sharia laws.[5] In the United States there is an ongoing war between groups and organizations that support Sharia -compliant finance and those who are against it.

One of the arguments used by those who support Sharia -compliant finance is that Muslims have the right to adopt an Islamic financial system in the West as part of their religious rights. Many in the West were inclined to accept this as a matter of respect to Islam. This raises an important issue: Is Sharia law truly a part of Islam or is it a man-made political system that aims to control others?

In the first case Sharia law could receive legal privileges granted to religions but in the second case it should not be given any of those privileges since it would not be considered part of the religion itself.

Examining Sharia law carefully reveals many important facts that cast doubts as to whether it is part of Islam.

First, the expressions of "Islamic Sharia " and "Islamic law" were never used in the Quran or in the Sunna of the Prophet Mohammed. They were invented after his death. Since most of the details and structure of Sharia law such as the rules of jurisprudence and interpretations of the religious text were made after the revelation of Islam was completed, it is hard to consider Sharia as part of the religion itself. In other words, if Sharia law with its details was part of the Islamic religion it should have been noted before the end of the revelation. The Quran states clearly that Islam has been completed as a religion far before the invention of the " Sharia law" (Quran 5:3).

---

[4] Taher, A. (2008, September 14). Revealed: UK's first official sharia courts. *The Times of London.* Retrieved from http://www.timesonline.co.uk/
Trevelyan, L. (2004, August 26). Will Canada introduce Sharia law? *BBC News.* Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk/

[5] Butt, R. (2008, February 07). Archbishop backs sharia law for British Muslims. *Guardian.* Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/

Second, Sharia law typically has five sources: the Quran, the Sunna (words and deeds of prophet Mohammed), Fiqh (jurisprudence), acts of Prophet Mohammed's disciples, and interpretations (Tafseer) of the Quran.[6] ALL sources of Sharia other than the Quran are a matter of controversy between the two major sects in Islam (Shias and Sunnis). These sects - who agree only on the Quran as a source - have completely different sources for Sharia law. These sources contradict one another to a level that makes it impossible to define Sharia law as part of Islam, as the Quran made it clear that having contradictions in the statements or regulations of the religion is evidence that the words are not revealed by Allah, not being part of the religion.[7]

Third, Sharia law promotes concepts that contradict the Quran itself. For example, Sharia law promotes killing apostates and stoning women until death for committing adultery while the Quran - which is the most authentic, agreed upon book in Islam - promoted freedom of religion and never mentioned stoning as a punishment for adultery (Quran 4:25). In fact the Quran made the punishment for concubines who commit adultery half of the punishment of the married women (Quran 4:25). Obviously, it is impossible to "half-stone" someone until death. This shows that some Sharia laws are even against and contradict the Quran itself.

The same principle applies to Islamic finance as the Quran only mentioned a few general principles aimed at having justice and agreement in monetary relations between people. Some Islamic scholars are trying to convince the West that "Islamic finance" is fundamental to Islam. The Quran never suggested a completely detailed law for finance. Most of the rules and regulations of Islamic finance were all made after the evolvement of Islam as a religion during the lifetime of the prophet.[8]

---

[6] [See Usul Al-Fiqh –Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi Publications 1997 for Imam Mohamed Abu-Zahra p191]

[7] (Quran 4:82) "Had it been from other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much discrepancy."

[8] The Quranic verses that deals with the Usary or "Riba" are:

2:276 Allah will deprive usury of all blessing, but will give increase for deeds of charity: For He loveth not creatures ungrateful and wicked.

2:278 O ye who believe! Fear Allah, and give up what remains of your demand for usury, if ye are indeed believers.2:275 Those who devour usury will not stand except as stand one whom the Evil one by his touch Hath driven to madness. That is because they say: "Trade is like usury," but Allah hath permitted trade and forbidden usury. Those who after receiving direction from their Lord, desist, shall be pardoned for the past; their case is for Allah (to judge); but those who repeat (The offence) are companions of the Fire: They will abide therein (forever).

The question that must be raised in this context is that if the expression "sharia law" is not mentioned in the Quran, was created after the end of the revelation of Islam, and contradicts clear statements in the Quran, how does it have the legal privileges given to religions? Banning Sharia must not be seen as banning *Islam*.

According to Islamic teaching itself, the former must be considered a man-made law that was structured after Islam. It may have some basis in the religion but it should not be considered as a part of the religion itself. Decision makers should not be reluctant to take active steps against Sharia law since it should not be considered a part of Islam. In fact many of its rules can be seen as "un-Islamic" or contradictory to the Quran itself.

3:130 O ye who believe! Devour not usury, doubled and multiplied; but fear Allah. that ye may (really) prosper.

30:39 That which ye lay out for increase through the property of (other) people, will have no increase with Allah. but that which ye lay out for charity, seeking the Countenance of Allah, (will increase): it is these who will get a recompense multiplied.

4:161 That they took usury, though they were forbidden; and that they devoured men's substance wrongfully;- we have prepared for those among them who reject faith a grievous punishment.

The Movie "The Stoning Of Soraya M." Shakes The Foundations Of Radical Islam

On Friday night June 26th, the E Street Cinema in Washington, DC hosted a packed showing of the film, "The Stoning of Soraya M." The suffering of the woman portrayed in the movie is based on the story of an actual stoning that took place in Iran in 1986, as described in Freidoune Sahebjam's book "The Stoning of Soraya M."

This extraordinary movie must raise many questions in the collective conscience of mankind.

The first question is: Does the Muslim world expect that non-Muslims -after watching such punishment- believe that "Islam is the religion that gave women their rights?" [a sentiment shared by many Muslims]

The second question is: If Islam is truly against the stoning of adulteress, where are the approved Sharia (Islamic law) books that clearly and explicitly say that stoning is obsolete? Further, where are the voices within the Muslim world and Islamic organizations in the West that stand against such inhumane punishment?

To date, all main Islamic schools of jurisprudence -with no single exception - approve stoning for adultery. The difference in views within Islamic Sharia law about stoning is not about the punishment itself but rather over nuances which include the size of stones required for a proper stoning.

If modern Islamic theology continues its support of the stoning of women, Muslims must not expect anything but criticism of their religion. Historically, stoning is mentioned in the Bible; however, both Jewish and Christian scholars unambiguously agree that it cannot be applied anymore. Currently, the stoning of women for the crime of adultery is not only approved by most leading Islamic scholars and organizations but also practiced almost exclusively in the Islamic world.

Instead of providing lectures about how Islam is "tolerant" and "peaceful," Islamic scholars and organizations such as the Council on American-Islamic Relations [CAIR] and the Islamic Society of North America [ISNA] must be clear on their stance against such barbaric practices. If these organizations refuse to stand boldly against stoning, it will be difficult for them to speak

against their critics and the "Islamophobic" community. In fact, developing a phobia of a system of law that promotes the stoning of human beings until death is the most normal reaction of any sane individual.

This movie –in my view- is the most powerful weapon in the war against Radical Islam. The reason is simple. Peaceful Muslims with a conscience only have three possible responses to the film.

First - to reject stoning; a fundamental concept in the Sunna of prophet Mohamed (his acts and deeds) and adopt only the Quran. Stoning as a punishment for adultery is only mentioned in the former. This response can shake the foundations of the entire religion of Islam as the Sunna plays an integral part. The main pillar of Islam (Emad Aldeen) or the five prayers has never been described in the Quran itself and is only mentioned in the Sunna. In fact, the Quran only calls for prayer three times a day.[9] Rejecting parts of the Sunna such as stoning to avoid the criticism of Islam will subsequently cast doubt on the only source for the main pillar of Islam, the five prayers.

Second – selective use of the Sunna; this will demonstrate to many Muslims that the Prophet Mohamed is not "the perfect role model" for mankind. This –by itself- can shake another major foundation of the religion which requires Muslims to follow the footsteps of the Prophet. This presents a Catch-22 for many Islamic scholars who are now faced with the reality of what they currently promote and teach in mainstream Islam.

Third – proving that stoning exists in the Quran; Islamic scholars may try to teach Muslims that stoning had been mentioned in as a verse in the Quran that was later abrogated -only from the writings of the Quran- but remained a valid law. This Islamic theological concept is established in "Al-Bukhari" and "Muslim", the most authentic Hadith books in Islam.[10] Such books do quote the verse that existed in the early Quran, but was not included in the final version. This too can raise doubts in the mind of many Muslims about the authenticity and accuracy of the available Quran.

In conclusion, this movie will produce nothing short of an earthquake in current Islamic theology. On one hand, accepting the act of stoning will make many Muslims unable to defend Islam as a religion of peace or one that gave women their rights. On the other hand, rejecting this barbaric punishment can raise doubts about following the Prophet as the "perfect role model" and will create distrust in the authenticity of the Sunna and/or the Quran. In both situations, Islamic theology will be shaken.

---

[9] See Quran 11:115.

[10] Al-Jaza'iry, A. B. (2001). Minhaj Al-Muslim (The Way of the Muslim), 2 Vols. Dar-us-Salam Publications.p.506

Some apologists might say that the stoning depicted in this movie did not conform with Sharia Law as there were only two witnesses who testified while Sharia Law requires four. This should not in any way discredit the reality that Islamic Sharia still promotes the stoning of women to death if they commit adultery. Rather, the question that must be asked is: Does having four witnesses make the stoning in any way a humane form of punishment?

Today, many women living in countries controlled by Sharia Law such as Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Somalia, as well as regions under the Taliban have been murdered by stoning. Such terrorism against women must end. I urge you to encourage others to see this film, which is currently playing in select theatres across the United States.[11]

---

[11] To learn more about the film, please visit their website: http://www.thestoning.com

Terrorism

The Mystery Of The Word "Jihad"

Since September 11, few words have been considered more controversial than the term "jihad" in theological, political, and military discussions.

Apologists for Islamic radicalism immediately raced after 9/11 to convince the West that "jihad" is predominantly understood in a peaceful way. Many in the West accepted and relied on this comforting definition without adequate scientific research in Arabic and Islamic literature.

For example, John O. Brennan, Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism, mentioned that the meaning of "jihad" is to "…purify oneself or to wage a holy struggle for a moral goal" in a speech at the Center for Strategic and International Studies on August 6, 2009.

In addition, John Esposito and Dalia Mogahed defined 'jihad' in their book, Who speaks for Islam in the same peaceful way.[1]

Hiding the violent meaning of Jihad has also permeated reputable encyclopedias for terrorism such as Encyclopedia of Terrorism by Combs & Slann.[2]

However, scientific honesty necessitates that we present all views about the meaning of the word jihad instead of selecting the definition that makes us feel most comfortable.

According to classical Islamic texts and sources, jihad can be understood in the following five ways:

Meaning 1:
From an Arabic linguistic perspective, the literal meaning of the word jihad is to "struggle" or to "resist" something.

Meaning 2:
The traditional Salafi (the predominant meaning in traditional Islamic books as noted later) understanding of jihad includes defending oneself as well as going on the offensive and attacking others solely to spread Islam. This violent meaning was behind the offensive wars of the early Muslims to

---

[1] Esposito, J. & Mogahed, D. (2008). *Who Speaks For Islam?: What a Billion Muslims Really Think.* Gallup Press

[2] Combs, C. C. & Slann, M. (2003). *Encyclopedia of terrorism.* New York: Checkmark Books p. 165

spread their religion in North Africa, the Middle East, and to parts of Europe such as Spain and Turkey.

Meaning 3:
The Sufi understanding of jihad is mainly to struggle against and resist the evil thoughts and ideas emanating from within oneself. This view was based on a Hadith (saying) of prophet Mohamed that described jihad as "the striving of the servant against his desires".

Meaning 4:
Jihad can also mean preaching by the using the word of the Quran. This rare view is based on a verse that uses the Arabic word "jahidhom" which is derived from the word jihad (Quran 25:52).

Meaning 5:
Jihad can be also understood as a struggle to understand God by studying his omnipresent touch in nature. This very rare understanding is based on a verse (Quran 29:69). The original Arabic verse used the word "jahadu" which is also derived from the word jihad.

For more comprehensive understanding of the word jihad, the following facts MUST be addressed to understand the most dominant meaning of the word Jihad in the Muslim world:

1- Currently, the words "Jihadi Islam" are used by the mainstream Arab media to refer to the violent form of Islam. If jihad is mainly peaceful, why do the Arab media use the word predominantly to describe violent Islam? (Note: Jihad is the noun, Jihadi is the adjective)

2- The word jihad is interpreted in most of the reputable traditional Islamic books in a violent manner. Most mainstream interpretations for the Quran mentions for Sura 9, Verse 73 that "Jihad against the Infidels is achieved by fighting them until they submit to Islam." Is this the moral goal that Mr. Brennan's speech writers and "Islamic experts" are alluding to? Modern Islamic books written by top Islamic scholars and distributed globally still adopt the violent meaning of the word to fight the disbelievers until "Allah alone is worshiped". For example, see Chapter 5 of Minhaj Al-Muslim Vol 2. The book states clearly on page 167 that the aim of violent jihad is that "Allah alone is worshiped". Minhaj Al-Muslim is published in Saudi Arabia, London, Houston and New York and is written by Al-Jaza'iry who is a lecturer in the Noble Prophetic Masjid in Saudi Arabia. This position is one of the highest positions in Islam that could be attained by any Muslim scholar. It is unrealistic to assume that he, too, does not understand the definition of jihad.

3- If the word jihad is primarily understood in a peaceful way, why do we not hear about peaceful jihadi organizations? The word "jihad" is almost always used by the violent radical groups. If the word is understood predominantly in a peaceful way, we would have seen it used predominantly by peaceful Islamic organizations rather than the violent ones.

4- The Hadith (or sayings of the prophet Mohammed) that described jihad as a struggle against one's desires ("You all have come with the best arrival, and you have come from the minor Jihad to the major Jihad…It is the striving of the servant against his desires") is a Daiif or weak (unbinding) Hadith.[3] An example of a Sahih (strong and binding) hadith (in Al-Buchary) that is used by the radicals to incite violence is the following: "I have been ordered to fight all mankind until they say no God other than Allah".

5- Modern Islamic scholars such as Yusuf Al-Quradawy who are considered "moderates" by many in Western media and academia mention clearly that jihad has to be conducted via wars to spread Islam and make Islam as the ONLY religion.[4] How is it that such a knowledgeable and leading "moderate" Islamic scholar is not aware of the meaning of the word jihad while non-Arabic speakers are aware of it?

6- Aiman Al-Zawaherri (second in command of Al-Qaeda) encouraged the Muslim Uma (nation) to wage Jihad against the West. If Most Muslims do not understand the word Jihad in a violent way, Al-Zawaherri would not have used it to convey his message of fighting the West.

It should not be complicated to figure out that the Arab media, most classical as well as modern Islamic scholars, and Islamic organizations are in a much better position than most Westerners to define the most dominant meaning of the word jihad. Unsophisticated forms of research in the Muslim world that do not consider cultural factors such as "Tequia" (the Islamic concept of deception) are not sufficient to stand against the reality of above mentioned violent theological, linguistic, and historical usage of the word.

One of the easiest ways to know how the word is truly understood in the Muslim world is to ask covertly some young Arabic children in any Arab country about what the word jihad means for them. Is it "War to kill the infidels" or "a struggle against the desires of oneself"?

---

[3] Al-Jaza'iry, A. B. (2001). Minhaj Al-Muslim (The Way of the Muslim), 2 Vols. Dar-us-Salam Publications.p.167

[4] [Arabic] Quradawy, Y. (2001). *Islamic Revival: Islamic Solution is an Obligation and a Necessity.* Wahba Library: Cairo. p. 91

It is fair to say that jihad "can be" understood in a peaceful way. However, there is huge difference between saying that "Jihad can be understood in a peaceful way" and "Jihad is a peaceful concept". The former is an honest and accurate statement, while the latter is a wrong and deceiving one that indicates a serious lack of knowledge.

Creating a Western definition for a word that does not represent how it is primarily used by native Arabic speakers is both misleading and dangerous to our national security. It would be great to convince Arabic speakers and the Muslim world to change the meaning of the word instead of deceiving ourselves. The change must occur in their educational books rather than in the public statements, they release to the West to convince it that jihad is peaceful. Insisting that the word is mainly peaceful while it is mostly used in Islamic texts and media as a violent one is misleading and is like a non-English speaker who insists that the word "war" in English is a form of chocolate.

The most effective way to know the true meaning of the word "jihad" is to simply evaluate how the word is used by the Arab street and how it is defined in Islamic texts and in the Arab media, as seen above. As Mr. Brennan wisely put it in his speech, "How you define a problem shapes how you address it" - and eight years after September 11th, we are still having problems defining the problem.

A Jihadist's Advice On How To Win The War In Afghanistan

On September 23, 2008, Dan Ephron wrote in Newsweek Web Exclusive that "America's war in Afghanistan, soon to enter its eighth year, is arguably at its lowest point since troops drove the Taliban from power in 2001. Throughout the country, Taliban forces are making inroads. Allied casualties are at their highest since the war began. And Al Qaeda operates from a safe haven on the border area between Afghanistan and Pakistan, just out of America's reach".[5]

The lack of success in this war has been recognized and the U.S. military commander in Afghanistan, General Stanley McChrystal, has recently launched a new counterinsurgency strategy.[6] In addition, on October 1, 2009 the Washington Times mentioned that President Obama is meeting with his national security team to plan the next moves in Afghanistan.[7] American generals demanded thousands of additional soldiers for Afghanistan in order to accomplish their mission.[8]

The above-mentioned points indicate that the decision about how to proceed in Afghanistan is crucial, as there will be grave consequences if the U.S. and its allies lose this war. This is partially because this war is seen by many as a war between our civilization and barbarism. Both President Obama and former President Bush have emphasized this point.[9]

It is important to realize the difference between traditional war, where two traditional army forces face each other and war against radical groups & suicide bombers, who target civilians.

---

[5] Johnson, T. (2008, September 22). Winning in Afghanistan. (D. Ephron, Interviewer) Retrieved from http://www.newsweek.com

[6] McGreal, C. & Boone, J. (2009, September 24). US launches new Afghan counterinsurgency strategy. *The Guardian.* Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/

[7] Mosk, M. (2009, November 29). Obama faces hard sell on Afghan decision. *The Washington Times.*

[8] U.S. Generals to Demand Thousands of Additional Soldiers for Afghanistan [Blog Post]. (2009, August 03). Retrieved from http://mostlywater.org/

[9] Why We Must Win In Afghanistan [Blog Post]. (2009, September 15). Retrieved from http://www.thenextright.com/tomganley

The difficulties that the U.S. and its allies face when dealing with Taliban fighters can be summarized in the following points:

1- The enemy is launching irregular warfare using insurgency as a tool

2- The enemy's fighters are scattered as many small groups rather limited front lines. This makes it more difficult to win using the traditional military approaches used in conventional wars.

3- The enemy predominantly targets civilians in markets, funerals, and hospitals. This factor aggravates the problem as it is virtually impossible and extremely costly to continuously protect all civilian areas in the country.

4- They use simple tactics and human factors rather than sophisticated technology to communicate. It is often easier to trace messages conveyed via the Internet or by telephone than those messages passed from one person to another one across a table in a busy café.

5- They gather in rural areas where the military is not concentrated.[10]

Considering this situation, an increase in traditional troop numbers may be inefficient unless it is coupled with an enhancement of certain tactics that can deal more effectively with this situation.

The U.S. needs to consider the following points to deal more effectively with this unconventional situation:

1- The winning factor in this war may be improved infiltration of the radical groups from within, by well-prepared intelligence agents. Infiltration by agents suits the scattered nature of the enemy. Special methods that can work with Islamist radical groups are needed to prepare such kind of spies.

2- This infiltration has to be enhanced both qualitatively and quantitatively.

3- Effective synchronization with military units is needed to launch sudden attacks on the leadership of these small groups or on the members of the group while they are gathering together. The best defense is a good

---

[10] Johnson, T. (2008, September 22). Winning in Afghanistan. (D. Ephron, Interviewer) Retrieved from http://www.newsweek.com

offense!

4-Many people in the rural areas of Afghanistan are illiterate and simple people. This can give us the opportunity to launch effective psychological operations to create a rift between them and the Taliban fighters. Such a rift could be used for our benefit: the more that ordinary people hate the Taliban, the better intelligence and cooperation we can get from them to fight the insurgents. We need to suppress the growth of the Taliban by suppressing the environment that allows them to grow and function.

5-An example to illustrate the previous point is that the ordinary people in these Afghan villages need to realize that every suicide attack conducted by the Taliban will likely make the U.S. prolong its stay in Afghanistan. This message can be conveyed via the media, or by using a "war of rumors." If this message is conveyed effectively, it can weaken the ability of the Taliban to convince the Afghan people that these attacks will force the U.S. to pull out. The more the Afghan people feel that these attacks by the Taliban are counterproductive, the less likely they are to support them.

6-Another example is that such psychological operations should also aim at discrediting the Taliban leadership (especially morally) and distorting or degrading their image as "mujahedeen." Specific covert intelligence tactics are needed to achieve this. The emotions of the simple, primitive, rural people in Afghanistan could be directed against the Taliban leaders, which could further weaken the leaders' ability function.

7-If we engage in effective diplomacy with some Arab Muslim nations and leaders, they could also contribute by issuing fatwas (Islamic religious statements) to denounce suicide bombers and those who support them as apostates who will go to Hell forever. Such a fatwa, if worded correctly, could significantly discredit the Taliban fighters in the eyes of Afghan society and limit their ability to get support from the Afghan people. In order for the Fatwa to be effective, it would have to be issued initially in Arabic-the language of the Quran-by Arab Muslim scholars and organizations, rather than by Afghan scholars. Generally speaking, non-Arab Muslims look up to Arab Muslims, as the latter speak the original language of the Quran and the Hadiths of the Prophet Mohamed. In addition, most Islamic theology is written in Arabic. This form of ideological war against the Taliban-if used properly-could be an extremely effective tool and adjunct to the US

efforts to win this war.

8-A long-term parallel strategy must be also in place to provide young Afghans with better religious education, in order to decrease the possibility that they become attracted to radical views. Such an educational system must encourage critical thinking, use effective cognitive psychology tactics, and provide an alternative theological answer to young Afghans.

To conclude, nontraditional warfare may also require the usage of nontraditional tactics. Improving our intelligence techniques to allow the infiltration of radical groups from within, having better synchronization with military units, and using better psychological operations are vital elements if we want to achieve victory in this war. The roles that ideology and the issuance of certain fatwas against the jihadists can also play must not be ignored in dealing with this complex situation.

Do We Only Need More 'Security Measures' Or More 'Common Sense'?

On Christmas day, a man identified as a young wealthy elite Nigerian Muslim (Abdul Farouk Abdulmutallab), with possible links to Islamic Radical groups, set off an explosive device in a failed terrorist attack on a Northwest Airlines plane as it was landing in Detroit, Michigan, federal officials said.[11]

The White House called the act an attempted act of terror. If the mission of this man had succeeded more than 270 people on board would have been killed and both tourism and airline industries in US could have been seriously affected.

It is vital to emphasize that it was just mostly luck that prevented the explosion. Otherwise, Christmas day in the US would have turned into a disaster.

The profile of Abdulmutallab adds another piece of evidence to support the view that lack of education and poverty are not the main cause of terrorism as some suggests. Abdulmutallab is from a wealthy family and is highly educated which fits with the pattern of many other Islamic Jihadists.

The question that we need to address is, do we only need more security measures or do we predominantly need more logic and more common sense in addressing the phenomenon of Islamic Radicalism.

It will be erroneous if we could not see this terror attempt in the context of the other recent terror plots such as Fort Hood massacre and the increasing home grown Islamic Radicalism in the US. Inability to see these atrocities linked together by a common ideological thread is like failure to identify the underlying disease that causes the patient's symptoms. In such a situation, treatment would be incorrectly directed to treat the symptoms rather than to treat the underlying disorder or the true cause of the problem. The same can happen if we only focused on treating terrorism and ignore treating the

---

[11] Abdul Farouk Abdulmutallab: Christmas Terrorist Attack 12/25/2009. (n.d.) *Terrorist Plant Magazine.* Retrieved from http://www.terroristplanet.com

underlying factor, namely the ideology behind Radical Islam. Failure to address this ideological component and consequently failure to treat it effectively is disastrous.

Addressing the contribution of the religious ideology is crucial, as if Al-Qaeda adopted a new approach to attack Metro passengers, cinemas, sport stadiums and other big gathering areas in USA, it would be very difficult and extremely inconvenient to do a security check for every individual at these places.

If our only approach to terrorism is to increase security measures for individuals, the terrorists can in fact paralyze our life if they shifted their target from attacking airplanes to attacking the formerly mentioned places.[12]

Our policy should move from only symptomatic treatment of the problem to include defeating the ideology behind it. It is vital in this situation to develop a complete comprehensive strategy to treat the cause of the problem at the psycho- behavioral and ideological levels rather than only working at the security front.

This is particularly significant when we realize that the phenomenon of Islamic Radicalism is using several fronts both tactically and geographically. At the tactical level terrorists planned to attack airplanes, buildings and shopping moles. At the geographical front new fronts for terror, include Yemen and possibly Somalia. Defeating Al-Qaeda at the military level in Afghanistan will not end the problem, as new fronts for terror will develop as long as the radical ideology exists. On the contrary, defeating Islamism at the ideological level can add a needed and fundamental component to the current antiterrorism approach.

CNN quoted President Obama as saying that America would continue to "keep up the pressure on those who would attack our country," asserting that the US is doing everything in its power to stop terror. This statement raises an important issue. If all previous US efforts intended to defeat terror, including expenditures of billions of dollars, have failed into today to eradicate this problem, then America MUST adopt new approaches and

---

[12] After writing this Op-Ed there was an attempted attack on the Washington DC Metro.

Collins, H. (2010, October 27). Man Arrested in Alleged Washington Metro Terror Plot. *AOL News.* Retrieved from http://www.aolnews.com

strategies. Previous measures, including President Obama's outreach to the Muslim world, were not very successful until today. This does not mean that these approaches must be stopped but significant improvement for their quality is needed.

In short, using military and security approaches to defeat terror *without* addressing the ideology behind it is not sufficient. We certainly need to improve our security measures and technology to protect civilians, however, we also need more 'common sense' to see the common factor or the Ideology behind terrorism and treat it.

Not "Hardly Existential"

In a recent op-ed published by Foreign Affairs under the title "Hardly Existential: Thinking Rationally About Terrorism," the authors John Mueller and Mark G. Stewart argued that spending to further reduce the likelihood or consequences of terrorism is rarely justified. They based their argument on the view that according to the number of terrorist attacks in comparison to other threats such as fatal accidents and homicidal acts, terrorism is "hardly existential" and presents an "acceptable risk." In fact, based on their analysis, car accidents should be considered more important and dangerous than terrorism.[13]

The authors have not addressed the following important facts:

1- Deciding if a threat is existential or not depends predominantly on the inherent lethality of that threat. The potential to cause massive killing carries greater weight than the actual number of victims at a given time. For example, a rapidly contagious and fatal infection problem within a country must be treated as existential and should be taken more seriously than car accidents, as the former has the potential to spread and kill millions in a short period of time while the latter remains pretty stable. To demonstrate this point, based on the death toll numbers from the influenza epidemic of 1918-1919, that same phenomenon could kill 62 million people today.[14] Therefore, evaluating the magnitude of the terrorism threat by only the number of current victims, which the authors suggest be done, is a limited approach to the problem that leads to underestimation.

2- The rate at which a phenomenon occurs is also fundamental to understanding its potential to cause death and destruction. For example, the number of car accidents per capita remains relatively

---

[13] Mueller, J. & Stewart, M. (2010, April 2) Hardly Existential: Thinking Rationally about Terrorism. *Foreign Affairs*. Retrieved from http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles

[14] Brown, D. (2006, December 22). World Death Toll Of a Flu Pandemic Would Be 62 Million. *The Washington Post.* Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com

stable over time.[15] However, the number of terrorist attacks conducted by Islamists has increased by more than one hundred-fold over the last few decades.[16] This exponential growth rate of Islamic terrorism simply means that if we simply ignored the problem, we might face tens of thousands of terror attacks over the next few decades, which could lead to an uncontrollable problem, thereby threatening the security of the entire world.

3- Another factor that needs to be considered in the evaluation process is the intention of the terrorists. It is known by many, that most if not all Islamic terrorists will not hesitate to use WMDs if given access to them [See the recent comment of President Obama about this topic (4)].[17] In such a case, a single attack on a major city could kill hundreds of thousands instantly. However, car accidents tend to occur unintentionally and, from a statistical standpoint, their numbers are relatively stable over years. In other words, the possibility that car accidents can in one day kill hundreds of thousands of people is very unlikely possibility. On the contrary killing such number of people in a single day is a valid possibility when we deal with terrorism.

4- In addition, the authors should have mentioned that the number of fatalities they used to evaluate the threat was calculated during the aftermath of the attacks on the Twin Towers, when security measures have been higher and more sophisticated than ever. This is comparable to measuring the temperature of a patient while he or she is under the use of antipyretics (medications that lower body temperature), as the real temperature could actually be higher if antipyretics were not used. This relates to the terrorism problem because it is hard to tell how many people would have been killed in the US from terrorist attacks if extra care had not been given to post-9/11 homeland security measures.

---

[15] National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2009). Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes. NHTSA. Retrieved from http://www-fars.nhtsa.dot.gov

[16] Statistics on Terrorism. (2008, August 2). Retrieved from http://www.johnstonsarchive.net/

[17] Obama: Al-Qaida would use nuclear weapons if it could. *(2010, April 18) Japan to Day.* Retrieved from http://www.japantoday.com/

5- I agree with the authors' view that less costly measures may be needed to deal with the problem of terrorism. However, underestimating the threat - as the Op-Ed implied - can end in a disaster for the US.

In short, factors such as the potential to cause massive damage, the rate of growth of a phenomenon, and the intention of the attackers to use WMD rather than just the actual number of fatalities, MUST be included in the evaluation process of a threat, such as that of terrorism.

Lessons To Learn From The Times Square Bomb Plot

After the recent failed attempt to explode a car in the Times Square in NY City, it is vital to learn some lessons to prevent further attacks on the US soil.[18] There is no doubt that our HLS is doing a great job keeping us secure and it is fair to say that their efforts need to be saluted. However, learning from the NYC attack is also fundamental to avoid major disaster in the future.

The following points need to be addressed:

1- What if the person who conducted this failed attempt in NY was wearing an Islamic Niqab that covers the whole face and body? In this situation, searching for the suspect would be much more complicated. It is time to think of how religious freedom must be weighed against our security measures. Wearing the Niquab can limit our ability to find terrorist suspects and consequently impede our efforts to prevent terrorism.

2- The incident in Times Square further confirmed the fact that terrorists are still having the "will" to attack us and they have the capability to "penetrate" our systems. All they need to cause massive damage to the US is to "attain" a destructive weapon. Efforts in the US are clearly directed toward preventing the penetration of our systems by the Jihadists and limit their ability to attain WMDs. It is time to seriously consider using better psychological warfare tactics to weaken the "will" of the terrorists. Addressing ALL components of this Fetal Triad i.e. "The will to destroy", "The ability to penetrate"- and "Attaining more destructive weapons" is crucial in winning the war against terrorism. Ignoring one of these components, for example, failure to declare an effective psychological warfare to weaken the "will" of the terrorists can have grave consequences on our future security.

---

[18] Suspect in Times Square plot faces terror charges. (2010, May 04). *The Washington Times.* Retrieved from http://www.washingtontimes.com/news

3- The US administration MUST analyze the reasons and factors that have contributed to the increasing number of terrorist acts and attempts inside the US in Year 2009/2010. Not including the Pakistan case of the 5 American Jihadists, the Rand Corporation says that nearly 30 homegrown terror plots have been uncovered in the U.S. since Sept. 11, 2001. Ten of these attacks surfaced in 2009 alone, including two actual attacks - in Little Rock, Ark. and Fort Hood, Texas.[19] The possibility that some actions of the Obama administration were perceived as signs of weakness by the Jihadists and thus have contributed to such an increase in their "will" to attack the US must be addressed and analyzed.

4- In the last 5 months "Luck" has played a major role in preventing two disasters in the US. The first was the failed attack to destroy an airliner on the Christmas day.[20] The second is the latest attempt to explode a car in Times Square on a busy Saturday night.[21] Just imagine the negative impact on the US if we were not 'lucky" on those days and the explosions exploded! The damage would include:
   a- Loosing trust and confidence in US security measures (which can encourage Jihadists to launch more attacks on the US).
   b- Economic damage to the airline industry.
   c- A major blow to tourism industry in NY (and possibly all over the US!).

The question that MUST be raised: What measures are the US administration going to take to improve our security so that we do not rely on "luck" anymore in defending our home land?

I mentioned earlier the importance of being pro-active against the tourists via using effective psychological warfare (EPW) to weaken the 'will' of the Jihadists and to limit their ability to launch more attacks on the US.

---

[19] Macedo, D. (2009, December 14) Homegrown Terror on the Rise in 2009. *Fox News*. Retrieved from http://www.foxnews.com/us

[20] Siegel, H. & Lee, C. (2010, December 25). 'High explosive' - U.S. charges Abdulmutallab. *Politico*. Retrieved from http://www.politico.com/news

[21] Latest Updates: Times Square Car Bomb Scare [Blog Post]. (2010, May 03). *CNN News*. Retrieved from http://news.blogs.cnn.com

In short, we cannot rely on our 'luck' while dealing with Islamist Terrorists. We must analyze our strengths and weaknesses and consider new approaches to enhance our ability to protect our homeland. Psychological Measures to weaken the "will" of the Jihadists are needed to achieve victory in this war.

Who Is To Blame For Terrorism?

The recent terrorist attempt in New York's Times Square[22] (possibly conducted by Islamist terrorists)[23] and the global nature of Islamic terrorism[24] in the last few decades raises an important question: Who is to blame for these acts of terror?

Let us assume that a father teaches a child to hate his neighbor. Years pass and the child becomes a young adult full of hatred towards this neighbor leading to the end scenario where the young man kills his neighbor. Shall we only blame the child for killing the neighbor or shall we also blame the person (or people) who taught him how to hate? Is it acceptable to ignore the role of the teaching person in this process of killing? The same applies to terrorism, Shall we only blame the terrorists who conduct the attacks or also blame those who taught them how to hate 'others'?

It is easy to only blame the terrorists for the attack; however, deep analysis of the problem reveals a better understanding and allows for better answers to such questions. Looking back on the Nazi regime and its barbaric inhumane atrocities against the Jews illustrates the dynamics of evil. This type of cruelty has set an example to understand Islamism terrorism and who is to blame.

The following people should be held responsible for contributing to the atrocities of Nazi's:

1 Adolf Hitler and those who taught the ideology of hate.

2 The system that allowed such an ideology to flourish such as the Nazi party.

3 The soldiers who conducted the killing of the innocents.

---

[22] Police examining video from Times Square. (2010, May 3). *CNN Justice.* Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com

[23] Roggio, B. (2010,May 2). Pakistani Taliban claim credit for failed NYC Times Square car bombing. Retrieved from http://www.longwarjournal.org/

[24] See examples at http://www.thereligionofpeace.com/

4   Those who stayed silent until millions of people were killed.

5   Those who encouraged the Holocaust by verbal or logistical support.

Similarly, in the case of Islamist terrorism the following must be held accountable:

1   Those who promote religiously based ideology of hatred toward Non-Muslims. It is easy to detect a level of hatred in many mainstream Islamic books and media sources.[25]

2   The Islamic systems that adopted, encouraged, and supported such negative forms of teaching in the last few decades. These include many radical mosques and Islamic schools. The role of the Wahhabi regimen of Saudi Arabia in promoting such an ideology should not be ignored.[26]

3   The terrorists who accepted such teachings of hatred and materialized it into violence.

4   The passive attitude of many in the Muslim world against the terrorists.[27]

5   Those who abused the values of Liberty and allowed the ideology of hate to grow under the banner of religious freedom.

All of the above are to blame and should be held responsible for the problem of Islamic terrorism as each has contributed to the growth of this phenomenon. Individual terrorists play the role of the soldiers who killed the Jews during the Nazi era. It is not enough to only blame the soldiers without blaming the leaders of the system and those who promoted the ideology of hatred. Similarly it is unreasonable not to hold accountable those scholars and Islamic systems that preach, teach, or promote hatred toward Non-Muslims. Stopping the hatred is the first step toward ending terrorism.

---

[25] Examples can be found at http://www.memrijttm.org/

[26] Friedman, T. (2007, April 15). The Power of Green. *The New York Times Magazine.* Retrieved from http://query.nytimes.com

[27] Hamid, T. (2008). Inside Jihad: Understanding and Confronting Radical Islam. Abdelhamid. p. 91-96

Applications Of Medical Lessons To The War On Terror

Analysis of the performance of the US in the War on Terror can clearly demonstrate that the US is not winning it as it should. The same mechanisms that may cause failure in treating a disease are more or less similar to the factors that may cause failure in treating Islamic terrorism. Studies in the field of medicine can help us understand the possible causes that lead to failure of certain treatment. Let us examine some of these factors.

Failure to treat a medical condition can be due several reasons. These include:

    1-Failure to treat the underlying cause of the problem
    2-The use of improper remedy
    3-Insufficient use of medication
    4-Failure to distinguish between the disease and its aggravating factors
    5-The presence of factor(s) impeding the action of the used treatment
    6-Relying on a medication to treat a new medical condition based solely on its former success in treating another disease

Observing the course of the War on Terror can demonstrate that a similar dynamic exists, which resulted in difficulty to achieve victory over Islamic Radicals:

1- Failure to treat the underlying cause of the problem.

    One of the basic rules in medicine is that failure of traditional therapies to treat a medical disorder must raise the possibility of an underlying condition that must be treated. For example, failure to treat high blood pressure must raise the possibility of an underlying cause that has not been treated yet. The same principle applies to radical Islam. Failure to acknowledge Radical Islamist Ideology as the main underlying case of the problem of terrorism has limited the US ability to properly treat the condition. The US was focused for nearly 10 years on treating the

symptom of the problem (terrorist attacks) while the ideology of the Islamists (the underlying cause of the problem) was not treated.

2- The use of improper remedy

It is not surprising to know that the use of incorrect type of treatment will result in nothing but failure of treatment of the disease. Conventional military confrontation may not be the best remedy to deal with suicide bombers and Islamist insurgency. Effective Intelligence infiltration and destruction of targeted terror cells may be the best treatment to deal with this phenomenon. Improving the way the US is using the latter approach and giving it a priority over conventional military confrontations may play a pivotal role in changing the course of the war against terror to become more successful.

3- Insufficient use of medication

The use of low dosages of antibiotics instead of using the full dose will not only result in failure to treat an infection but may also result in the emergence of resistant strains. The US has increased its troops several times to overcome the enemy in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Better estimation of the capabilities of the enemy and more accurate evaluation of the threshold of military power that is needed to defeat it was and is still crucial to achieve victory. Had the US used sufficient power from the beginning of this war the situation would have been much different from now.

4- Failure to distinguish between the disease and its aggravating factors:

It is important to care for the contributing factors that aggravate a medical condition; however, without treating the condition itself the patient cannot be properly treated. For example, Diabetes mellitus can be aggravated by several factors. Treating these factors may improve the condition to some extent but should not replace the treatment of the disease itself. Failure to distinguish between the disease and its contributing factors can be catastrophic. The same principle applies to terrorism as political, social and economic factors may contribute to aggravating it and thus must be treated. However, failure to treat the disease itself or the Islamist radical ideology is disastrous. The US has been trying to give attention to the possible contributing factors that

aggravate the disease of Radical Islam without giving similar attention to addressing the disease itself. This approach is undoubtedly a losing one as treating the disease in such cases is fundamental.

5- The presence of factor(s) impeding the action of the used treatment:

Factors that impede the action of a given medication may seriously affect the ability of the medication to work effectively. For example, the use of cortisone may impede the action of Insulin treatment and result in failure in treating diabetes. The same principle can help us understand the failure of treating Islamic Radicalism. Apologetic attitudes toward radical Islam can impede the active steps taken to defeat it. Finding justifications for terrorism by claiming that it is caused by the Arab-Israeli conflict or that it is a reaction to US foreign policy gives a green light and justification to the terrorists to continue their violent acts and impedes our efforts to treat the problem.

6- Relying on a medication to treat a new medical condition based solely on its former success in treating another disease

A doctor might fail in treating a disease simply because he was unable to realize that former success of a medication in treating certain disease does not necessarily mean it will work with other medical conditions. For example, cortisone can significantly improve some inflammatory diseases in the body but is likely to aggravate other medical conditions such as hypertension and Diabetes. The same applies to the Islamism phenomenon. For example, previous successful tactics that worked with the Cold War will not necessarily be effective in defeating radical Islam. Novel tactics and new approaches are needed to deal with the latter case. In other words, we need to create a new medication or medications to deal with the phenomenon of Islamic terrorism.

In short, America MUST focus on fighting the ideology that creates terrorism, adopt novel strategies to deal with the problem at different levels, and STOP the apologetic attitudes toward Islamism, as this actually aggravates the problem. Failure to do so may result in a disaster if the terrorists put their hands on more sophisticated types of weapons (we have been lucky that we have not yet been attacked with a WMD), Shall we rely on luck forever or shall we start addressing the problem in a strategic manner in order to end it?

Lessons Of The Cold War For The War On Terror

I was recently invited to speak to the 19th Economic Forum that was held in Krynica, Poland on September 9-12 2009. The topic of discussion was "Lessons of the Cold War for the War on Terror".

A summary of the points that I discussed is below:

1- It is vital to realize that if some strategies or tactics succeeded in the cold war this does not necessarily mean that they will succeed in dealing with radical Islam (A key that opened one room cannot necessarily open another room!). This is partially due to the difference in cultural and ideological factors between the two cases. Special strategies need to be created to deal with radical Islam.

2- The main differences between communism and Islamism must be understood, as this affects the way we deal with the latter. Communism is an economically-based model while Islamic radicalism is a religiously-based one.

In economic models it is much easier to prove something wrong by simply showing that it failed to improve people's living conditions. It is also much easier to decrease people's enthusiasm toward it, as their relationship to the model is more or less processed at the higher cortical brain centers (responsible for critical thinking) rather than the subconscious, or emotional, level. In addition, in economically-based models the followers of the model- unlike jihadists-want to live.

On the contrary, it is relatively difficult to prove to its followers that the religiously-based model of radical Islam is wrong, as its hopes are not necessarily on Earth. For example, it is hard to convince a Jihadist that he will not find the "72 virgins in Paradise" if he dies as a martyr.

Furthermore, it is much more difficult to decrease people's enthusiasm toward the religion-based model as opposed to the economically-based one, as the former is usually processed at the subconscious rather than the higher cortical level of the brain. To clarify this point, it is possible to convince a smoker logically that smoking is "harmful," as the processing of data occurs at the higher cortical levels; and yet the same person might still "love" and enjoy smoking, as the features of love (or hate) are processed in the emotional parts of the brain. The same applies to the Islamists: it might

be possible to convince them logically that their model is ineffective, yet they may still "love" it and continue in the same path of violence.

In addition, the opponent in the economically-based models may develop military power, but at the end-unlike the jihadists-it is not in the opponent's interest to destroy the others and die as a result of this. Dealing with enemies such as the jihadists, who are willing to die (as martyrs) just to destroy their opponent, makes it mandatory to develop different strategies to deal with them than those strategies that were previously used to defeat communism.

3- When we think about suggesting solutions to the problem of radical Islam, we need to consider the following lessons from the Cold War:
- It is important to be able to negotiate from a position of power. The opponent must feel defeated, either militarily or economically, before it will accept change.
- It is important to find and work with reasonable and progressive leaders of the opposition. For example, working with Michael Gorbachev was crucial in making changes to communism. The same principle applies to the Islamic world.

Ideological defeat of the enemy can sometimes be more important than military confrontation. The US won the Cold War without going into war or military confrontation with the Communists. The defeat occurred predominantly at the ideological, psychological, and economical levels. The media played an essential role in this war. These principles can also be applied to radical Islam; however, unlike in the case of the Cold War, military confrontation with the jihadists is sometimes a necessity and should not be ignored.

Confronting Radical Islam

How Much Support Does Bin Laden Have In The Arab Street?

Analysis of more than 2500 Readers' comments on the killing of Bin Laden from Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabia

After the killing of Bin Laden it was important to know how much support he truly has in the Arab street.

Recently, I did an evaluation for the responses to the death of Bin Laden in the major Arabic news media. I choose Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabia because the news media they produce is viewed by literally millions in the Arab world and to a great extent they represent the mainstream educated sector in Arab society. Additionally, this choice was made on the basis their consumer base. In general, Al-Jazeera audience represents the more conservative pro-Palestinian side of the society and Al-Arabia represents more of the more liberal thinkers. I analyzed the comments of the readers on the death of Bin Laden. The number of reader's comments in Al-Jazeera was 966 and the number of reader's comments in Al-Arabia was 1851. All comments were in written Arabic Language.

The results are as follows:

Readers' comments in Al- Jazeera[1]

Total Number of those who commented on Bin Laden death: 966

Number of those who clearly support Bin Laden: 881

Number of those who are clearly against Bin Laden: 45

Number of those who did not moshow a clear position: 40

This comes too approximately: 91% support for Bin Laden, 4.8% against Bin Laden, 4.2 % unclear answers

Readers' comment in Al- Arabia[2]

Total Number of those who commented on Bin Laden death: 1851

---

[1] Original comments in Arabic: http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/05/02/147475.html

[2] Original comments in Arabic:: http://www.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/2F09761A-7F7A-4A20-9CB9-A93E1B1537BE.htm

Number of those who clearly support Bin Laden: 995

Number of those who are clearly against Bin Laden: 492

Number of those who did not show a clear position: 364

This comes too approximately: 54% support for Bin Laden, 26.5% against Bin Laden, and Unclear answers 19.5%.

The total number of the reader's comments was 2817 comments.

The mean results show approximately: 67 % support for Bin Laden, 19 % against Bin Laden, and Unclear answers 14%.

The above results are in harmony with the results of a recent publication by a nationally representative Gilani Research Foundation (Poll conducted by Gallup Pakistan, the Pakistan affiliate of Gallup International Association).[3] The poll was conducted among 2530 representatives (men and women) of the adult (18+) population of Pakistan. According to this Poll (51%) say they are sad about the death of Osama bin Laden (i.e. Supporters), 11% were happy (i.e. Against Bin Laden), a significant 30% described their emotions as unconcerned or uncommitted (unclear).

These results suggest that there is a serious problem in the Muslim world and that this problem must be addressed. Killing Bin Laden is an excellent step toward fighting radical Islam. However, with this level of support for Bin Laden in many parts of the Islamic world it is vital to realize that this problem is much bigger than one person.

Note: the above data suggests that analyzing the comments of the readers' of Arab media can reflect, with a reasonable level of accuracy, the same results of question-based surveys. Moreover, the use of analyzing comments left by readers of Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabia is an approach which is much easier, less costly, and a lot faster.

---

[3] Pakistani Views on THE DEATH OF OSAMA BIN LADEN. (2011, May 16). *Gallup Polls*. Retrieved from http://www.gallup.com.pk/Polls/16-05-11.pdf

US Could Have Used Bin Laden's Death To Expose Sympathizers

The issue of burial is very important in the Muslim mind. There is a special prayer over the body which is typically followed by burial in the dust.

Burying in the Islamic way gives the close relatives and friends (or followers in case of bin Laden) psychological comfort that the person died as a Muslim and will go to the paradise. This concept has roots in the following verse (Quran 12:101) "…O Thou Creator of the heavens and the earth! Thou art my Protector in this world and in the Hereafter. Take Thou my soul (at death) as a Muslim…"

The punishment for early Muslims who refused to share in jihad was to forego the funeral prayer and not to bury them as Muslims (Quran 9:84) Nor do thou ever pray for any of them [who refused to do Jihad] that dies, nor stand at his grave; for they rejected Allah and His Messenger, and died in a state of perverse rebellion).

Furthermore, according to sharia, if a Muslim is considered to be an apostate, he must not be buried as a Muslim. Indian Muslims, for example, refused to bury as Muslims the Islamic terrorists who committed the Mumbai attacks in 2008, as refusing to bury them as Muslims is the most powerful sign of rejecting terrorism.

After killing bin Laden the United States should have asked leading Islamic organizations such as the OIC, Muslim Brotherhood, and leading Islamic institutes & scholars whether or not they would consider bin Laden a Muslim and thus wanted to give him a Muslim funeral or not.

If these groups, which claim to be peaceful, consider Bin Laden a Muslim and asked for a Muslim burial for him, then their sympathy and support for bin Laden would be exposed.

On the contrary, if these groups refuse to give him a funeral prayer and reject considering him a Muslim, then this would have been a stronger blow to al-Qaida ideology and its supporters than the killing bin Laden itself.

Asking Muslim groups and organizations if they wanted to bury bin Laden as a Muslim would have been a win-win situation for the U.S.

Monday, May 2, 2011 01:05 PM

http://www.newsmax.com/blogs/TawfikHamid/id-59

What Al-Zawahiri Said About The Killing Of Bin Laden?

Today, June 8, Dr. Ayman Al-Zawahiri appeared on video to give words of condolences for Bin Laden's death.[4] His appearance (which is the first response to Bin Laden death) and his way of speaking indicate that he presumes to be currently leading Al-Qaeda.

The video (in Arabic) started with Bin Laden saying to the US that they will never have peace (i.e. Al-Qaeda will continue fighting them) until the Palestinians have peace (in Jihadists' jargon this means erasing Israel from the map rather than living peaceful with the Israelis). This was taken from a earlier video that was released years ago by Bin Laden.

The use of a video of Bin Laden speaking at the beginning of the tape aims to give his followers the feeling that he is still 'alive'. This feeling is meant to create more enthusiasm in the hearts of his followers.

The verse that was used in the tape further established the common Muslim's belief that martyrs (like Bin Laden -in the view of the Jihadists) are not dead but alive. The whole verse was quoted and it says: (Quran 3:169): "Think not of those who are slain in Allah's way as dead. Nay, they live, finding their sustenance in the presence of their Lord."

Early in the video, there was also a very passionate and powerful song about Bin Laden describing him and presenting his images on a horse as a honorable and great knight.

Al-Zawahiri was very passionate in his message and he was pointing with his index finger which is a classical Islamic sign that is used in a Muslim's prayer to indicate that "There is no God but Allah".

The main features of Al-Zawahiri's talk are:

1- More than 20% of the speech was poetry which shows his very high command of Arabic language. Some of the poems about Bin Laden seem to be authored by Al-Zawahiri himself. It is not surprising that Al-Zawahiri has this very high command of classical Arabic as he was the grandson of a former Sheik Al-Azhar (the most reputable Islamic University in the Muslim world), and well-read in Sayed Qutb's books

---

[4] To watch original video [Aribic] please go to: http://news.nawaret.com/?p=197961

and interpretations (Tafsseer) of the Quran. As is well known, Sayed Qutb's command of classical Arabic was very impressive.

Interestingly, when Bin Laden was speaking at the beginning of the video he made two mistakes in Arabic language in a very short segment (less than 2 minutes). On the contrary, Al-Zawahiri spoke more than 20 minutes with virtually not a single mistake in the Arabic grammar or the language.

2- Al-Zawahiri strongly encouraged the "Arab Spring" as he sees it as a way to establish Sharia (Islamic) Law in the area (i.e. to be like the Taliban).

3- He was trying to humiliate the US for what he described as its defeat in Tora Bora, Iraq, and Afghanistan. He also considered the removal of US allies in the Arab world and withdrawal from Iraq and Afghanistan as evidence for the defeat of the US.

4- He threatened the US with forthcoming acts of terror in revenge for Bin Laden's killing.

5- He reminded Muslims all over the world about Palestine, Kashmir, and Chechnya in an attempt to make the Muslim world enthusiastic about the return of the Caliphate.

6- He thanked Ismail Haneia (the leader of the Hamas organization) for praising Bin Laden after his death.

7- He encouraged the Pakistanis and people in the Gulf area to follow the footsteps of other Arab countries' revolutions to remove their leaders to establish Sharia. (Comment: Al-Zawahiri does not see Saudi Arabia as applying true Sharia as it allows non-Muslims to exist on its Holy land, allows western banks and T.V. satellites, and does not declare Jihad on the West.)

8- Al-Zawahiri also criticized the US for not respecting the rules of the Geneva Convention with Muslim prisoners of war (Comment: It is ironic to see those who behead innocents and kill thousands of their fellow Muslims by bombing their markets and funerals, demanding respect for the rules of Geneva convention!).

9- He also reminded Muslims of the historical wars of Salah Al-din against the people of the "Cross" to encourage them to fight the West. (Note: the West as a whole and people who have fair skin and colored hair

and eyes are seen as "people of the Cross" by many in the Muslim world irrespective of their beliefs).

10- Al-Zawahiri gave an oath of Loyalty to Mullah Umar (the leader of the Taliban). This indicates that the Taliban sponsoring Al-Qaeda is a likely outcome after the withdrawal of the US troops from Afghanistan. [Note: giving such an oath in the jargon of radical Islamic groups means that Al-Zawaherri is currently the leader of Al-Queda)

11- He encouraged the whole Muslim Umma (world) to follow the path of "Jihad".

Why, As A Muslim, I Support The Congressional Hearings About Radical Islam

House Homeland Security Committee chairman, Republican Peter King, of New York, opens hearings on the threat of homegrown Islamic terrorism in Washington, DC, on Thursday 10 March. Congressman Keith Ellison, a Muslim, objected to Rep. Peter King saying that, "Singling out one community is the wrong thing to do". Congressman Ellison should have realized that it was not Rep. Peter King, but the unequivocal statistical data that showed that almost all - if not all, home grown terror attacks and plots in the US since September 11 have been conducted by Muslims.

Similarly, the statistical data in Europe was the reason why Tony Blair a few months ago had to single out Muslims as the cause of failure of integration in Europe. In an Op-Ed published in the WSJ on November 9 2010, Mr. Blair mentioned, "We have to nail down the definition of the problem. There is no general failure to integrate.[5] In the U.K., for example, we are not talking about Chinese or Indians. We are not talking about blacks and Asians. This is a particular problem. It is about the failure of one part of the Muslim community to resolve and create an identity that is both British and Muslim".

Failure of Muslim communities to address the root causes of homegrown radicalism in their communities in the last 10 years supports the view that these communities failed to solve the problem and indicates that Muslim communities need unbiased research conducted by outsiders to get to the root causes of this problem and solve it. The failure of the Muslim communities is exemplified in the fact that, according to a May 2010 Rand Corporation report, between September 11, 2001, and the end of 2009, the U.S. government reported forty-six incidents of "domestic radicalization and recruitment to jihadist terrorism" that involved at least 125 people. There had been an average of six cases per year since 2001, but that rose to thirteen in 2009, a worrisome sign to some experts.[6]

Proclaiming, "Today I am a Muslim too," about 1,000 protesters gathered last Sunday in Times Square to decry Rep. Pete King's upcoming hearings. It

---

[5] Blair, T. (2010, November 09). Making Muslim Integration Work. *The Wall street Journal.* Retrieved from http://online.wsj.com/

[6] Jenkins, B. M. (2010). Would-Be Warriors: Incidents of Jihadist Terrorist Radicalization in the United States Since September 11, 2001. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation.

was much better that such communities ask their religious scholars to remove or challenge the mainstream Sharia teachings that encourage Muslims to declare wars against Non-Muslims and undervalue the lives of 'Un-believers' instead of demonstrating against the hearings.[7]

Congressman Ellison mentioned that he welcomes confronting the ideology of Al-Awlaki, the American-born cleric who is hiding in Yemen now. I fully agree with him on this; however, Congressman Ellison needs to realize that the violent teachings that can end in creating terrorists is not limited to Al-Awlaki or Bin Laden teaching but is an integral and unchallenged part of the current mainstream teachings that are available to many young Muslims in the US and overseas.

Muslims must ask themselves that why these hearings are not about Buddhists or followers of the Baha'i faith. The answer is simply that it is the undisputable statistics rather than individual opinions that made it a necessity to "single out" the Muslim communities in the West for these hearings. If Muslim communities were capable of solving the problem of home grown radicalism within their own communities, these hearings would not have been initiated.

If there is any one to blame for this, it is the Islamic scholarship that failed to bring a new understanding of Islam that challenges values of hatred or violence that are widely available in the mainstream Islamic books.

Muslims in the US must realize that the Quran stated that (Quran 4:135) "O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to the Lord, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin". Accordingly, Muslims need to be honest enough and admit that there is a particular problem that affects their Muslim communities more than other communities and that they failed to solve such problems. As a Muslim, I send my full support to Rep. Peter King in his noble and desperately needed research about the root causes of home grown Islamic Radicalism in the US as his work can save many human lives including Muslim's lives as well. If the efforts of Rep. Peter King resulted in saving even one human live it is as if he saved all mankind (Quran5:32 If any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people).

---

[7] Mcauliff, M., Croghan, L. & Sisk, R. (2011, March 07). Protesters call Rep. Pete King's upcoming hearings on Muslim radicalization a witch hunt. *New York Daily News.* Retrieved from http://www.nydailynews.com

Why Using The Word "Islamophobia" Is Misleading

Name-calling with the term Islamophobia is an aggressive tactic popularized by apologists for Radical Islam to silence individuals who attempt to tell the truth about Jihadist Islam.

In the spirit of "the best defense is a good offence," accusations of Islamophobia were first slung broadly in this country to suppress attention to the Islamic Jihadist motivations of the perpetrators of the September 11th Twin Towers attack. Most recently Islamophobia name-calling has been utilized with renewed vigor to discredit Rep. Peter King (US) whose Congressional Hearings threatened to expose the realities of the ideological basis of terrorism. The accusations of Islamophobia have been also used to silence European Politicians such as Geert Wilders and UK Academics such as Patrick Sookhdeo.

The psychological term phobia describes an excessive and irrational fear. So-called Islamophobia, by contrast, is appropriate willingness to heed the solid evidence of who commits terror acts and their motivations.

The statistics are striking. According to a recent survey by the Justice department, while Muslims constitute about 1% of the American population, they contribute 80% of the Home Grown Terrorism.[8] According to these data, the probability of an American Muslim to conduct a terrorist act in the US is approximately 400 times the probability of American Non-Muslims to an act of terror. Furthermore, the vast preponderance of the last decade's worldwide terror acts have been conducted by Radical Islamic groups.[9]

In addition, the ONLY nations that punish or kill in our modern times for religious crimes are majority Muslim states.

Likewise, one of Sharia (Islamic) Law's central ideals which is approved by ALL the main schools of Islamic Jurisprudence-even to today- is declaring wars against Non-Muslims to spread Islam across the globe. This has led several of its practitioners to believe that violent acts are a legitimate means of accomplishing that goal.

---

[8] Islamists Dominate DOJ's List of Terror Prosecutions. (2011, March 09). *IPT News*. Retrieved from http://www.investigativeproject.org.

[9] A list of these terror acts has already exceeded 15 thousand acts by Radical Islamists since September 11th -is available at http://www.thereligionofpeace.com .

The above can be just added to the practices of Sharia laws in Muslim countries such as killing apostates & sorcerers, hanging gays, Honor Killing, stoning adulteries and using violence against women. The reality is that, it is seldom, in our modern times, to see similar atrocities practiced in the name of any religion other than Islam.

The lack of a powerful denouncement in the Muslim world or by leading Islamic scholars to the formerly mentioned atrocities just adds more salt to the wound. In fact, many-if not most-of Islamic institutes and scholars actually promote such values. These are facts-NOT irrational beliefs. Therefore, labeling fear of Islam "Islamophobia" is clearly inappropriate and misleading.

American health authorities recently have begun conducting tests to evaluate nuclear irradiation in foods imported from Japan. The Japanese people are not labeling these actions that protect the American people from fallout from the distressed Japanese nuclear reactors as "Japano-phobia." They are not complaining that this information gathering is a discriminatory response to Japan.

Similarly, singling out Muslims for evaluation in the counter-terrorism Congressional hearings of Rep. Peter King or in other forms of research is an appropriate response to the facts and dangers of Islamic terrorism.

Failure to take appropriate steps to evaluate a statistically validated danger violates the Constitutional mandate that the federal governmental protect its citizens from "domestic violence." Moreover, the outcomes of ignoring terrorism's Islamic roots can be disastrous. Yet, perhaps because of the American spirit of goodwill plus prevailing winds of political correctness, the intimidation tactic of name-calling with the term "Islamopobia" has been all too effective in inhibiting our political leaders and the American media from pursuing an understanding of the role of religious ideology in Islamic terrorism. The result has been a confused public and muddled understanding within our State Department, Congress, and Department of Homeland Security.

In conclusion, fear of Islam cannot be described as "Islamophobia" as this fear is based on facts and realities rather than irrationality as the word 'phobia' would indicate. American concerns that religious teaching is the primary factor in contemporary terrorism must be heeded, not suppressed by name-calling tactics. Americans who allow themselves to be silenced by "Islamophobia" accusations serve as radical Islam's enablers. Finally, fear from Islam can ONLY be changed when the Muslim world challenges itself to change the above mentioned frightening facts and realities.

Inabilities To See The Dots, Not Merely Failures To Connect Them, Is What Hinders Our Ability To Defeat Radical Islam

After the recent terror attempt on Christmas Day President Barack Obama boldly said that U.S. intelligence officials had "sufficient" information to uncover and disrupt the plot to blow up Flight 253 over Detroit but "failed to connect the dots."[10]

This terror attempt by the Nigerian Muslim Umar Farouk Abdul Mutallab raised several concerns in addition to the above mentioned president's concern about a failure of the US system to connect the dots. There is no single doubt that this event among many others such as the Fort Hood Massacre point to a serious problem in connecting the data together. However, the question that MUST be raised in this context is, have we only failed to connect the dots or have we actually failed to see them to begin with?

Since September 11th and in fact before it we failed miserably to see several clear dots and threats that could have changed our approach to the problem of radical Islam and enhanced our capabilities to fight it.

Some of the dots that we failed to see include the following:

1-We failed to see that in most approved Islamic Sharia books Jihad is predominantly taught in a violent manner. We lived in our dreams and imaginations that Jihad is a peaceful concept instead of doing our homework to learn how it is defined by mainstream Islamic books and media in the Arab and Muslim world. We obviously failed to confront the reality of the problem until the reality confronted us.

---

[10] Grim Obama says terror attack 'dots' not connected. (2010, January 05). Retrieved from http://www.mlive.com/

2-We could not see that the problem of terrorism is clearly linked to a religious ideology. Our political correctness made us unable to see the most apparent thing which is that when thousands of terror attacks and suicide bombings are conducted predominantly by dedicated and devout Muslims who belong to different economic and educational levels, it is imperative to think in the ideology as the number one cause for the problem.

3-We did not recognize that in the present, Sharia Law that allows stoning of women until death for adultery and encourages promoting wars against Non-Muslims to spread Islam is not only violent and inhumane, but also carries a major threat to the future of our civilizations.

4-We were unable to see the clear link between teaching violence in mainstream Islamic jurisprudence books and the development of a violent mind that can ultimately lead to terrorism and barbarism.

5-We kept talking about moderate and radical Islam without setting parameters to define the terminology that we use. This made us support some radical Islamic groups, organizations, and individuals thinking that they are 'moderates'.

6-We failed to comprehend that the lack of a strong reaction in the Muslim street against the terrorists is indicative of a serious cultural problem that encourages and supports radical Islam.

7-We failed to see that allowing radicals who clearly express sympathy and support for our enemy in our military - such as the case of Nidal Hasan, who committed the Fort Hood massacre, is a form of insanity.

8-We could not realize that carrying a US passport or having US citizenship does not grant immunity from becoming radicalized.

9-We could not figure out that Muslims killing one another in extremely barbaric manner in Iraq and Afghanistan cannot be due to or explained by the presence of an Arab Israeli conflict or by the US foreign policy in the Middle East. We failed to ask the basic question: Why Muslims kill one another in such barbaric way?

10- We failed to see that disrespect for the life of non-Muslims as currently taught in many mainstream Islamic jurisprudence books is one if not the main underlying factor behind terrorism. We simply could not see that the barbarism practiced by radical Islam has its roots in what we call "moderate Islam" or Sharia Laws.

In brief, our failure to defeat radical Islam is not simply a failure in connecting the dots and is primarily a failure to see these dots

Is Your Local Mosque 'Moderate' Or 'Radical'?

Ask the Imams of Mosques, the Muslim leaders, and the Islamic organizations in the US and worldwide to sign this declaration (See below)

After the problem of Ground Zero Mosque has escalated it becomes an urgent necessity to distinguish 'Moderate' from 'Radical' Islam.[11] Without making such a distinction the US and the rest of the world will remain divided regarding this issue. Debates about the issue can be endless unless we define the words 'radical' and 'moderate'.

Mosque leaders, Islamic scholars, and organizations who want to be considered Moderates MUST clearly and unambiguously declare the following declaration in their media outlets and on their websites.

I suggest that you send this declaration to Mosque leaders and the Islamic organizations inside the US and worldwide to see if they are ready to accept such a declaration or not.

Please feel free to circulate this newsletter so that we can start a process that allows us to distinguish radical from moderate Islam.

Declaration of Beliefs of Muslim Moderates –

I (We) are Muslims who want contemporary understandings of Islam to replace currently predominant harsh and radical (Salafi/Wahabbi) interpretations of our religion. We therefore declare that:

1 Redda Law, the Sharia Law that allows the killing of Muslims who convert to other faiths, must be banned in Islamic teachings and in Sharia legal doctrine. Islamic countries that practice Sharia must stop the practice of this law and must admit that Freedom of belief and the right to convert to other faith or believe is a basic right that must be given to all Muslims.

2 Current mainstream Sharia doctrines justify the use of violence against women. They encourage men to beat their wives to

---

[11] Altman, A. (2010, August 19). TIME Poll: Majority Oppose Mosque, Many Distrust Muslims. *Time.* Retrieved from http://www.time.com/time/nation/

discipline them. They allow women accused of adultery to be stoned to death. These doctrines are barbarically inhumane, non-egalitarian, and teach Muslim children to be violent. These teachings must be ended by reinterpreting the Islamic text that justifies such violence.

3   Traditional Sharia doctrines teach Muslims that they must engage in war so that Islam will dominate the world. When Islam becomes dominant, Non-Muslims are offered three options: to convert to Islam, to pay Jizzia (a humiliating tax), or to be killed. These doctrines run contrary to modern respect for diversity and for personal freedom of speech and belief. This understanding of Jihad that seeks domination of Islam over other peoples must no longer be regarded as an Islamic value and its teaching as a duty for Muslims must end.
The early Islamic wars known as "Futohaat Islameia" were fought to implement this doctrine of Jihad. These wars therefore should now be regarded as un-Islamic and un-justifiable.

4   Jews are individuals who deserve the same respect accorded to all individuals. They should not be called "pigs and monkeys." The Islamic teaching that Muslims must fight and kill all Jews before the end of days is totally incorrect and unacceptable as it does not exist in the Quran. All teachings that encourage anti-Semitic attitudes, violence or disrespect toward Jews must be declared un-Islamic.

5   Slavery is a crime against humanity. All Sharia laws that justify slavery in our modern times must not be taught any more. Muslim scholars must have a clear and loud voice against slavery.

6   Islamic Sharia laws currently permit the killing homosexuals. These laws also are advocating a crime against our fellow human beings. They must be declared un-Islamic and their implementation must be considered criminal.

Signed,

Dr. Tawfik Hamid

Aug 2010

Comment:

The above violent teachings, which currently are taught in mainstream Islamic books in America, are implemented in countries that allow governance according to Sharia Law. Future Muslim generations must be protected from these destructive doctrines, interpretations and customs.

These violent Sharia doctrines must be replaced with clear and unconditional explanations of why they no longer are valid.

Anything short of a fully clear and unequivocal stand against these doctrines indicates passive approval. Therefore, all Islamic leaders who genuinely consider themselves to be Muslim moderates must post these principles in English and in Arabic in full public view on their websites and declare them in their media outlets.

Failure to publically post and support these principles should be interpreted as clear evidence that a leader's mosque or Islamic organization must be considered radical.

'Intolerance' To Sharia Necessary for Liberty, Freedom

One of the questions being asked is, Should the United States become more tolerant to radical Islamic law (Sharia)?

President Barack Obama's comments to American Muslims at the recent Ramadan dinner at the White House suggest that he believes that the value of "tolerance" was the main driving force that made America a beacon for liberty and equality throughout history.[12]

The president appealed to the American people to honor the memory of the September 11th attacks by hewing to the values of diversity and tolerance. "We will not sacrifice the liberties we cherish or hunker down behind walls of suspicion and mistrust," the president declared.

In another statement the president said, "Americans must cling to the shared belief in religious tolerance and clarity about who their enemies are."

Furthermore, on the ninth anniversary of the greatest mass murder on American soil in the history of our country, far-left, faux-documentarian Michael Moore issued a clarion call to the United States. "If the [ground zero] 'mosque' isn't built," he wrote, "this is no longer America."[13]

In fact, Moore said he was opposed to building the ground zero mosque two blocks from ground zero. "I want it built on ground zero," he wrote.

The president should have had a clear distinction between the religious values that must be respected and those values that must not be granted any form of tolerance.

Those who promote the value of "tolerance" in an absolute form miss that it is simply not possible to be tolerant of every ideology. It is the delicate balance that has preserved the American dream of equality and liberty.

For example, where would we be if the United States was tolerant of slavery? If not good men stood up to be intolerant of such cruelty?

---

[12] Obama, B. (2010, August 13). Religious Tolerance in America: Remarks at IFTAR Dinner. Retrieved from http://www.presidentialrhetoric.com/speeches

[13] Shapiro, B. (2010, September 15). Build the Ground Zero Mosque on Michael Moore. *The Patriot Post.* Retrieved from http://patriotpost.us/opinion

Similarly, "intolerance" of the discrimination against the blacks, the Jews, and women in the American history has been the main foundation for our current freedoms and equality.

It is fair to show tolerance to religious values that do not physically harm or threaten the lives of other people (such as fasting in Ramadan or praying in a mosque). However, showing any tolerance to oppressive barbaric, violent, religions and giving them protection under the umbrella of "religious freedom" is a form of facilitation for criminal acts as those who will practice these values advise killing apostates, stoning women, having slaves in their houses, and killing homosexuals under the name of practicing their religious values.

The United States must show the same level of intolerance to Sharia, which allows the use of violence against women and homosexuals and justifies killing Muslims who convert from Islam to another faith - or no faith at all.

Above all, if President Obama wants to make a true contribution to the debate, he must uphold American values by showing "intolerance" to Sharia.

Approaches To Addressing Radical Islam - What Will Work And What Will Not

The problems of radical Islam have been escalating during the last few decades and have affected the world in diverse ways. On one hand, the socio-religious-political impacts have directly affected our homeland and national security; and on the other hand, they have had a negative impact on our freedoms of expression and the social stability of many countries that have Muslim majorities or significant Muslim minorities. An analysis of the current responses to radical Islam reveals at least five different approaches or schools of thought.

The first approach, which is used by many Muslims as a defensive mechanism for their faith, is to simply deny the existence of any ideological or religious role in the problem. This group typically promotes that Islam is a peaceful religion. This approach cannot work in solving the problem, as it always confronts the reality that almost all approved interpretations of Islamic core text and Islamic jurisprudence books that exist today promote values such as declaring wars to spread the religion, justify killing Muslim apostates, and allow beating women, polygamy, and stoning for adultery. In fact, such an approach makes things worse, as many westerners become angrier when they learn more about the Islamic teachings and recognize the reality that not only do these violent teachings exist, but also that they are unchallenged in mainstream teachings.

The Bashers are the second group, who can only see the violent texts in Islam, its violent practices, and its traditional interpretations to conclude that it is impossible to change or reform it. This group promotes that peaceful Muslims are the ones that do not apply Islam. In other words, they are peaceful despite of - not because of - Islam. For example, a Muslim who does not beat his wife will start beating her if he started to become more religious and implement the mainstream interpretation of the (Quran 4:3) that allows men to beat their women to discipline them. It is hard to explain the motives of the bashers solely on the basis of bigotry, as many of them did not have the same stand against Buddhism or Hedonism. This illustrates that the views of this group are not just an issue of hatred against the 'others' but, rather, a specific fear of certain violent teachings in Islam. Furthermore, it is fair to say that it is virtually impossible to stop criticism of Islam until the mainstream Islamic jurisprudence and interpretation books

clearly stop the discriminatory and inhumane edicts in Islamic (or Sharia) Law. In other words, Islamic teaching needs to change first, before asking this group to stop their criticism of Islam. This group has a problem in that by denying any possibility for reformation within Islam they end any hope in having a realistic solution for the problem. The Bashers simply expose the problem without offering pragmatic solutions for it, which makes many unwilling to accept their views.

The Apologists are the third group, who play a different role by blaming external factors such as socioeconomic and political circumstances (e.g., US foreign policy) for being the cause of the phenomenon of Islamist terrorism. This group completely ignores the role of ideology in causing the problem. Critics of this group raise the point that if this view was correct, why do non-Muslims who live under the same circumstances not become suicide bombers? In other words, why do these external factors selectively choose and affect young Muslims? In addition, the external factors theory failed as it is hard to convince any sane human being that Islamists kill, behead, and explode their fellow Muslims in a barbaric manner because of elements in US foreign policy.

The Idealists are the fourth group, who assume that we must show 'tolerance' to any religion just for being a religion. This group fails as well, as tolerance for Islamic Law simply means intolerance for its victims. In other words, tolerance of Sharia Laws means extreme and sometimes fatal intolerance for apostates, adulterous women, and gays who will be killed with such a law. Idealists have to clarify their position if they are willing to show 'tolerance' to the religious rights of Muslims who practice this barbaric Sharia Law, or respect the religious rights and the lives of the latter groups by showing 'Intolerance' to these Islamic laws. It is insane to show tolerance to cancer cells and normal cells at the same time as the former will kill the latter. The Idealists need to distinguish between tolerating 'belly dancing' under the banner of Cultural Relativism, and tolerating 'stoning' of women until death under the same banner. Tolerating the part of Islam that teaches fasting in Ramadan is completely different from the teachings that promote suppression of women and justify killing homosexuals.

The fifth group uses an un-objective dishonest approach by selectively choosing information to prove their view that there is no ideological basis for the problem. For example, this group uses a peaceful- but an atypical - definition of Jihad to prove that it is a peaceful concept and ignores the more widely used violent definition and usage of the word. Every sane person who will do honest research in Islamic theology and history will recognize that this approach is unscientific and misleading.

Each of the former groups can contribute to solving the problem of radical Islam.

Those who deny the existence of any violent teaching in mainstream Islam must face the unavoidable reality that violent teachings do exist, and are still unchallenged in the mainstream Islamic books. This group needs to provide at least one single mainstream-approved Islam book that negates and theologically refutes the above violent Sharia concepts. As long as this approved book does not exist, the problem will remain, claiming that "Islam is peaceful" without changing the violent teachings is merely unrealistic lip service that aims at deceiving others.

The Bashers need to continue exposing the violent teachings and practices in Islam as exposing such texts and its practices is vital to initiate a true reformation within the religion. However, the bashers can also play a role by declaring that they have no problem of peaceful coexistence with a new Islamic teaching that refutes the violent edicts of Sharia and emphasizes the peaceful aspects of the religion. This will put more responsibility on the shoulders of the Islamic scholars to change the interpretations of the violent texts if they are truly willing to stop "Islamophobia".

The Apologists need to stop the self-flagellation attitude that ignores the ideological component of the problem, as ignoring the role of the ideology impedes efforts for reforming Islam. Muslims will NOT feel the need to reform if others are telling them that the problem is all about the US foreign policy and that it has nothing to do with the religious ideology.

Those who use the Idealistic approach can also contribute to solving the problem by stating that 'tolerance' must only be given to the peaceful teachings that do not harm other human beings and cannot be applied to the religious teachings that discriminate against or threaten the lives of other human beings. Failure to make this distinction can be fatal.

Followers of the un-objective dishonest approach must adopt an honest and scientific approach that addresses the facts without trying to distort or hide them to serve certain agendas. This group can convey a better message by acknowledging the existence of the violent interpretations and stating that that we need to foster the peaceful interpretations so that they dominate the Islamic jargon and teachings.

In conclusion, solving the problem of radical Islam will require us to cooperate with one another rather than fight against each other. The responsibility of solving this problem is a joint responsibility that needs the cooperation of different groups rather than the actions of one single group.

A Challenge To The Ground Zero Mosque Leaders

Controversy is heating up on plans for building a giant 15-story Islamic community center and mosque on Ground Zero.

Journalist Thomas Friedman[14] and many others including New York's mayor consider the building of a mosque proof of American tolerance that will have positive impact on the Muslim world.[15]

Yet others, myself included, say to the contrary that Radical Muslims and their sympathizers want to raise the giant mosque as a sign of victory of the Jihadists over the US.[16] Such a mosque would signal to the Islamic world that Jihadists' overt and covert attacks against America and its interests are succeeding and should be continued.

Allowing the erection of a Ground Zero Mosque would enable Jihadists to extend their narrative of success: "First our 9/11 attacks destroyed the World Trade center, symbol of American power, and now the mosque symbolizes Islam's rise to power within America."

How the public to know which side is correct? Fortunately, Friedman's hypothesis that the Islamic world respects religious tolerance can be tested.

One test would be to ask Mosque leaders request that Saudi Arabian leaders reciprocally allow churches and synagogues to be built in their country.

A second test would be to ask questions that would clarify if the mosque's proponents are truly moderates or in fact Jihadist radicals disguised as moderates. Americans who defend the building of this mosque could ask the

---

[14] Friedman, T. (2010, August 03). Broadway and the Mosque. *The New York Times.* Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/

[15] Adams, R. (2010, August 04). Bloomberg defends mosque as a symbol of New York's tolerance [Blog Post]. The Guardian. Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/world

[16] Sidman, F. (2010, June 08). Rally Against the Ground Zero Mosque Retrieved from http://frontpagemag.com

mosque's Islamic proponents to publicly post to the media and on their websites answers to the following questions:

1- Islamic Law (Sharia Law) states that Muslims who convert to Christianity must be killed (Redda Law), women in adulterous relationships must be stoned to death, men can beat their wives to discipline them, and homosexuals should be killed.

   Are you willing to recommend that these traditional Muslim practices be banned and to condemn countries such as Saudi Arabia and Iran which accept such practices as religiously mandated?

2- Several Muslim texts declare that "Jews are pigs and monkeys"[17] and that killing Jews before "end days" is a religious duty for Muslims.[18]

   Are you willing to declare that these texts must be changed and/or reinterpreted and that Muslim teaching of such anti-Semitic values must stop?

3- Muslim texts that is approved by ALL the schools of Jurisprudence in Islam (Shafeii, Hanbali, Maleki, and Hanafi) state that Muslims must declare wars against non-Muslims to spread Islam and those they conquer must either convert to Islam, pay Jizzia (a humiliating tax) or be killed.

   Are you willing to declare that this belief, used in "*Foutohhat Islameia*" the early wars to spread Islam and praised currently in much of the Muslim world, is un-Islamic and unacceptable?[19]

Mosque leaders issue statements such as that 'Islam is the religion of peace,' 'Islam respects freedom of religion,' 'Islam is the religion that gave them their rights,' or 'Islam is not anti-Semitic.' Their answers to the

---

[17] (Qur'an 5:60) Shall I point out to you something much worse than this by the treatment it received from Allah (The Jews), those who incurred the curse of Allah and His wrath, those of whom some He transformed into monkeys and pigs, those who worshipped evil - these are (many times) worse in rank, and far more astray from the even path!"

[18] Littman, D. (2006, July 20). The Charter of Hamas and the UN. Retrieved from http://archive.frontpagemag.com

[19] Richard, G. (2006, November 19). Primer on Islamic imperialism. Retrieved from http://www.americanthinker.com

questions above about Sharia teachings would clarify if it would be unfair to call these leaders Jihadist Islamic radicals, or if in fact their statements about Islam are misleading propaganda.

Are Islamic Mosque advocates willing to declare publicly, in English and in Arabic, that their answers to these three questions are yes? If so, let the mosque proceed. If not, plans to build a shrine to Islam on the grounds of the World Trade Center are contrary to America's values should be halted immediately.

Shall The Us Start Fighting Terrorism In 'Brainistan'?

The war on terror and the US military confrontation with Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan is considered to be one of the longest wars in our modern history.[20]

It has actually surpassed WWII in duration. The jihadist-related terrorism phenomenon has not been defeated yet, 'Home Grown Radicalism' in the US is increasing in the last couple of years, and the Taliban is regaining power and killing more US troops.[21] This state of affairs should lead us to think that the US may be fighting the correct war but in the wrong locations.[22]

Traditionally, military confrontations occur in a physical territory or a geographically describable piece of land and ends with military control over this territory. The global nature of the jihadist phenomenon and its ability to span the globe from Indonesia to Spain and from Russia to the US makes it very difficult - if not virtually impossible - to confront it only at a territorial level. Furthermore, the use of the internet to transmit radical teachings by someone like Al-Awlaqui in Yemen to effect Major Nidal Hasan - who conducted the Fort Hood massacre in Texas and Faisal Shahzad - who recently attempted to explode a car bomb in Times Square in NYC - add another dimension to the problem and further support the idea that we need to think outside traditional warfare tactics and a territorial way thinking when we deal with the phenomenon of Islamist radicalism and terrorism.

When we look deeper into the phenomenon of terrorism we need to ask ourselves: What makes a person decide to go get a bomb or a weapon just to kill some innocent people without achieving any materialistic gain for themselves? In other words, what happens in the brain of such an individual to make them take such a destructive, frequently self-destructive, decision?

---

[20] Bergen, P. (2011) *The Longest War: The Enduring Conflict between America and Al-Qaeda.* Free Press

[21] *Bolderson. C. (2010, September 22).* The struggle to tackle home-grown Islamic radicalism in the US. *BBC News.* Retrieved from http://www.bbc.co.uk/news

[22] Afghan Roadside Bombs Killing More U.S. Troops. (2011, January 26). *CBS News.* Retrieved from http://www.cbsnews.com/stories.

Studies in physiology tell us that an impulse(s) has to originate in the mind of this individual that will ultimately make them make such a decision and take such an action. This impulse could represent an impulse of hatred, revenge, animosity, or other forms of negative feelings toward others.

Hence, the real territory in the war on terror is actually the brain ("Brainistan"), and our real challenge is to fight this impulse in the minds of these individuals and to replace it with an impulse of love, forgiveness, and humility.

Electrical impulses in the brain that make an individual choose the path of violence over the path of peace can be either nourished or inhibited via education, ideology, cultural behaviors, and other factors that affect the psychology of a human being.

Humans are born equal. One of the main differences between us is the way and the quality of the education we receive. If we acquired an education that promotes love and harmony it is likely that we will become good human beings. On the contrary, if our education and upbringing created hatred toward others, suppressed our human conscience, and created a feeling of superiority above others, the outcome can be completely different.

In **'Brainistan''** the tools of winning the war on terror are approaches to education that encourage critical thinking, uphold the use of our human conscience, and ultimately teach us how to be able to love others irrespective of their religious backgrounds and views. The main challenge that faces us in 'Brainstan' is, on one hand, to create an impulse of love and tolerance toward others in the minds of the youngsters in the Muslim world to protect them from becoming terrorists, and on the other hand, to suppress the existent impulses of hate in the minds of those who have been already radicalized. This does not in any way mean that we ignore or underestimate the physical nature of the threat posed by the terrorists, but mainly points out that our confrontation in this war has to be extended beyond the physical territory in Afghanistan or Pakistan to include and give more focus to fighting it in "Brainistan" as well.

Apologetic Attitudes Towards Radical Islam Aggravate It

Ignoring a problem or trying to find justification for the problem instead of confronting it can only make things worse. For example, if someone disregarded the start of a fire in his house, or a doctor ignored the beginning signs of cancer in the body, the outcome would be disastrous.

Overwhelming evidence supports the view that a radical and lethal form of Islam has been growing in the Muslim world since the late seventies. The Iranian Islamic revolution, the application of inhumane Sharia rules in several parts of the Muslim world, and the growing threat of Islamic terrorism are concrete evidence of the rising of a major threat to the world's security and harmony.

Failure to recognize and confront this threat (or Islamism) at its early stages has resulted in several devastating consequences such as September 11th and the many other atrocities conducted by radical Muslims all over the world.

Some apologists thought that ignoring the ideological component of the problem of Islamic Radicalism, would appease the Muslim world and prevent a possible clash of civilizations. However, by adopting such a defenseless attitude the apologists actually made things worse and increased the possibility for such a clash of civilizations to happen.

The impact of ignoring the role of **ideology** in creating Islamic Radicalism has resulted in the following three outcomes:

1- The apologetic attitude towards Radical Islam has impeded reformation efforts within the Muslim world. Ignoring the role Ideology played in creating the problem has made reformation within Islam simply unnecessary. The Muslim world is unlikely to consider changing violent interpretations of the religious text as long as western apologists insist ideology played no role in creating the problem. In other words, by ignoring the truth there is no incentive for Muslims to make any changes in the traditional interpretations of their religion. Criticisms of the violent interpretations of Islam are needed to encourage the Muslim world to make a change in such interpretations and to adopt more moderate understanding of the religion.

2- The apologetic attitudes toward Islamic radicalism encouraged Jihadists and terrorists to attack more because they recognized that whatever they do Western apologists will find justifications. The same applies to those who practice stoning of women as part of Sharia Law and the Western apologists who claim that Sharia Law is compatible with human rights! To make it clearer, why should someone change his violent behavior if everyone is telling him that it is 'peaceful'?

3- The apologetic attitudes towards Radical Islam have made many policy makers in the West unable to make appropriate decisions to deal with it. Postulating Non-ideological reasons for the problem and ignoring the obvious ideological factors have mislead many leaders and directed their efforts to the wrong cause(s) of the problem.

The integration of the above outcomes of the apologetic attitudes to Radical Islam has given more fuel to the fire of Islamic Radicalism and actually made things worse. If the apologists for radical Islam were honest enough to admit the role of the Ideology, appropriate steps and measures to prevent violent atrocities could have been taken years ago. Ignoring the true cause of the problem has only made things worse.

The rising number of people who have a negative perception of Islam and the recent vote in Switzerland to ban the Minarets is clear evidence of the failure of the apologetic attitudes to improve the image of Islam.[23] Addressing the problem of Radical Islam in an honest & scientific manner and dealing with it with wisdom was and is still the best way to go.

---

[23] Deane, C. & Fears, D. (2006, March 9). Negative Perception Of Islam Increasing: Poll Numbers in U.S. Higher Than in 2001. *The Washington Post.* Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com

Reformation Of Islam

Can Fresh Interpretations Of Islamic Text Prevent A Possible "Clash Of Civilizations?"

Since 9/11, the possibility of a clash of civilizations has become an unavoidable area of discussion among intellectuals as well as the general public. The inaction of Islamic scholars around the world to those who interpret the religion's sacred texts to further the influence of extremism undoubtedly increases the likelihood of such a clash. The war declared by jihadists on the free world has resulted in the killing and torturing of thousands of people. This has ranged from terror attacks, and the murder of innocent victims in the name of Islam, to paralyzing vital cities such as Mumbai. All such events share the common involvement of Islamic groups that are fueled by ideologies of hatred and violence.

The passive attitude of many Muslims and Islamic scholars has aggravated the problem because this passivity is interpreted by the jihadists - correctly or incorrectly - as a permission for terrorist activity. What message do these scholars convey when they issue a fatwa of apostasy against Salman Rushdie for writing a novel or when they issue other fatwas against many modern Islamic reformers without issuing a similar one against Bin Laden and the terrorists? As an ex-jihadist, I believe that such a fatwa labeling terrorists as apostates can prevent many young Muslims from pursuing the path of terror.

Islamic scholars need to start teaching certain phrases in the Quran differently. There are certain phrases and expressions in the Islamic text that have the capacity to encourage violence unless that text is taught in peaceful way. For example, there are verses in the Quran about killing infidels and idolatries, as well as fighting Jews and Christians.[1] These include the well-known verse of the sword that says "...slay the Idolatries wherever you find them"(Quran 9:5). Jihadists simply use such verses to create a mindset of hatred and violence toward others.

Current mainstream books of Islamic jurisprudence add more fuel to the fire by noting that it is an obligation for the Muslim Umma to declare wars on

---

[1] (Quran 9:29) Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth, (even if they are) of the People of the Book, until they pay the Jizya with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued

non-Muslim nations until the people of these nations convert to Islam. According to ALL accepted schools of Islamic jurisprudence, non-Muslims are to be offered conversion to Islam, to pay a Jizzia (humiliating tax), or to be killed. Bin Laden was therefore not inventing a new rule when he offered the US subjugation to Islamic rule (in order to stop terrorism).[2]

The jihadists are responsible for their acts of violence, but so too are our Islamic scholars for teaching such jurisprudence and not changing it. These same scholars, who loudly proclaim that "Islam is a religion of peace," still teach that Jews are pigs and monkeys. For example, in Friday prayer service on Jan 9 2009, inside the al-Azhar Mosque, a 1,000-year-old center of religious learning, the preacher Sheik Eid Abdel Hamid Youssef described the Jews as: "Monkeys and Pigs" "God has inflicted the Muslim nation with a people who God has become angry at and who He cursed so he made monkeys and pigs out of. They killed prophets and messengers and sowed corruption on earth. They are the most evil on earth."

a people whom God has become angry at and whom he cursed so he made monkeys and pigs out of them.[3] They killed prophets and messengers and sowed corruption on Earth. They are the most evil on Earth." This anti-Semitic view is not solely that of this preacher, but rather is a widespread teaching articulated by many Islamic scholars that is derived from mainstream Islamic books.[4]

One of the ways to solve some of the aforementioned theological problems is to look deeply into the Quranic text itself. ALL verses that order believers to declare wars on non-believers or to use violence against infidels use the suffixes Al or Alazhina (meaning "The") before the word "Infidel." The use of this expression really applies more to a certain stage in history when early Muslims were fighting with other tribes. The difference in Arabic between kill "Man Kafar" (any Infidel) and Kill "Al-Kafereen" (the Infidels) is like the difference between visiting "a white house" and visiting "the white house" in Washington! Therefore, emphasizing the meaning of "The" in the Quranic verses can serve to better prevent many young Muslims from pursuing the path of generalized violence. Without teaching the text in this manner, we actually allow radicals to use such texts to win the hearts and minds of young Muslims.

---

[2] Warrick, J. (2007, September 8). In a New Video, Bin Laden Predicts U.S. Failure in Iraq. *Washington Post.* Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com

[3] Naggar. M.(2009, January 9). Rage Over Gaza in Friday Prayers [Blog Post]. *The New York Times.* Retrieved from http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com

[4] Hamid, T. (2008). Inside Jihad: Understanding and Confronting Radical Islam. Abdelhamid.

It is hard to deny the presence of inflammatory statements against the Jews in our Islamic text. The Quran uses at least 5 different expressions that describe certain groups of Jews in different historical contexts. The first of these is Yahood, or certain tribes in the Arabian Peninsula during the early stages of Islam who, according to Islamic history, had a conflict with Mohamed (Quran 5:64; 9:30). Others are AlaZhina Hadu, which are those who returned back to God (Quran 7:156), and Bani Israel, which refers to Children of Israel (Quran 44:30). The fourth is Ashab Al-Sabt (Quran 4:47), which was a village that disobeyed Moses and the Torah, and the fifth is Ashab Mosa (Quran 26:61), Israelites who crossed the sea with Moses.

All of these Arabic expressions are interpreted and translated simply as "Jews." However, this incorrectly targets all Jews throughout history, even those in the present day. It is essential to teach the proper context of any text in order to better curb the influence of radical Islam. For example, most of the criticism in the Quran is directed toward the "Yahood" and to "Ashab Al-Sabt" rather than to the Children of Israel.

In fact, Muslim scholars who insult the Children of Israel must realize that most of the messengers described in the Quran belong to these Children. Therefore, insulting all the Children of Israel by labeling Jews as pigs and monkeys is an insult to these messengers. Such an insult is considered a grave sin in Islam. In fact, the Quran actually has positive verses about the Children of Israel (Quran 2:47; 44:32; 45:16).

In addition, the Quran forbids judging someone by the mistakes of someone else (Quran 6:164; 17:15; 35:18; 39:7). Therefore, judging and hating the current Jews based upon possible historical conflicts between some of them and Mohamed is - in actuality -un-Islamic and is undoubtedly against the teaching of the Quran. The same goes for judging all Jews based solely on the grievances many Arabs have with the Israeli government. Applying the verses about the Yahood or Ashab Al-Sabt to all Jews and, on the other hand, limiting the usage of the more positive ones about the Children of Israel in Islamic religious textbooks, has resulted in an unprecedented wave of anti-Semitism in the Muslim world.[5]

In short, if Islamic scholars issue a fatwa labeling the terrorists as apostates, start limiting the use of "The" in violent Islamic texts to ONLY a historical context, and stop cursing all Jews as well as calling them pigs and monkeys, a possible war of civilizations can be better avoided.

---

[5] Samber, S. (n.d.). New Report on Anti-Semitism in Arab World Called "Bone-Chilling" Retrieved from http://www.interfaithfamily.com/news_and_opinion

Passive Attitude Toward Violent Islamic Text Is Destructive

The recent growth of cases involving home-grown Islamic radicalism in the US raises an important question.[6] How should Muslim leaders address the religious text that is used to promote violence among young Muslims?

According to several reports, Mustafa Abu Maryam who is youth coordinator at the I.C.N.A. Center, an affiliate of the Islamic Circle of North America, in Alexandria, Virginia defended the mosque's activities, saying discussion of fighting against others (jihad) had no place in the congregation or the youth program.[7]

This passive approach regarding concepts such as fighting against others (i.e. violent Jihad) did not protect the young Muslims from the radicalization process. Reciting the peaceful verses in the Quran without addressing and confronting the aggressive teaching and refuting it with new interpretations is an inefficient approach. Being passive in this situation means tacit approval of the violent interpretations.

It would have been much better if Abu Maryam addressed the issue of Jihad, rejected its violent interpretations in mainstream Muslim books, and provided new interpretations for it instead of remaining passive and avoiding its discussion.

Under-valuing human life is a main psychological and ideological factor that gives justification for the terrorists to do their barbaric acts. Without changing the values that under-value human life in mainstream Islamic books, it is virtually impossible to prevent the phenomenon of terrorism. Some of these values are currently promoted in mainstream Islamic books inside the US (See below).

The following are just two examples from a well-known, modern and best-selling Islamic jurisprudence book (Minhaj Al-Muslim) to illustrate how human life of Non-Muslims is disrespected and considered lower than Muslim's lives. These are found in the mainstream modern Islamic books that are used to educate young Muslims. According to this book:

---

[6] Macedo, D. Homegrown Terror on the Rise in 2009. (2009, December 14) *Fox News.* Retrieved from http://www.foxnews.com/us/

[7] Americans' Arrests in Pakistan a 'Wake-Up Call' for Virginia Muslims. (2010, April 22). *PBS New Hour.* Retrieved from http://www.pbs.org/newshour

1- Value of the life of Non-Muslims is less than a Muslim: "A Muslim is not killed for a disbeliever nor a free person for a slave. This is due to the Prophet's statement, "A Muslims is not killed for a disbeliever". (Ahmed and At-tirmithi and it is Hasan [the word Hasan in the last statement means a good Hadith based on the level of accuracy of the Hadith).[8]

2- Blood Money (Compensation given to the family of the victim in cases of murder): "If the victim was a non-Muslim under the protection of the Islamic state (Dhimmi), whether he was a Jew, a Christian, or of some other religion, his blood money is half the blood money of the Muslim. The blood money of their females is half the blood money of their males. This is due to the Prophet's statement: the blood money of the disbeliever is half the blood money of the (Muslim) man." (At-Tirmithi and it is Hasan) [the word Hasan in the last statement means a good Hadith based on the level of accuracy of the Hadith)[9]

The author, a Lecturer in the Noble Prophetic Masjid (Mosque) in Saudi Arabia, stated in the introduction of this book: "I spared no effort in investigating and searching for the most sound opinion of the eminent scholars such as Imams Abu Hanifah, Malik, Ash Shafl'i, and Ahmad, may Allah have mercy on them all, when there was no conclusive text or apparent proof from the Book of Allah the Almighty and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (S) for a topic." Note: This means that the book represents the mainstream views in Islamic Sharia as the above mentioned four scholars represent all the approved Mazthhab or School of Jurisprudence in Sunni Islam.

In addition, this book is widely distributed all over the world and translated into several languages. In fact, it is published in London, Houston, and New York as well.

The book has been described as follows by the publisher (A respected Islamic publishing house) "A comprehensive work by the great scholar Abu Bakr Jabir Al-Jaza'ri comprising all that concerns a Muslim regarding creed, manners, providing direction for righteous character, acts of worship, and dealings with his colleagues."[10]

---

[8] Note: according to the same book a Muslim should be killed if he intentionally kills another Muslim.

[9] Al-Jaza'iry, A. B. (2001). Minhaj Al-Muslim (The Way of the Muslim), 2 Vols. Dar-us-Salam Publications. [p: 492-493].

[10] Al-Jaza'iry, A. B. (2001). *Minhaj Al-Muslim (The Way of the Muslim), 2 Vols.* Dar-us-Salam Publications.

The book is sold and distributed on Amazon.com and on many mainstream Islamic web sites such as OnlineIslamicStore.com and IslamicBookStore.com.[11]

The book has also been described by IBS-Canada (Division of ISNA Canada) as follows:[12]

"This book Minhaj - Al -Muslim, or "The way of a Muslim" is a very important book composed by the great scholar Abu Bakr Jabir Al - Jaza'iri, presently lecturer in the Noble Prophetic Masjid and former teacher in Al-Madinah University who worked there till his retirement. This book comprises all that concerns the righteous Muslim regarding his creed, manners, providing direction for righteous character and acts of worship, and dealings with his colleagues."

Giving peaceful lectures during Friday prayers to be perceived by the West as moderate while remaining silent against such aggressive teaching is not only a passive form of endorsing this teaching but is also a fruitless and deceiving approach to the West. If Muslim leaders are truly willing to prevent radicalism of the young Muslims they must confront these violent areas and provide new theology or interpretations for it. Staying passive against this inhumane teaching is not enough.

---

[11] Al-Jaza'iry, A. B. (2001). *Minhaj Al-Muslim (The Way of the Muslim), 2 Vols.* Dar-us-Salam Publications.

[12] The book can be found at http://www.islamicbookservice.ca/

A Message to the Muslim World

Many in the Muslim world repeatedly express anger when Islam and its founder are criticized. This anger-while unacceptable-could be fully understandable, especially when we take into consideration the sensitivity of talking about religious issues. However, it is vital that the Muslim world realize that most-if not all- the criticism of Islam and of the prophet is based on what traditional and mainstream Islamic books teach. In other words, it is unfair to say that criticism of Islam has been merely based on or motivated by bias against the religion, especially when we see thousands of Mosques and Islamic schools built in and sometimes supported by Western countries. We have actually seen much more limitations placed on the rights of minorities to build their religious temples or to practice their religion freely in Muslim countries than in the West. For example, Christians are not permitted to have their bibles with them in Saudi Arabia while Muslims have complete freedom to have the Quran in the US and European countries. Muslims MUST ask themselves who actually discriminates against the other, is it the West who is discriminating against Islam or is it that the Muslim world is discriminating against people of other faiths? Who needs to change and show more tolerance for religious minorities, the West or the Muslim world?

In addition, when the Taliban destroyed the historical Buddha statues the Muslim world was virtually silent, which may indicate a form of acceptance for this barbaric act. The Muslims MUST ask themselves, what would they have felt if the Buddhists- for example- destroyed the Muslim Holy mosque in Mecca?

Furthermore, Muslims enjoy full freedom in the West to preach to non-Muslims and to convert them to Islam. On the contrary, Muslims-in general-become very furious if they discover that non-Muslims are proselytizing to Muslims to convert them to other faiths. In fact, proselytizing to Muslims is illegal in many Islamic countries. The Muslim world needs to question itself. Again, is it the West discriminating against them, or is it the Muslims discriminating against the others.

The Muslim world needs to realize that the negative image of Islam in the West has been created by the Muslims themselves.

When mainstream Islamic books of Sira (Biography of Prophet Mohamed that was essentially written by Muslims) teach that prophet Mohamed took a

woman as booty in the war after forcing her to see her father and brother decapitated.[13] Do Muslims expect the world to tell them that.... Wow, this is a wonderful model for tolerance!

When we teach in several Islamic books including Sahih (accurate) Hadith that prophet Mohamed said that he was ordered by Allah to fight the entire world until they subjugate to Islam[14] and when we teach in current approved Sharia books that Muslims have to wage wars against Non-Muslims and offer them to choose one of the following options: to convert to Islam, to pay humiliating tax (Jizzia), or to be killed….Do we expect others to tell us that Islam is the religion of peace? I wonder if non -Muslims declared war against Muslims to spread their religion and offered Muslims to convert out of Islam (to the new religion), to pay a humiliating tax to the invaders, or to be killed…Will Muslims consider this to be a peaceful act?

When our traditional Islamic books mention that prophet Mohamed ordered his followers to torture his opponents.[15] Does the Muslim world expect that the world will tell us that the prophet of Islam was sent as a mercy for mankind?

When we teach in Al-Butchery [mainstream Hadith book for Sunni Muslims] that prophet Mohamed married and had sex with a 9 year old child[16] and used to bring dolls for her so that she can play with them[17] or that the

---

[13] Tabari IX:137 "Allah granted Rayhanah of the [Jewish] Qurayza to His Messenger as booty [but only after she had been forced to watch him decapitate her father and brother, seen her mother hauled off to be raped, and her sisters sold into slavery]."

[14] Bukhari: Volume 4, Book 52, Number 196

[15] Tabari VIII:122

Ishaq:515"The Prophet gave orders concerning Kinanah to Zubayr, saying, 'Torture him until you root out and extract what he has. So Zubayr kindled a fire on Kinanah's chest, twirling it with his fire stick until Kinanah was near death. Then the Messenger gave him to Maslamah, who beheaded him."

[16] Sahih Al-Buchary Volume 7, Book 62, Number 64:

Narrated 'Aisha: that the Prophet married her when she was six years old and he consummated his marriage when she was nine years old, and then she remained with him for nine years (Note: according to Islamic books, Mohammed was above 50 years old when he married this young child).

[17] Sahih Al-Buchary Volume 8, Book 73, Number 151:

prophet used to have sex with his 9 wives in one night.[18] Do we expect the world to tell us that the prophet was a role model for mankind? If mentioning these stories are considered an insult to Islam then Al-Buchary - not the West-should take responsibility for insulting the religion.

When non-Muslims realize that Muslims who convert away from Islam must be killed by *Redda Law* (killing the apostates) and that this law is approved by ALL schools of Islamic jurisprudence based on Hadith of prophet Mohamed. Shall we expect them after this to sing praises for how Islam respects the value of religious freedom?[19]

When non-Muslims read in our current mainstream books that stoning of adulterous women is acceptable in our modern times,[20] and that it is permissible for a man to beat his wife to discipline her,[21] and that polygamy is permissible for men up to four wives ....Do we expect that the world will tell us that Islam is the religion that gave women their rights?

When non-Muslims read in some Hadith books (sayings of prophet Mohamed) that prophet have said that if the wife licked a wound pouring pus from her husband she would (still) not have fulfilled his right (as a

---

Narrated 'Aisha:

I used to play with the dolls in the presence of the Prophet, and my girlfriends also used to play with me. When Allah's Apostle used to enter (my dwelling place) they used to hide themselves, but the Prophet would call them to join and play with me. (The playing with the dolls and similar images is forbidden, but it was allowed for 'Aisha at that time, as she was a little girl, not yet reached the age of puberty.) (Fateh-al-Bari page 143, Vol.13)

[18] Narrated Anas: The Prophet used to go round (have sexual relations with) all his wives in one night, and he had nine wives. (Hadith Sahih; Sahih Albuchary Volume 7, Book 62, Number 14: Chapter of Marriage or Allnikah).

[19] Sahih Al-Bukhari (52:260) - "...The Prophet said, 'If somebody (a Muslim) discards his religion, kill him.' "

[20] Al-Jaza'iry, A. B. (2001). *Minhaj Al-Muslim (The Way of the Muslim), 2 Vols.* Dar-us-Salam Publications. p. 505

[21] Quran (4:34): Men are superior to women because Allah has given them more preference to women, and because they financially support them. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient, and guard in (the husband's) absence what Allah would have them guard. As to those women on whose part you fear that they do not obey you, admonish them, avoid making sex with them (as a form of punishment), and beat them; but if they return to obedience, seek not against them Means (of annoyance): For Allah is Most High, great (above you all).

husband)[22] and when they hear Fatwas from some of our leading scholars that drinking the urine of the prophet was a blessing for the disciples of Mohamed.[23] What do we expect their reaction to this form of teaching? Shall we expect words of admiration or criticism?

When we teach in our approved Islamic books that early Muslims army invaded many countries to spread Islam and that the agreement between the second Caliphate and non-Muslim minorities in these countries (Al-Uhda Al-Umareia) did not allow non-Muslims to sit while Muslims were standing and did not allow non-Muslims to raise their voices while crying when following their dead, do we expect that others to be speaking loudly about the 'tolerance' of Islam?

It is important that the Muslim world realize that they need to stop discrimination against its non-Muslim minorities and that the negative image of Islam was not created by the West but by Muslims themselves. Denying that the above teachings exist just makes things worse as such teachings do exist in our Islamic books. The best way to stop criticism of Islam is to admit that violent teachings exist and that Islamic scholars must work on providing modern ways for interpreting and understanding their religion instead of accusing those who expose the problem and raise valid questions of being Islamophobes.

---

[22] Reported by Ahmad (3:159) and others. It's of narration is declared to be good by al-Mundhiree in at-Targheeb wat-Tarheeb (3:75): The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said, "It is not right that any human being should prostrate to another human being I would have ordered the woman to prostrate to her husband due to the greatness of his rights upon her. By Him in whose Hand is my soul, if from his foot to the crown of his head there was a wound pouring forth pus, and she (the wife) came and licked that, then she would (still) not have fulfilled his right."

[23] Azuri, L. (2007, June 13). Media Uproar Following Egyptian Mufti's Fatwa on Companions of the Prophet Muhammad Being Blessed by Drinking His Urine. Retrieved from http://sweetness-light.com/archive

An open letter the Second in command of Al-Qaeda

Dr. Al-Zawherri, many years ago, as a student at University of Cairo Medical School Mosque, when I joined Jammaa Islamia, I sat in front of you, and listened fervently to you sermons. At that time, I looked up to you as my mentor who was going to guide me through the correct path to the divine. I cannot forget your fiery speeches, enthusiastic, extraordinary charisma and your dedication to the cause of Islam.

Once, I remember you placing your hand over my shoulder, telling me that my generation is the hope for Islam. I was truly captivated; I was so young and mislead by your appealing charm as many others were. As I looked deeply into your eyes, I hoped that you would lead me to find my path to spirituality. Instead, you led me into the corridor of hatred and violence. I was deceived by your sharp authoritative look and your powerful e speeches, but after all, I was fortunate to recognize early enough that I was on the wrong course.

You taught me and other members of the JI that the west is evil because it does not implement Sharia law. You explained that they allow women to dress as they wish, and provide them full freedom. Back then, I was deceived by your statements. But let me ask you now which is preferable; the western system that respects basic values of freedom for women or the Salafi Islamic system that you follow which suppresses and justifies beating women, allows polygamy, permits slavery and still promotes stoning women to death for adultery?

Dr Al-Zawaheri, after all these years, I discovered that the values that you promoted for 'modesty' of our Muslim women are not sincerely values of modesty as you claimed, but rather immoral means to enslave them. According to our Sharia system, a Muslim woman engaged sexually with a man on her free will, should be punished by death, yet, if a man sold the same woman as a slave to the same man to engage in sex with him - against her free will - it is until now acceptable in our Islamic laws. Do you consider that moral or just? Obviously, the entire issue is not modesty for Muslim women as you claimed but rather a way to control them.

Through your video tapes, you try to sway the west against America, blaming the "evil" US foreign policies against the Islamic world. If the US is truly as wicked as you claim, it could have used its devastating military power to rape the land of Arabia and get its oil for free as our Islamic

ancestors did under the banner of spreading Islam! Or probably is it American evil foreign policy that saved millions of Muslims in Kosovo and is trying to do the same in Darfur? Or is it the evil Americans who saved Kuwait from the Iraqi vicious despot Saddam Hussein?

If it's only the "others" causing the Muslims misery, why then didn't you ever protest against the Pakistani Mullas who issued a fatwa to justify for Pakistani Muslim soldiers to rape the Bangladeshi women as concubines in the name of Allah during the war between the two countries in the 1970s? Is that because of the damage done to Muslims by the west?

Through your publicized videotapes you claim that your Muslim "brothers" suffer in Iraq. Don't your Muslim "brothers" suffer in Iraq primarily because your Sunni Islamic thugs "brothers" are torturing, killing other Muslims and mutilating the dead bodies of their fellow Muslim Sunni "brothers"? Maybe If you ordered your Muslim Sunni "brothers" to suspend their barbaric acts, the Iraqi people would enjoy the fruit of democracy that was offered to them with American soldiers' blood, scarifying their lives to provide them with such dignified opportunity.

Dr. Al-Zawaherri, in many of your tapes, you maintain that Israel is oppressing the Palestinians. You should know that, the Jewish state that you so despise allows Muslims to build Mosques and practice their religion freely. Compare it to Saudi Arabia which denies basic rights to Christians or other non-Muslims to build churches or practice freely their religion. Compare it to your Taliban system which destroyed the historical statues of Buddha. You are merely lucky that your evil acts against civilized people have not been countered by destroying our sacred places in Mecca and Medina.

I vividly remember you teaching us in our JI Mosque that the Jews are the world's worst enemies; that they are "pigs and monkeys." To my pleasant surprise, I must share with you that I later found out that unlike you and your followers, Jews have brought immense constructive contribution to our civilization.

You repeatedly taught us that the US and the West are oppressing Muslims. I used to believe it when I first met you, but after living in the West and having seen how Muslims are treated in the US, I can openly say to you; Dr. Al-Zawaherri, you are a liar! The US has allowed Muslims to build mosques, to practice freely our religion, to enjoy economic opportunities, to thrive in their education as any American citizen does. US constitution simply does not allow discrimination against minority. If this is what you call "oppressed Muslims in the west" then I wish Islamic systems like Saudi Arabia, the Taliban and Iran treat their non-Muslims in the same way US treats its Muslim population!

Dr. Al-Zawaherri, your heinous attacks on innocents all over the world have deprived our world of tremendous amount of resources as an attempt to protect ourselves from people like you. So instead of diverting the money of the world to build, to cure disease and to improve the environment, we now need to direct a major portion of our budget to protect our nations from your evil acts.

I am asking you to remember the orphans who lost their parents because of you, the parents who lost their children because of you, and the innocents who still suffer because of you. Use your conscience if it still exists and remember them even for a moment as an opportunity to evaluate your deeds.

After all these years, I tell you vociferously that if "the hope of Islam" is cultivated by the damage you cause to the world then never blame anyone for questioning Islam's nature, genuine motives and criticizing it.

Dr. Al-Zawaherri, I must confess that I am not sure whether I should blame only solely you for your crimes or should I also hold responsible the entire culture and our religious system that have been guiding you and millions other to hate the "others". Should I only blame you or also my fellow Muslims who have been passively watching your dreadful actions with minimal expression of dismay over your brutality? Or maybe I should also blame those in the West who still try to find irrational justifications for your terrorist acts instead of confronting its true cause which is the Ideology that changed an innocent child that you were, into a beast who deprived others of their life.

Dr. Al-Zawaherri -as a surgeon your hands were supposed to heal and help reduce suffering, but instead, you caused anguish to thousands if not millions of our human race. Therefore, the blood on your hands is the blood of your victims rather than your patients during surgical operations.

Now, I live too far from you geographically, and more importantly, ideologically. Unlike you, based on fresh interpretation of the Quran, I preach a message of love and respect to all humans; regardless of their religion, race or nationality. It is a peaceful and non-conventional interpretation which attempts to heal the world that you have injured. One day, the Muslim world will have to decide if they should follow my path or your path. Our paths cannot converge.

Dr. Al-Zawaherri....Awake before it is too late!
Your old colleague in the JI
Dr. Tawfik Hamid

Killing Sorcerers for Practicing 'Witchcraft' in Islam: Another View

A few weeks ago the Saudi religious authority was going to behead a Lebanese TV psychic because he had been convicted of practicing witchcraft.[24] While to us this seems ludicrous, the current Sharia Law justifies and promotes killing "witchcrafts."[25]

It is vital -an innocent person could be killed based on this law-to explore new and different ways to look at the issue of killing sorcerers in Islam.

First of all, it is important to clarify that killing witchcrafts has NEVER been mentioned in the Quran itself. The sources for the law of killing sorcerers are in the Sunna or Hadith (sayings of the prophet) books that were collected more than 200 years after the death of the prophet. These books are accepted by mainstream Islam as fundamental parts of the religion.

The following points need to be discussed:

1- Were the acts of this man's 'sorcery' consistent with the type of acts that directly harm others described in the Qur'an as the work of "Al-Naphathati Fi Al-Uquad?" (Quran 113:4) Or instead, were the acts of this man more consistent with a variety of future telling "Istiqsam Bi-Alazlam" that are only considered haram (forbidden, yet non-punishable in Islam)? (Quran 5 : 3) The later expression, "Istiqsam Bi-Alazlam," indicates an act of using stones to predict the future luck of a person and make decisions accordingly.[26]

2- Acknowledging that the acts of the accused were a form of future telling, means they should not be classified as black magic "Al-

---

[24] Lawyer: Beheading planned in Saudi sorcery case. (2010, April 1) *CNN World.* Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com

[25] Al-Jaza'iry, A. B. (2001). *Minhaj Al-Muslim (The Way of the Muslim), 2 Vols.* Dar-us-Salam Publications. p. 527

[26] See Quran 5:3 for Tafseer Al-Shawkani.

Naphathati Fi Al-Uquad" [the punishable form of magic in Islam]. This
calls for further review and revising of the case.

3- Since the rule of killing a person for sorcery (black magic) or future
   telling has never been mentioned in the Qur'an it is fundamental to
   question the sources for this Non-Quranic law.

4- There are two main sources for the rule for killing the accused in the
   Sunna.

A statement by Prophet Mohamed: The only statement about killing the
sorcerers that is supposed to be said by the Prophet Mohammed: "The Hadd
(punishment) for the magician is striking with the sword" is weak
(unbinding) Hadith.[27]

A statement by Sahaba (a disciple) of Mohamed: This statement is
considered according to the science of Hadith as accurate. Assuming that
this is correct, or in other words the statement is accurate, it is important in
this context to mention that some of the top Sahaba such as Umar Ibn Al-
Khatab stopped the punishment (Hadd) for stealing [supposed to be
amputating the hands of the thief] in "Aam Al-Ramada" (the latter
represents a year of extreme poverty) due to the possibility that
implementing this law could be unjust for some people (as poverty was
prevalent in this year due to lack of rain so a person may steel in order to
survive). Therefore, using the same approach of Umar Ibn Al-Khatab may
justify stopping the present beheading of this man since this law is basically
not in the Quran. In addition, the statement of the prophet about killing
magicians is a weak Hadith, and the act itself can be classified under another
category of "Istiqsam Bi-AlAzlam"- which is not considered 'black magic'.

In short, the concept of killing a person for being a sorcerer or a magician
needs to be reviewed by the Islamic religious authority. New Laws in Islam
that allow freedom are desperately needed as the current Sharia Laws
promote several violent concepts that ultimately help in creating the violent
radical minds that underestimate the value of human life.

---

[27] Al-Jaza'iry, A. B. (2001). *Minhaj Al-Muslim (The Way of the Muslim), 2 Vols.* Dar-us-
Salam Publications. p. 527

Fighting Islam With Islam

Unbiased observation of the Islamism phenomenon reveals beyond doubt that barbaric acts and discrimination against non-Muslim minorities are repeatedly practiced and conducted in the name of Islam.

Preventing Christians in Saudi Arabia from having a churches or even carrying Bibles, the recent attacks on Christian Churches,[28] the recent incident which could lead to the possible hanging of a Pakistani Christian Mother -of five in Pakistan for criticizing prophet Mohamed are just few examples of many that exemplify the inhumane discrimination that is currently practiced against innocent non-Muslim minorities in several parts of the Muslim world.[29]

Unfortunately, many Islamists or radical Muslims use Islamic religious text to justify such injustice and repeated hate-based barbarism against the non-Muslim minorities. It is shocking to see the leading scholars and organizations of the Muslim world -who want Islam to be called the religion of peace- not standing strongly against such unacceptable acts. One would expect that these scholars and organizations to strongly denounce the laws that prevent Christians from building their Churches, issue powerful fatwa to call those who attack churches as 'apostates', and have a declaration to denounce the ruling which could lead to hanging of the Pakistani woman who insulted the prophet-if they truly want others to call Islam 'peaceful'.

Deep analysis of Quranic verses reveals that preventing Christians from building Churches is against the Quran itself. The Quran in fact considered destroying non-Islamic worship places as a major crime.[30]

The practice of suppressing Church building in the Muslim world is based largely on the unjustifiable practice of some early leaders of the Muslim Caliphate who politicized the religion. Suppressing building Churches as practiced by some Islamic regimes is not only unjustifiable in the Quran but is opposed to the teachings of the Quran.

---

[28] Dozens killed after Iraq church attack [video]. (2010, November 01) *BBC News*. Retrieved from http://www.bbc.co.uk/news

[29] DeSouza, R. (2010, November 10). Pakistani Christian Mother of 5 Sentenced To Death for Blasphemy. Retrieved from http://www.allvoices.com/contributed-news

[30] (Quran 22:40) Did not God check one set of people by means of another, there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, in which the name of God is commemorated in abundant measure.

Furthermore, attacking innocents for being Non-Muslims is clearly forbidden in the Quran.[31] The practice of attacking Non-Muslims has stemmed from the Sharia Laws and Quranic Interpretations that undervalue the lives of Non-Muslims and promotes war against them to spread the religion. Understanding violent Quranic verses in their historical context and upholding the value of freedom of religion can assist in ending such barbaric practices against the small non-Muslim minorities in the Muslim world.[32]

It might be surprising for many -including Muslims themselves- to know that the Quran blamed Mohamed for even 'thinking' in forcing others on his religion.[33]

In addition, the Quran never mentioned any punishment for insulting the prophet. On the contrary, the Quran mentioned that if Islam was insulted the prophet can do nothing but to temporary avoid sitting in situations when Islam is insulted and mocked.[34] The concept of killing those who insult Mohamed or Islam is one of the parts of Sharia Law that contradicts the Quran itself. Mohamed was called "mad" (Quran 15:6; 68:51) and the other prophets were considered a "mockery" (Quran 15:11; 36:30; 43:7) yet none of them was instructed to retaliate for this.

It is vital that the Muslim world start distinguishing between the historical violent and discriminatory practices of Islamic Caliphate and the Quran as a source for the religion. Many of the former inhumane practices against Non-Muslim minorities are actually against the Quran and insisting on doing them under the banner of Islam is not only against the teaching of Quran but can also ignite a war of civilizations.

Fighting Radical teaching in Islam with secular views is ineffective as the radicals usually provide a theological base for their violent views. On the other hand, looking to the Quranic verses via eyes of modernity and upholding some of its suppressed values can be one of the best antidotes for Radical Islam.

---

[31] (Quran 2:19) Do not transgress limits or attack others for God loveth not transgressors.

[32] For example (Quran 18:29) Say, "The truth is from your Lord": Let him who will believe, and let him who will, reject (it).

[33] (Quran 10:99) If it had been thy Lord's will, they would all have believed,- all who are on earth! Wilt thou then compel mankind, against their will, to believe!

[34] (Quran 6:68) When thou seest men engaged in mocking and insulting our verses [Quran], turn away from them unless they turn to a different theme.

Can We Turn Burning The Quran Day Into Something Positive?

Nearly a decade after 9/11 it seems that the world may be headed toward a clash of civilizations. [35] On one hand, nearly 70% of Americans are against P51 (or the Ground Zero Mosque) and on the other hand plans to burn the Quran in a Florida Church on 9/11 are imminent.[36] It is clear that the radicals on both sides are controlling the game. This is a crucial time for true moderates to come to the table and do something to prevent the escalation of the endless cycle of hatred that can drag our civilization to a dark future.

The responsibility to act to stop this case scenario is a shared responsibility and the burden of it is on the shoulders of enlightened and likeminded people irrespective of their faith.

Various groups and personnel can contribute to the process of healing between civilizations. These groups may not be able to stop the book-burning event itself; however, their collaborative actions can help prevent an irrational violent response in the Muslim streets. In other words, our aim now must go beyond stopping the burning to stopping or ameliorating the reaction to the burning.

The Muslim world has the full right to feel insulted by the burning the Quran event. This should lead them to also understand the feelings of the families of the victims of 9/11 who also feel insulted by the building of the mega mosque close to ground zero. As we Muslims expect others to respect our feelings we also need to avoid doing or accepting things that hurt the feelings of the others. In such a case a genuine offer by Imam Raouf to relocate the Ground Zero Mosque as a matter of respect for the feelings of most Americans can probably interrupt this cycle of hatred and religious intolerance. In fact stopping the Burning the Quran day is currently in the hands of Imam Raouf as the pastor who is planning to do the burning offered to stop the burning of the Quran if Ground Zero mosque is relocated to another place.

Islamic scholars MUST take certain steps to avoid a violent backlash against innocent Christians and Non-Muslims all over the world. This can be

---

[35] Russell, L. (2010, July 30). Church plans Quran-burning event. *CNN.* Retrieved from http://articles.cnn.com

[36] Katz, C. (2010, August 11). CNN Poll: Nearly 70% Of Americans Oppose NYC Mosque Plan [Blog Post]. *New York Daily News.* Retrieved from http://www.nydailynews.com/blogs

achieved by emphasizing the value in the Quran that clearly teaches that no one can be punished by the actions of others (Quran 6:164). In addition, the leading Islamic authorities MUST issue a powerful Fatwa against those who might use violence against Non-Muslims as a response to the burning of the Quran day. In order to make this Fatwa effective it MUST clearly consider those who will do violent acts against Non-Muslims to revenge for the burning event- as 'apostates', state that Muslims are not permitted to pray on the dead bodies these of these terrorists when they die, and declare that such criminals who attack Non-Muslims must not be buried with Muslims if they died. Unfortunately, these are the kind of words that resonate in the minds of Islamic radicals that can deter young Muslims from going down the path of violence. Ideally, the Fatwa must warn radical Muslims that they will go to "hell forever" if they did such acts of violence. Fatwas that solely call violent acts against Non-Muslims 'Un-Islamic' are too weak to produce any significant deterrent in the minds of radicals.

The US government needs to learn that supporting acts that hurt the feelings of most Americans -such as President Obama's support for building the Ground Zero Mosque-based on respecting the first amendment rights, will put them in a difficult situation as some may ask them to support burning the Quran based on the same principles. There is inconsistency of the official comments that on one hand supported the building of Ground Zero mosque despite the fact that it will hurt the feelings of most Americans, and on the other hand denouncing burning the Quran day because it will hurt the feelings of Muslims. Clearly, this can be perceived as discrimination against Non-Muslims which may result is a feeling of injustice among the latter and ultimately create anger and breed hatred. Having double standards in these situations can only make things worse.

In addition, the complex situation of burning the Quran day highlights the need for more effective efforts to educate the Muslim world that the US government does not have full control over America's private institutions. Traditionally, people in the Muslim world see both as the same entity. This leads many in the Muslim world to react against the US government in response to actions of the media and other private organizations. The cartoon issue of prophet Mohamed is evidence for this lack of understanding, when the Muslim world asked for an apology from the Danish government for publishing cartoons of the prophet Mohamed in the Danish media. The US MUST use 'effective' tactics to inform the Muslim world that the government in America is separate from the private sector. This is a vital issue because thinking that the US government has full control over its

private sector allows the radicals to promote their agenda against the US based on the actions of the latter. Without forging such as separation between the government of the US and its private institutions in the minds of Muslims it will be very hard to win the hearts and minds of the Muslim world as Muslims will always blame the US government for any comment or act against Islam that occurs within the United States.

Furthermore, if we are ready to stand against Burning the Quran day as it insults the feelings of others we should also be ready to stand with the same passion against insulting Jews in the Muslim world by calling them "pigs and Monkeys." We also need to stand against more appalling things such as beheading humans who convert out of Islam based on Islamic Sharia -and we must also have the same strong reaction toward women who die in the most inhumane manner when they are stoned to death for adultery based on mainstream Islamic laws. Hurting the feeling of Muslims by burning pages from the Quran cannot be compared in any way to the real sufferings of beheadings or stoning (Interestingly both of these Sharia rules are never mentioned in the Quran itself!).

We also need to raise the point that if the Pastor Terry Jones uses this shocking approach by burning the Quran because he realized the failure of Interfaith dialogues since September 11, 2001 in stopping terrorism or ending the barbaric acts in the name of Islam?[37] Then, we need to develop more effective ways to deal with hatred and stop radicalism so that we stop the causes of hatred, rather than just asking people not to hate.

Finally, the more the response of Muslims is honorable in this situation and the more they show tolerance to freedom of expression the more they can improve the negative image of Islam that contributed to the creation of such a situation. The best example for Muslims to follow in this case is to follow what the Quran mentioned about Prophet Ibraham (Abraham) when his father threatened to stone him to death and the response of Abraham who is considered in the Quran as "the role model of all prophets" -was not by revenging but rather by offering peace (Not violence) to him: (The father) replied: "Dost thou hate my gods, O Abraham? If thou forbear not, I will indeed stone thee: Now get away from me for a good long while!" [Abraham] replied: "Peace be upon thee! I shall ask my Sustainer to forgive

---

[37] See the following video: Children of the Night-Sharia Law [Video]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com

thee: for, behold, He has always been kind unto me (Quran 19:46 & 47)." The more the Muslim world follows this Quranic model the more they can bring more peace to the world and decrease the possibility that others will think of burning the Quran in the future.

If the Muslim world responded to the burning event by following the above example and by following this Quranic verse: *Nor can goodness and Evil be equal? Respond to evil with doing good deeds to the evildoer…then will he between whom and thee was hatred become as it were thy friend and intimate!* (Quran 41:34) We may be able to avoid a major clash of civilizations.

Is The Anger Of The Muslim Street Justifiable By Islam?

In the last few decades, Muslims have committed several violent acts because they felt their religion had been insulted or attacked. These acts ranged from murders and violent riots against Salman Rushdie[38] for writing the "Satanic Verses" to violent riots as a response to rumors of US armed forces insulting the Quran.[39] The aggressive Muslim reaction after the publishing of cartoons of prophet Mohamed by the Jyllands-Posten newspaper in Denmark is another well-known example of the Muslim world's reactions.[40] Sadly, these acts of violence have resulted in devastating consequences such as the burning churches and the killing many innocent people.

The question many have raised is: are these violent reactions condoned by Islam and the result of Islamic teachings?

The answer to this question is that the reaction depends largely on the sources used by a particular follower and their understanding of the appropriate religious texts. The following are a few examples to illustrate how a Muslim's response to insulting Islam can vary depending on the religious references used:

Option 1: A Muslim who mainly follows the Quran and does not believe in the abrogation of the verses is likely to be forgiving if Islam or the prophet is insulted.[41] This is because the Quran never mentions any punishment for insulting Islam. In addition, the Quran in more than one verse clearly states that a Muslim can only avoid sitting with those who insult their religion during the time of insult and that they are permitted to interact normally

---

[38] The Satanic Verses Affair. (n.d.) *BBC 2.* Retrieved from http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes

[39] Riots over US Koran 'desecration'. (2005, May 11). *BBC News.* Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk/

[40] Asser. M. (2010, January 2). What the Muhammad cartoons portray. *BBC News.* Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk/

[41] Traditional Islam teaches that Quranic verses that were revealed to Mohamed cancelled or abrogated the peaceful verses that were revealed at the early stages of Islam. This view has been based on the understanding of the following verse, (Quran 2:106). None of Our revelations do We **abrogate** (**nansakhu**) or cause to be forgotten, but We substitute something better or similar: Knowest thou not that Allah Hath power over all things?

with them at any other time.[42] In fact, the Quran in another verse mentions clearly the concept of insulting Allah himself without approving or justifying any violent reaction to this.[43]

Option 2: If a Muslim believes in the abrogation of the verses as described in many traditional and approved Islamic books that provide Quranic commentary, they may consider that the above peaceful verses were revealed only when Muslims were weak and that those verses were abrogated later on by violent verses.[44]

(Note: A complex theological analysis and interpretation is needed and is possible to explain how to understand the above abrogation verse in a way that produces a net outcome of peace rather than violence.)

Option 3: Another Muslim who strictly follows the Hadith and Sunna books (Non-Quranic sources for Islam) may justify the angry and violent reactions to insulting Islam. The story of prophet Muhammad ordering his men to kill the poet Asma bint Marwan for criticizing him is an example of this type of violence. In such a case, a sincere follower of the prophet (as described in these sources) may do crimes, in the name of the religion, if someone insulted the prophet.[45]

Option 4: Muslims who follow the current mainstream Islamic jurisprudence books of all four legal schools can also justify barbaric reactions to insulting Islam through the well-known rule in Islamic jurisprudence. This rule justifies killing those who insult the prophet or Islam.[46]

The Muslim world has to choose between the above ways or options of understanding Islam. Understanding the religion and teaching it as described in Option 1 can prevent many violent acts by Muslims in the future. Ironically enough, the 'peaceful Muslims' - or the Muslims who do not use violence against those who insult Islam - are the ones who do not practice the mainstream Islamic jurisprudence and Sharia Laws "properly"!

The Muslim world needs to learn that Islam will be perceived by others as Muslims practice and portray it. Since Sharia laws justify killing a human

---

[42] See Quran 4:140, 6:68.

[43] See Quran 6:108.

[44] See Quran 2:193.

[45] Asma bint Marwan's Murder (n.d.). Retrieved from http://inthenameofallah.org

[46] Al-Jaza'iry, A. B. (2001). Minhaj Al-Muslim (The Way of the Muslim), 2 Vols. Dar-us-Salam Publications.p.525

soul because he or she insulted the prophet Mohamed or insulted Islam, then the Muslim world must not expect others to call Islam a peaceful religion and the westerners must not expect the outcome of this teaching to be anything but violence and barbarism. When the Muslim world at large changes its teachings and understanding of the religion to promote forgiveness for those who insult the religion (as described in Option 1) then - and only then - can Muslims demand that "Islam is the religion of peace".

Does The UN Want To Ban The Quran?

The General Assembly of the United Nations has for the fourth straight year adopted a resolution prepared by the 57-nation Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) calling upon all UN member nations to adopt legislation banning "defamation" of religion.[47]

This decision will put the UN in a very difficult situation as some may ask for Islamic books - including the Quran itself – to be banned for "insulting" Jews by calling them "pigs" and "monkeys."[48]

The problem can become more complicated by historical information written about the Prophet Mohamed, such as that written in Sahih Al-Buchary, the most authentic Sunni book for the Hadith (traditions of the prophet Mohamed). According to this work, the Prophet Mohamed commenced marriage with his wife Aisha when she was nine years old and he used to have sex with all his nine wives in one night.

Publicizing this information can be viewed in different ways within the Muslim world itself.

For some traditional Muslims they may see this as defamation or insult to Islam. Dedicated Salafi or a Wahabbi Muslims can see such stories as evidence for how the prophet of Islam was greater and distinct from the believers in every aspect of his life including his sexual abilities. Some Salafi books actually brag that prophet Mohamed had extraordinary abilities in having sex.[49]

Followers of the Quranic Islamic sect may support publicizing this information as it proves their view that the Quran (not Al-Buchary) must be the ONLY source of religious information for Muslims as it does not portray prophet Mohamed in such manner. Furthermore, some Sheiia Muslims may

---

[47] U.N. to make ban on criticizing Islam mandatory? (2009, March 04). *World Net Daily.* Retrieved from http://www.wnd.com

[48] (Qur'an 5:60) "Shall I point out to you something much worse than this by the treatment it received from Allah (The Jews), those who incurred the curse of Allah and His wrath, those of whom some He transformed into monkeys and pigs, those who worshipped evil - these are (many times) worse in rank, and far more astray from the even path!".

[49] The Sex Life of the Prophet. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.thereligionofpeace.com/Quran

feel happy with publicizing this as it supports their view that Al-Buchary is an inaccurate book and that the Shia Hadith books are more authentic than the Sunni ones (as the Shia books claim that the prophet married Aisha when she was 18 years old-Not 7 years old).

Things can get much more complicated if some Muslims asked for banning Al-Buchary itself for insulting Islam and its prophet by mentioning such "fake" stories. So, what the UN is going to do in this situation?

Banning books that insult Islam can be a double-edged sword. For example, the issue of criticizing religions can be viewed by some as the most powerful motivating factor for reforming or modernizing the religion itself. The recent history of the West is the best evidence for this as without criticizing some religious practices of Medieval Europe the West would not probably have enjoyed such level of liberty and freedom in our modern times. Similarly, without criticizing negative elements in Islamic practices and interpretations the Muslim world will never reform.

In fact, the criticism of some elements in the Islamic teaching in the past few years has resulted in unprecedented positive changes in the Muslim world. For example, the leaders of Jihadi groups in Egypt such as Dr. Fadl have revised their concept of violent Jihad,[50] many Islamic reformers started to speak out (E.G. Gamal Al-Bana,[51] Saudi Arabia started for the first time in its history an initiative for Interfaith dialogue,[52] Turkish religious authority have started reviewing and editing the old Islamic Hadith books,[53] and Qatar allowed building churches on its land.[54] In fact some of the leading thinkers and Islamic scholars in Egypt have recently accepted fundamental changes

---

[50] Bakier, Abdul. (2007, December 10). Imprisoned Leader of Egypt's Islamic Jihad Challenges al-Qaeda. *The Jamestown Foundation*. Retrieved from http://www.jamestown.org

[51] The following video is in Arabic: Egyptian scholar Gamal al-Bana in Al-Jazeera's al-Itijah al-mu'akis [Video]. (2007, March 27). Retrieved from http://video.google.com

[52] Saudi King Abdullah Commences Interfaith Dialogue Conference in Madrid, Spain. (2008, July 17). *Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia.* Retrieved from http://www.saudiembassy.net/affairs

[53] Turkey "not reforming Islam, but itself" with hadith review [Blog Post]. (2008, February 29). *Reuters.* Retrieved from http://blogs.reuters.com/faithworld/

[54] Verma, S. (2008, March 14). Qatar hosts its first Christian church. *The Times.* Retrieved from http://www.timesonline.co.uk/

in Islamic teaching especially those teachings that causes hatred and violence toward the others.[55]

Such positive changes only happened after many in the west -and in the Muslim world itself -criticized certain teachings within traditional or mainstream Islam.

It is very hard to stop criticism of Islam as long as its religious leaders still promote concepts such as killing apostates, beating women, killing gays, and stoning of adulteries. Muslim scholars must first provide modern interpretations for the Islamic text that clearly prevent insulting people of other believe systems and that clearly prohibit calling Jews "pigs and Monkeys" before asking others to stop criticizing Islam. The UN and the OIC need to realize that criticism of Islam will stop naturally when the Muslim scholars themselves unambiguously stand against the violent or unacceptable teachings in their text or –at least- provide an alternative interpretation for such text.[56]

---

[55] Hamid, T. (2011, January 26). Essay Reveals Steps to Reform Radicals. Retrieved from Newsmax.com
[56] Also see http://www.oicun.org/

Fighting Radical Islam with "Broad Band"

Traditional measures of fighting Islamist Terrorism and Radicalism have failed to end this phenomenon in several parts of the world. Some areas are relatively more resilient than others. For example, in the Arab world, Yemen, Somalia, and Iraq became safe havens for many Islamist terrorists. Similarly, Non-Arab countries such as Afghanistan and Pakistan are well known areas where Islamic terrorism has flourished to serious levels. On the contrary, countries like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Algeria -showed decline in the number of terror acts in the last decade.

The difference between the above mentioned countries in terrorism levels cannot be solely explained by a difference in Ideology or Anti-terrorism measures. Radical religious beliefs exist in most of the above countries. In addition, many of these countries use more or less similar security and anti-terrorism measures.

This phenomenon illustrates the fact that Islamist terrorism is a complex phenomenon that is not only determined by the existence of Jihadist ideology and anti-terrorism measures but it also includes other factors such as the culture that allows the Jihadist ideology to flourish. Certain types of Islamic cultures can be more permissible (or in other words less suppressing) than others to Jihadist ideology. Accordingly, **Culture Influence (or Modification)** can help us suppress the spread of this ideology and thus weaken the phenomenon of Islamist Terrorism. Poor economic situation, Human Development Index HDI, and the degree of sex deprivation of young Muslim men may play a role in allowing the spread of Jihadists' ideology. This Op-Ed, however, will focus on the use of the Internet as a possible culture-modifying factor.

Many countries such as Egypt, Algeria and Saudi Arabia have shown success in decreasing the number of terror acts in their countries compared to other countries. This success is possibly because they rely on infiltration of Radical groups rather than major combat operations in fighting Islamist terrorists.

Another variable that MUST be considered in explaining the difference is the use of the **Internet**.

The lowest level of Internet Penetration in Islamic countries is in Yemen, Somalia, Iraq and Afghanistan. The level of internet penetration in these countries is as follows: Yemen (1.4%), Somalia (1.0 %), Iraq (1%), and

Afghanistan (1.5%). On the contrary, countries such as Egypt, Algeria, and Saudi Arabia enjoy much higher internet penetration levels as follows: Egypt 12.9%, Algeria 10.4%, Saudi Arabia 22.2%. In additi0on UAE that seems to be relatively immune from terrorist acts have the highest levels of Internet penetration in the Muslim world 48.9%.

It is hard to assume that the difference in terrorism levels is exclusively because of this difference in using the Internet; however, however; it is also hard to ignore the possibility that internet penetration have played a role in fighting the spread of terrorism ideology in some Islamic societies via suppressing it at the cultural level.

Based on the number of the terrorist acts in 2010 and the number of population of the above countries the probability (per million) for an individual or citizen in the above mentioned countries to do a terrorist act is as follows:

Egypt 0.13, Saudi 0.03, Algeria 0.72, and UAE Zero.
Yemen 2, Somalia 13.5, Iraq 25.70 Afghanistan 10.13, and Pakistan 2.34.

The following table illustrates some of the above mentioned variables:

Country	Number of terror acts in 2010	Approximate Population number in millions	Probability (per million) of an individual to do a terror act	Internet Penetration
Egypt	11	80 millions	0.13	12.9%
Saudi Arabia	1	27 millions	0.03	22.7%
Algeria	24	33 millions	0.72	
UAE	Nil	2.5. millions	Nil	48.9%
Yemen	42	21 millions	2	1.4%
Somalia	108	8.5 millions	13.5	1.0%
Afghanistan	304	30 millions	10.133	1.5%
Pakistan	390	166 millions	2.34	10.1%
Iraq	694	27 millions	25.703	1%

The data from the above table suggests that after Sep 11, the internet could have played an important role in shaping the views and opinions of Islamic societies by allowing interchange of ideas and theological debates. The fear of criticizing the radical teachings has declined as the internet allowed free

thinking. Islamic teachings that promote violence have been challenged on social media and chat rooms by many people in the Arab world. These Internet-based theological discussions seem to have resulted in modification of the religious views within some Islamic societies and thus have impeded - to some extent-the spread of the Jihadists interpretations of the religion that permits terrorism. In other words the use of the Internet played a role in suppressing the phenomenon of terrorism by impeding it at the cultural level.

The ONLY exception of the above mentioned observation is **Pakistan** as it enjoys internet penetration levels of 10.1 % yet it became a major contributor to terrorism phenomenon. Several factors such as geographical proximity to Afghanistan and the creation of the state on religious basis in 1933 could have contributed to the proliferation of the violent Jihadi ideology and thus the high levels of terrorism. However, when it comes to the use of the Internet it is important to clarify that the Pakistanis are deprived from the formerly mentioned high levels of theological debates within Islam as they do not speak Arabic language which is a factor that is considered fundamental to engage in real theological debates and discussions within Islam. For example, unlike the situation in Pakistan major Jihadi organizations in some Arab countries have reviewed and changed some of their traditional violent interpretations. Similar change has not been observed yet in Pakistan. This could be partially attributed to the fact that the Pakistanis -despite the existence of comparable internet penetration levels to these Arab countries- have difficulty to initiate their own theological discussions within their society and were also deprived from getting some benefit from the Arab debates that are on the internet because of the language barrier.

Countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia have shown the trend of high Internet Penetration associated with less terrorism. This is unlikely to be related to benefiting from 'theological debates' on the Internet as both countries do not speak Arabic. The relatively less terrorism in these countries compared to countries like Afghanistan, and Pakistan is likely to be due to the predominant style of Islam in the area (Sufism) which promotes more tolerance to the other faiths compared to the style of Islam (Salfi/Wahabi) that dominate is many other Islamic countries (Salafism) and is characterized by literal, regressive, and aggressive understanding of Islam.

It is important to mention that, the Internet has been used to radicalize some young Muslims, however, the possible role of the Internet in impeding the phenomenon of Islamic Terrorism at the cultural level deserve serious consideration. The US may need to consider supporting the use of the

Internet in the Muslim world as an effective tool in fighting terrorism. This approach can be more effective and probably less costly than building schools for girls in Afghanistan as it is easier for Radicals to physically burn a school than to interfere with the power of the Internet.

In brief, the proliferation of terrorism in a given country or location depends largely on the interaction between several factors such as the number of the Jihadists, the Anti-Terrorism measures within this country, and the cultural permissibility that allows unchallenged spread for Jihadists views and ideology. The use of the Internet can play an important role in fighting radical Islam by allowing theological challenges to the radical views and thus impede the phenomenon of Islamic Radicalism by decreasing permissibility to its spread at the cultural level. The Internet can also play an important role in fighting radical Islam via properly prepared psychological warfare.

Note: A more detailed report which will include analysis of different variables that can affect the level of terrorism in different countries will be published soon by Dr. Hamid.

Islam In The United States

Rise Of Homegrown Islamic Radicalism Raises Concerns

Note: this Op-Ed was written on Mon, Nov 2, 2009 before the Fort Hood massacre November 5, 2009[1]

Recently, U.S. officials have announced charges in several terrorism probes in various states. This was described by CNN as a confluence of cases unlike anything the country has seen since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.[2] In all cases the convicted were Muslims.

No. 1: Najibullah Zazi, 24, an immigrant from Afghanistan who lived legally in Denver, was plotting to use one or more weapons of mass destruction" inside the U.S. Authorities characterized the suspected plot against New York City subways and trains as one of the most significant threats to the United States since 9/11.[3]

No. 2: Two North Carolina men - Hosam Maher Husein Smadi, 19 and Michael C. Finton, 29 - have been held since July on international terrorism charges. They have also been accused by prosecutors of plotting to kill U.S. military personnel.[4]

Federal officials said Hosam Maher Husein parked what he thought was an explosive-laden truck in a parking garage beneath the 60-story Fountain Place office tower in Dallas. Michael C. Finton, who also went by the name Talib Islam and idolized the American-born Taliban fighter John Walker, was arrested Wednesday in Springfield, Ill. Federal officials said he attempted to detonate what he believed to be explosives in a van outside a federal courthouse in the Illinois capital.

---

[1] Friedman, E., Esposito, R., Nelson, E. & Adib, D (2009, November 5). Fort Hood Gunman Who Killed 12, Wounded 30 Surivved Gun Battle. World News. Retrieved from http://abcnews.go.com

[2] Spate of Terrorism Arrests Not Connected Analysis Say. (2009, September 25). *CNN.* Retrieved from http://articles.cnn.com

[3] Cummings, J. (2010, February 22) Najibullah Zazi pleads guilty in New York terrorism plot. *CNN.* Retrieved from http://articles.cnn.com
[4] Standora, L. (2009, September 25). Authorities nab Michael C. Finton, Hosam Maher Husein Smadi, in unrelated Illinois, Texas bomb plots. *Daily News*. Retrieved from http://articles.nydailynews.com

No. 3: Betim Kaziu, 21, was indicted for conspiracy to commit murder abroad and support foreign terrorists. The U.S. attorney's office said that Kaziu wanted to join the militant group Al-Shabaab in Somalia and was planning to take up arms against perceived enemies of Islam.[5]

No. 4: In addition, Last week, Noor Faleh Almaleki was run down by her father in Arizona in an attempted honor killing, for being "too westernized." Yet the media has decided to bury the story and we are unable to find any updated information about her condition or her father's whereabouts.[6]

No. 5: Also, last week, a radical Muslim leader (Imam) Luqman Ameen Abdullah, 53, was killed in a raid by the FBI. The Imam used violence against authorities and led an Islamic separatist group that wanted to implement Shariah Law (such as stoning for adulteries, killing homosexuals, killing apostates, and allowing beating of women and underage marriage) in America instead of the U.S. Constitution.[7]

This recent increase in the number of Home Grown Islamic Radicalism (HGIR) raises some imperative questions:

1. Do these cases represent the tip of an iceberg that may bring more threats to the United States in the future?[8] In other words, how many in the Muslim communities here have been radicalized to such a high level? Using proper parameters to measure radicalization in Muslim communities, as well as performing correct analyses of the statistical data, is mandatory.
2. Is the American government ready to declare war on or stand against the ideology that drives these radicals in order to protect our homeland from future attacks?
3. If using military and security measures since September 11 has failed to uproot the ideological drive for Islamic radicalism, will the decision-makers in the U.S. consider adding non-military tactics to defeat this lethal ideology? These tactics must include effective psychological operations and proper educational methods.

---

[5] Nardoza, R. (2009, September 24). Brooklyn Resident Indicted For Conspiracy To Commit Murder Overseas And Conspiracy To Provide Material Support To Terrorists. *Press Releasses.* Retrieved from The United States Attorney's Office: http://www.justice.gov/usao/nye

[6] Bodeeb, J. (2009, November 2). Noor Almaleki Murdered by Her Father in Arizona. Retrieved from http://www.associatedcontent.com

[7] Ryan, J. & Thomas, P. (2009, October 28). FBI Gunfight Leaves Mich. Suspect Dead. *World News*. Retrieved from http://abcnews.go.com

[8] Note: Fort Hood massacre occurred after 3 days of writing this Op-Ed

4. Why haven't "moderate" Islamic scholars and organizations in the United States issued have not issued a fatwa to consider Islamic Terrorists as Apostates to deter them from following their violent path?[9]

5. Are powerful Fatwas that call a person an "apostate" limited to or kept only for thinkers and authors such as Salman Rushdie?[10]

6. Is there a positive correlation between the religious education of young Muslims and the development of the Jihadist mind-set which can ultimately create such ruthless terrorists and radicals? Proper research is needed to evaluate the potential correlation between these variables. A positive correlation would mandate serious intervention to make sure that young Muslims do not get education that promotes hatred and violence in their Islamic schools or mosques.

---

[9] Up to the day of publishing this Op-Ed. Shaikh Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri (Shaikh ul-Qadri is not a very influential figure in the Muslim world) issued a Fatwa against terrorism that considered them as apostates See:
Power, C. (2010, March 12). Can a Fatwa Against Terrorism Stop Extremists? *Time.* Retrieved from http://www.time.com/time/world

[10] The exact wording of the Fatwa of AlKhumini against Salaman Rushdi include the following clear statement against persons not just the act: "I inform the proud Muslim people of the world that the author of the *Satanic Verses* book which is against Islam, the Prophet and the Koran, and ALL involved in its publication who were aware of its content, are sentenced to death. *(FATWA issued February, 1989against Salman Rushdie)*

What The US Needs To Do To Avoid Another 9/11

The leaks of more than 90,000 records about the Afghanistan conflict by Wikileaks has raised the possibility that Pakistan, assumed to be an ally of the United States, and its ISI spy service, has met secretly with the Taliban to not only organize militant networks to fight against American soldiers, but also to even plot to assassinate Afghan leaders.[11] If this is true, the possibility of terrorists using WMDs against major cities in the US must be given extra care and attention, as Pakistan has a considerable WMD arsenal.

This extremely dangerous and destructive possibility may necessitate some mandatory reforms to US intelligence policies. Below are some recommendations for how to enhance America's ability to counter such threats associated with radical Islam.

1- It is vital that the US Government learn how to detect radicalism more attentively. Failure to do so can be destructive, as putting trust in so-called 'Moderates' when they are actually radicals serves to undermine American counterterrorism efforts.[12] These radicals posing as moderates could ultimately use American support, aid, and shared information to harm the US. Failure to recognize who the radicals are among government officials of Islamic countries as well as failure to define precisely what we mean by the word 'radical' can seriously impede the ability of the US to win the war against the terrorists, not to mention potentially lead to disastrous consequences.

2- Just fighting terrorism in and of itself is not enough. Prevention can sometimes be more important than treatment. To better understand this concept, an analogy can be made to medical history. Smallpox

---

[11] Davies, N. & Leigh, D. (2010, July 25). Afghanistan War Logs: Massive Leak of Secret Files Exposes Truth of Occupation. *The Guardian.* Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/world

[12] A suicide bombing on a CIA base in Afghanistan was carried out by a Jordanian doctor who was an al-Qaida double-agent. The attack killed 7 CIA officers. Windrem, R. & Engel, R. (2010, April 1) Al-Qaida Double-Agent Killed CIA Killed Officers. *MSNBC.* Retrieved from http://www.msnbc.msn.com

was virtually eradicated from the world through mostly preventative measures (that is, through vaccination), as opposed to just using medications to kill the virus once it had already established itself within a human body. On a similar note, a preventative style should be applied to the terrorism problem, as weakening Islamic radicalism at both the psychological and ideological levels is fundamental to interrupting the transformation process that makes one become a terrorist.

3- Radical Islam must be treated as a real threat that needs immediate intervention rather than just being used as an area of academic interest. Research studies and conferences about radical Islam need to focus on realistic courses of action as opposed to just giving a mere overview about the problem. For example, studying the history and politics of Islam as well as its different sects are important, yet these things in and of themselves are not enough to solve the problem. Such studies must result in suggestions for realistic, active measures.

4- Vertical growth for intelligence is essential and is probably more important than Horizontal growth. In other words, our focus must be to increase the knowledge of intelligence officers about the problem rather than just increasing the number of the personnel who deal with the topic. Increasing the number of chess players who are only able to think about one move ahead is not going to solve a problem that needs thinking about four steps ahead. On the contrary, increasing the knowledge of just a single player to the point where he or she can think four steps ahead may be all that is needed to win the game. The same principle applies to countering radical Islam. Having one person or one small group of people who truly understand the problem and how to treat it can be much more effective than using multiple individuals who are not as able to implement active solutions due to a potentially lower threshold of knowledge about the problem.

5- Common sense and logic must be used to deal with the problem of radical Islam. Waiting for evidence to prove every point can be useful but can also be destructive as well. For example, if a patient took a penicillin injection and immediately went into shock, it would be fatal and insane to wait until we find antibodies against penicillin to provide evidence that the shock has resulted from an allergic

reaction to the medication. The patient in such a case must be given treatment based on pure logical analysis before finding the 'evidence,' as common sense and logic simply tells us that going into shock immediately after getting penicillin injection is a life threatening emergency that needs to be immediately treated. Waiting to for evidence in such a case can be fatal. Similarly, it is not so difficult to figure out that when people become more Islamized and devout in following Salafi Islamic teachings they have more potential to become terrorists. Trying to prove the obvious and waste time on finding evidence for this crystal clear situation can work only for the benefit of the radicals who increase in number and power and make us liable to more threats. Using logic and common sense in dealing with radical Islam is fundamental. The 'evidence-based' approach is excellent in most circumstances but can be fatal when we use it with Islamic radicalism, as with the case concerning shock caused by penicillin allergy.

To conclude, the US needs to adopt a strategy that does the following:

1- Defines clearly what is meant by the term "radical Islam"
2- Uses common sense and logic to deal with the problem
3- Uses more of preventative approach to interrupt the process of radicalization in young Muslims before some of them reach the stage of their development that classifies them as terrorists
4- Treats radical Islam as a threat to our civilization that must be ended rather than as an area for endless research and academic study
5- Increasing the knowledge of intelligence workers concerning radical Islam, not just their personnel size

Supreme Court Takes A Correct Step To Fight Terrorism

The supreme court upheld the government's authority Monday to ban aid to designated terrorist groups, even if such support may be intended to direct groups toward peaceful and legal activities.[13] Once the State Department places a group on the list, it is illegal for Americans or others in the country to provide ''material support or resources'' to the group. The law also bars travel to the U.S. by representatives or by members of the group and freezes any assets that the organization has in U.S. jurisdictions.

The justices voted 6-3 to reject a free-speech challenge from humanitarian aid groups to the law that bars ''material support'' -- everything from money to technical know-how to legal advice -- to foreign terrorist organizations.

Human rights organizations say the law's ban on providing training and advice to nearly four dozen organizations on a State Department list squanders a chance to persuade people to renounce extremism.

Chief Justice John Roberts said in his opinion for the court that material support intended even for benign purposes can help a terrorist group in other ways.

I add my voice to the decision of the Supreme Court, as meeting with terrorist groups and giving them any form of support (even humanitarian) can have several negative consequences. These include the following:

1- Terrorist groups who have a humanitarian wing can do different forms of money laundering to use the money given to them under the banner of a humanitarian 'aid' to ultimately support their terrorism agenda. In fact they may sell the material aid that could be given to them and uses its money for their violent purposes.

2- More humanitarian support for terrorist groups decreases the pressure on them to spend part of their own money to support the humanitarian needs of their own societies. This actually allows such

---

[13] A Bruise on the First Amendment. (2010, June 21). *The New York Times.* Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com

groups to have more available money to spend on their violent activities.

3- Giving humanitarian aid to these groups can help them improve their image among their local population and thus allow them to get more votes in democratic elections. For example, giving support to Hamas in the form of a humanitarian aid can help them to win in the next election against the PLO. To the contrary, depriving these groups from such an aid can help turn their society against them for failure to provide the basic needs of the population. The latter approach can also send a clear and strong message to the societies that choose terrorists to represent them (such as the Palestinians who choose Hamas in their last election), that violence and barbarism will not solve their problems.

4- Giving aid or support to Islamist terrorist groups under the banner of humanitarian purposes can be perceived by the jihadists as sign of weakness by the US. The jihadists can interpret this humanitarian American hand as a failure of its anti-terrorism and military measures and thus may aggravate the desire of the radical groups to further attack the "weak" US at the military front.

5- Giving the terrorist the advantage of getting humanitarian support for their local population is a form of acknowledging the legitimacy of these groups. This can make such terrorist groups more reluctant to accept the decisions of the international community as they simply get what they want in the form of aid and some element of recognition without accepting the international laws.

Depriving the terrorists from all forms of support including the humanitarian one is crucial to defeat terrorism. Any form of support or recognition given to these groups can be counterproductive and can actually give more fuel to the radicals to continue using violence. This is like giving a humanitarian aid to the Nazi regime in Germany during WWII. It can only help this regime to continue fighting.

The above decision of the Supreme Court is certainly a correct one to help the US defeat terrorism. The next step that needs to be addressed by both the Executive and Legislative branches is the formal definition of "material support" to include ideological support in the phenomenon of terrorism.

Persons, organizations, and governments that publish or promote teachings that undervalue the lives of non-Muslims and dehumanize them must be held accountable for giving material support for terrorism, as these texts help terrorists to lure young Muslims and recruit more people to their groups. For example, best-selling mainstream Islamic books that are written by leading Muslim scholars and mainstream Islamic institutes and mosques promote the idea that the lives of non-Muslims have less value than that of Muslims.[14] Also, they promote the idea that fighting and killing non-Muslims to subjugate them to Islam is a religious duty[15] and that dying as a martyr in violent Jihad is the greatest deed for a Muslim person.[16] This form of teaching to young Muslims is probably one of the -or the- most important support factor for the terrorists, as it guarantees a continuous breeding ground for jihadists and suicide bombings. A decision by the Supreme Court to consider the promotion of such an ideology and value system that disrespects human life as a material support for the terrorist groups is desperately needed.

---

[14] Hallaq, M. S., & Strauch, S. (2009). *Fiqh According to the Qur'an & Sunnah (Vol. 2)* . Houston: Dar-Us-Salam Publications. p. 494-495

[15] Abu Bakr Jabir Al-Jaza'iry. (n.d.). *Minhaj Al-Muslim (Vol. 2)*. Houston: Dar-Us-Salam Publications. p. 529

[16] Sabiq, S.; Khokhar, A., Zarabozo J. & Dabas M. (1992). *Fiqh us-Sunnah (Vol. 2): Alms and Fasting.* American Trust Publications p.27-29

A Comment On Mr. John Brennan's Speech To CSIS, "Protecting The American People From Terrorism And Violent Extremism"

When the US President's principal advisor on counterterrorism speaks about National Security issues, we should expect nothing but objective, unbiased, and scientific analysis.

On May 26, 2010, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) hosted a discussion with John Brennan, the assistant to the president for homeland security and counterterrorism.[17] His speech, "Protecting the American People from Terrorism and Violent Extremism," laid out the president's comprehensive approach to protecting the American people from terrorism and defeating the short-term threat from al Qaeda and other terrorist groups. The speech in several ways conveyed a similar message to the speech that he also delivered to the CSIS on Aug /6/ 2009.[18]

Some of the positive points in Mr. Brennan's message:

1- Pointing out that the President has called his single most important responsibility as president - keeping the American people safe

2- Addressing both the immediate, near-term challenge of destroying al-Qaida and its allies, and the long-term challenge of confronting violent extremism.

3- Acknowledging the dynamic and evolving nature of the terrorism threat and the need for innovative and non-military approaches to dealing with it.

---

[17] Brennan, J. O. (2010, May 26). Events. Retrieved from Center for Strategic and International Studies: http://csis.org/event

[18] Remarks by John O. Brennan, Assistant to the President for Homeland Secutirty and Counterterrorism-As Prepared for Delivery "A New Approach to Safeguarding Americans". (2009, August 6). *Office of the Press Secretary*. Retrieved from http://www.whitehouse.gov

There are also several negative areas in Mr. Brennan's message that must be addressed. The following are few examples:

1- Honest scientific approach necessitates non-selective presentation of the data. Mr. Brennan praised both banning the use of enhanced interrogation techniques and closing the prison at Guantanamo Bay. Irrespective of the motives behind these decisions, there is overwhelming and irrefutable evidence that terrorism plots inside the US (Home Grown Radicalism) has risen dramatically since the new administration took power in 2009.[19] Mr. Brennan should have mentioned the latter fact as well as informing the audience about these statistics; in such a case, may support the view that the former approaches (i.e. banning the use of enhanced interrogation techniques and closing the prison at Guantanamo Bay) have actually been counterproductive.

2- Mr. Brennan mentioned that enhanced interrogation techniques "not only fail to advance our counterterrorism efforts; they actually set back our efforts. They are a recruitment bonanza for terrorists; increase the determination of our enemies.... In short, they undermine our national security".

   On the contrary, the dramatic rise in terrorist's plots inside the US in 2009 after banning these enhanced interrogation techniques and after taking more active steps to close Guantanamo Bay may actually support the opposite of such unfounded views. In addition, the President's principal advisor on counterterrorism did not give any evidence to support his view that such techniques in fact increased "the determination of our enemies". My former experience with several jihadists in the Jammaa Islameia and other radical groups as well tells me that soft attitudes toward them aggravate their barbaric and violent trend. They simply become more encouraged to attack an enemy, knowing that there will be unresponsiveness to aggression. The repeated attacks on peaceful, non-Muslim minorities in several parts of the world support this view. These peaceful non-Muslims did not use any enhanced interrogation techniques against Muslims, yet this did not protect them from getting attacked repeatedly and killed

---

[19] Macedo, D. (2009, December 14). Homegrown Terro On the Rise in 2009. *Fox News.* Retreived from http://www.foxnews.com/us

viciously by radical Muslims. The repeated attacks on the peaceful Baha'i,[20] Ahmadeia members,[21] Buddhists,[22] and Christian minorities,[23] in the Muslim world further support the latter view.

3- Mr. Brennan mentioned the peaceful practice of Islam in Indonesia and ignored commenting on the practice of Islam when he spoke about Saudi Arabia. The latter form of practice of Islam supports killing apostates (Redda Law), permits the beating of women, justifies stoning of humans until death for committing adultery, and encourages violent Jihad to spread Islam. Speaking only about the positive aspects of Islam in Indonesia without mentioning any comment on the negative aspects of the practice of Islam in Saudi Arabia is a biased and misleading approach that should not be used by those who lead our nation's security.

4- Mr. Brennan supported the view that the US should avoid using expressions like "terror", "terrorist" and "terrorism" in the President's speech to the Muslim world as, in his view, this (using these words) will threaten the US relationship with more than a billion Muslims around the world. The avoidance of using the former words to avoid hurting Muslim's feelings actually indirectly implies that most Muslims are terrorists. After all, why should Muslims be offended by a war against terrorism if they are not terrorists themselves? In fact, Muslims are the primary victims of terror attacks,[24] something also mentioned in Mr. Brennan's speech!

---

[20] Baha'is face increasingly violent attacks in the Muslim world [Blog Post]. (2009, April 05). Retrieved from http://atheistnews.blogs.fi/

[21] Dogar, B. & Toosi, N. (2010, May 28). Pakistan Mosque Attacks: At Least 80 Killed. *Huffington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com

[22] Petty, M. (2009, June 15). Thai Buddhist Beheaded, Another Shot in Muslim South. *Reuters.* Retrieved from http://www.reuters.com

[23] FaithWorld: Religion, faith and ethics, (2009, July 14). Baghdad church bombings leave tiny Christian minority trembling [Blog Post]. Retrieved from http://blogs.reuters.com/faithworld/2009/07/14/baghdad-church-bombings-leave-tiny-christian-minority-trembling/

[24] Al Qaeda hurts Muslims most. (2010, January 14). *The Washington Times.* Retrieved from http://www.washingtontimes.com/news

5- Mr. Brennan mentioned that the intention of Al-Qaeda is to create a clash of civilizations. In his own words: "After all, this is precisely what Osama bin Laden intended with his September 11th attacks - to use al-Qaida to foment a clash of civilizations between the United States and Islam". It is hard to comprehend how Mr. Brennan speaks with such confidence about Bin Laden's intentions without any evidence to support his views. A person who holds the position of the President's principal advisor on counterterrorism should not have portrayed his assumptions about Bin Laden's intentions as if they are facts without having a strong prove for such assumptions. Bin Laden's intentions in Sep 11 could be creating fear in the hearts of the disbelievers (Quran 8:60). Other intentions may include fighting the Jews and Christians based on traditional interpretations of certain verses from the Quran (Quran 9:29). It is difficult to understand how Mr. Brnnan can define the exact intention of Bin Laden with such a precision.

6- Mr. Brennan refrained from describing the efforts of the US as "a global war," as according to his views "this only plays into the warped narrative that al- Qaida propagates". This contradicts an earlier statement of Mr. Brennan that confirmed the global nature of the Islamist threat. The statement says: "al-Qaida's own capabilities are further leveraged by the web of relationships the group maintains with other, locally run terrorist organizations around the world, from Iraq to the Arabian Peninsula, from East Africa to the Sahel and Maghreb regions of North Africa". Our decisions should be taken based on the reality of the nature of the threat rather than merely to contradict the enemy's propaganda. For example, if the propaganda of the Nazi regime was that it wanted to kill the Jews, we should not refrain from stating this fact because it "plays into the warped narrative" of the enemy. Facts are facts as the president said in his Cairo speech and as Mr. Brennan actually quoted in his previous speech to the CSIS "these are not opinions to be debated; these are facts to be dealt with."

7- Mr. Brennan supported the President's view "declaring that America is not and never will be at war with Islam". What truly matters in this regard is that if Islam is at war with America or not? It is not very valuable if you are not at war with someone unless he also reciprocated the same peaceful attitude toward you. Ritualistic Islam

that is limited to the practice of the five pillars of Islam in a mosque is probably not at war with America, but theological Islam that teaches Muslims to wage war against non-Muslims and offer them one of the following three options: to convert to Islam, to pay a humiliating tax (Jizia), or to be killed or promotes the use of violence to establish Sharia Laws instead of secular constitutions is certainly at war with America.

8- Finally, it would have been much better if Mr. Brennan avoided going into Islamic theology by stating that Jihad means "to purify oneself or to wage a holy struggle for a moral goal". While this meaning for Jihad is correct in some circumstances, it ignores the broader and well established definition of the word in the approved Islamic theological books as a war to spread the religion. Mr. Brennan also did not mention that Jihad is predominantly used in the Arab media to describe the spread of Islam via wars. We also have not seen Islamic peaceful groups or organizations named "Jihad". We only see the word predominantly used by the violent groups. Since, unlike Mr. Brenan, Arabic is the native language of the leaders of many - if not most - of these groups, their understanding and usage of the word has more credibility than his definition for the word. Mr. Brennan may also need to explain to us the following verse in the Quran that uses the word "Jahid." An Arabic word that means to perform Jihad (Quran 9:73).

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَاغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرِ

(Quran 9:73) O Prophet!("Jahid") against the unbelievers and the Hypocrites, and be cruel to them. Their abode is Hell- an evil refuge indeed.

Mr. Brenan must inform us if this meaning for Jihad is also "to purify oneself or to wage or to wage a holy struggle for a moral goal".

It were better that Mr. Brennan avoid talking about Jihad before reading enough about it as giving the audience selected information about the topic is unscientific and can be misleading. I was shocked with these comments about Jihad as I assume that the President's principal advisor on counterterrorism should have studied Jihad meticulously as it represents the ideology that is used by the terrorists to justify their acts. Pretending that Jihad is ONLY a peaceful concept jeopardizes our national security efforts simply because it is not predominantly taught in such a 'peaceful' way. For

example, Jihad is defined in Minhaj Al-Muslim which is written by one of the leading Islamic scholars in Saudi Arabia and published globally, including the US, [25] and defines Jihad in the following order:[26]

1- Fighting the disbelievers,

2- Using violence against the sinners,

3- Resisting the devil

4- Resisting a person's own desires.

The "wisdom behind Jihad" as the book described is that Allah alone is worshiped. Interestingly the book quoted many violent verses and hadith to support the violent meaning of Jihad and on the contrary provided strong theological evidence that the hadith that supports a peaceful meaning of the word as a "weak" hadith or in other words.[27]

The assumption that Jihad represents ONLY a peaceful concept can be accepted ONLY after the Muslim world changes the definition of the word in its mainstream Islamic books and clearly rejects the traditional violent interpretations of the word.

Ignoring the violent definitions of the word Jihad to sugarcoat the meaning of the word is dangerous, as it limits our ability to know the facts and the true nature of the threat.

Finally, I respect Mr. Brennan and appreciate his sincere desire to make America safe. My former comments about his speech are to clarify certain points that I felt morally obligated to clarify them.

---

[25] Abu Bakr Jabir Al-Jaza'iry. (n.d.). *Minhaj Al-Muslim (Vol. 2)*. Houston: Dar-Us-Salam Publications. p. 529

[26] Ibid. p. 165-167

[27] Ibid. p. 167

Analysis Of The Recent Bin Laden Tape (Today on CNN)

The latest recording purportedly from the al-Qaeda chief was broadcast Thursday on Al Jazeera. Osama bin Laden, in a new audio recording, threatened to kill any Americans that al-Qaeda takes prisoner if Khalid Sheikh Mohammed is executed.[28] Mohammed is considered one of the masterminds behind the September 11th attacks.

My brief comments on Bin Laden's tape:

1- Bin Laden started by saying "Peace be upon those who follow the right path." While some in the West might think he is sending a message of peace, the reality is that this was not a message of peace. By limiting the message of peace to 'those who follow the right path', Bin Laden is actually limiting the peace offer ONLY to devout Muslims and not to westerners. On the contrary, the hidden message of his statement is: War be upon those who do not follow the right path (Islam). In the views of Islamists, Non-Muslims are Infidels who are not on the right path- Islam.

2- Bin Laden avoided using the name of President Obama in his message and he used the expression "your friend at the white house." Not using President Obama's name is a form of disrespect to the American President. This could be a result of being perceived as 'weak' by Al-Queda.

3- Bin Laden tried to relate terrorism to the US support for Israel. It would be useful if Mr. Bin Laden could explain how American support for Israel can justify the killing of hundreds of thousands of innocent Muslims by the hands of the Jihadists in Algeria, Iraq, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. In addition, why are Sunnis in Iraq kills Sheia, exploding their Mosques and funerals, and mutilating their dead bodies after beheading them? Are these atrocities, Muslims against their fellow Muslims, also due to American support of Israel?

4- Bin Laden threatens to kill Americans if the US executes Khaled Sheik Mohamed however; Al-Qaeda already kills many innocent people

---

[28] Bin Laden Threatens to Kill U.S. Prisoners (2010, March 25). *CBS News.* Retrieved from http://www.cbsnews.com/stories

including Americans. The threats are not actually adding anything new to the traditional approach of Al-Queda of killing innocents.

5- Showing any sign of fear or weakness towards Al-Qaeda will only encourage them to continue their war against the free world. In fact, using 'effective' psychological warfare against them after they release such messages can weaken their ability to continue their barbarism.

Shall We Treat Islamic Terrorism As A Criminal Act Or As An Act Of War?

After September 11, the issue of how to classify Islamic terrorist acts has become an important topic for discussions. Some see the acts of Islamic terror or violent jihad as crime that only needs to be treated as any other crime while others consider it to be an act of war that needs military intervention. The answer to this dilemma is simply that Islamic or (Al-Qaeda Style) - terrorism does not fit fully into any of the former definitions. In other words, we need a new classification for jihadist acts of violence. This is similar to a situation if someone asked the question should angina be classified as an infection or a malignancy. The answer is simply that it cannot be classified as any these two conditions as it is a different phenomenon that needs to be classified separately as an ischemic heart disease. This is vital as treating angina as if it is an infection or as a malignancy can be fatal. Similarly, failure to see that new and novel approaches are needed to defeat Islamic jihadism can be also deadly.

Generally speaking, in cases of crimes and wars, the offender usually aims at a specific materialistic gain on earth that is typically motivated by economic factors such as gaining money or control of the resources of specific territories. In addition, the opponents in most of these circumstances do not want to die. For example, the emperor of Japan in WWII surrendered when he realized that he and his nation would be annihilated if he continued the war. Furthermore, in normal situations if the opponent has WMD he will avoid using them if this will result in his total destruction. The Russians, as an example, were not ready to attack the US with WMD as they knew that such an act will be reciprocated by the US if they started the attack.

On the contrary, Islamic terrorists seek to die as martyrs, and to cause maximum pain and suffering to the "Infidels" until they surrender to their barbaric ideology. Their ambitions are not financial or territorial. For example, Bin Laden and Al-Qaeda terrorists did not seek any materialistic gains after September 11th. Just causing pain to the US and seeking the honor of conducting jihad for Allah and dying as a martyr was sufficient for them to do the attack. The same principle applies to the Palestinian terrorist

groups who have repeatedly expressed their religiously based-desire to annihilate all Jews - irrespective of the issue of the land.

In the case of dealing with an enemy who wants to commit a crime or declare a war, it is usually feasible to negotiate with such an enemy as his ambitions are typically focused on tangible things. Negotiations that can result in giving this enemy some satisfaction in achieving some of his worldly desires may be successful in ending the problem. Furthermore, the enemy in these circumstances will be more likely to surrender if he is going to die and will certainly hesitate to use WMD if his opponent is ready to use them against him as well.

On the contrary, the Jihadists cannot be satisfied by giving them some materialistic gains as their target is subjugating others to their ideology as Aiman Al-Zawaheri stated clearly that Al-Qaeda will stop terrorism if the US converted or surrendered to Islam.[29] Furthermore, Jihadists are unlikely to surrender even if their decision will result in their annihilation or will cause a total destruction for their nation. Additionally, the Jihadists and ideologically motivated Islamists will not hesitate a second if they can use a WMD against their opponent as they evidently do not care for human life including the lives of their own Muslim people. Indeed, they will be happy to die in jihad for the cause of Allah.

On the other hand and the tactical level, Islamic Radicals tend to predominantly target civilians rather than combatants - unlike in traditional warfare where combatants take great care to reduce collateral damages.

It is worthwhile to point out that religiously-motivated terrorist acts conducted by some radical Christians against doctors who perform abortions iare limited in their numbers and targets compared to the global nature of Islamic terrorism. Moreover, unlike Islamic terrorism, the demands of conventional terrorist groups such as ETA and the Tamil Tigers are limited only to regional geographical areas and could be solvable via negotiations as their objectives are to achieve some political gains rather than to die for their cause and to cause pain for the "unbelievers". Similarly, unlike Jihadism-based violence, individually conducted crimes usually lack the

---

[29] American al Qaeda: U.S. should convert to Islam. (2006,September 02) *CNN World*. Retrieved from http://articles.cnn.com

ideological thread that can transform them into a global phenomenon that threatens the world security at a large scale.

This complex situation necessitates that we should look at the phenomenon of Islamic Terrorism as a completely different phenomenon that has different dynamics and new rules of engagement. It is different from ordinary crimes, from conventional and from traditional warfare. Developing novel approaches to deal with this phenomenon including legislative ones is mandatory as classical approaches in dealing with it as a crime, as conventional terrorism, or as a traditional war may not be enough to deal effectively with it. The phenomenon of Islamist Terrorism certainly has some elements of all of the former violent acts; however, it also has many features that make it un-classifiable under any one of them. A new approach is needed that treats Islamic Radicalism as a separate entity or a distinct type of violence as it does not fully fit under traditional categories of violent acts.

Bridges Between The US And The Muslim World Must Be Two-Way

The United States Postal Service has issued stamps to celebrate some religious holidays including the "Eid" or one of the holy festivals of the Muslim world.[30] The Postal Service mentioned on its news release, "This year's holiday stamps extend diverse greetings. The 44-cent First-Class stamps include Christmas: Madonna and Sleeping Child by Sassoferrato, Eid, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and Winter Holidays". The Eid stamp was published in 2001 soon after the attacks of September 11th.

While there have been many diverse views expressed on the topic of outreach to the Muslim world, the following are a few points that have not received serious attention:

1- Who was supposed to issue a stamp for reconciliation after September 11 - the US that was attacked or the Muslim world that produced, indoctrinated, and both actively and passively supported violent acts in the name of Islam.[31]

2- In the spirit of "mutual respect and understanding", it was naturally expected that the Muslim countries should have also issued a stamp to celebrate Christmas to reciprocate the US celebration of the Eid on an US stamp. This simply has not happened. Reconciliation needs both sides to take active steps toward mutual understanding. It cannot be effective if it is only a unilateral act.

3- Even before September 11, the US has showed respect for Muslims and Islam. The average American-Muslim income is higher than the national average, and mosques and Islamic schools are permitted in the country irrespective of what they teach. In addition, in full defense of religious freedoms, Muslims are allowed to preach Islam and convert others to it. This generous and very tolerant attitude toward Muslims was not reciprocated by many countries in the Muslim world. Converting people to Christianity is prohibited and illegal in many Muslim countries. Having Bibles or other non-Islamic religious texts or building churches, temples and other houses of worship are not permitted in Saudi Arabia. The US should have requested that its

---

[30] Eid Stamp Part of Holiday Celebrations Series. (2001, August 1). *United States Post Office.* Retrieved from http://www.usps.com/news

[31] Hamid, T. (2008). Inside Jihad: Understanding and Confronting Radical Islam. Abdelhamid.

generous attitudes toward Muslims and Islam be reciprocated in the Muslim world before issuing a stamp to celebrate Muslim religious festivals. The message that is conveyed by doing the former without asking for the latter or reciprocation is that the Muslim world feels that they do not need to do anything in improve their relationship with the West as the West seems to always show tolerance to Islam irrespective of what the Muslim world does. Showing the Muslim world that they should not take the tolerance of the West for granted is actually beneficial as it can encourage the Islamic world to start taking some active steps toward reconciliation. If the West will continue showing such levels of tolerance irrespective of how the Muslim world is treating its non-Muslim minorities, there will be no incentive for the Muslim world to make any improvement for its discriminatory decisions against non-Muslims including freedom of conversion of Muslims to other faiths and the basic freedom of worship.

In summary, the Eid stamp for Muslims would have been a great step in efforts of reconciliation between civilizations ONLY if the Muslim world reciprocated this by issuing a stamp for Christmas, allowed Muslims the freedom of conversion, and allowed non-Muslims to worship freely in any part of the Muslim world. Until these fundamental and basic human rights are respected all over the Muslim world, issuing stamps to celebrate Muslims' festivals may not be effective in bridging the gap between the West and Islam and, in fact, it could be counterproductive.

The Case Of The 5 Young American Muslim Jihadists Raises Several Concerns

Five American Muslims were arrested in Pakistan for planning to do terror acts in Pakistan.[32] Pakistani authorities described the men as college students who "were of the opinion that a jihad must be waged against the infidels for the atrocities committed by them against Muslims around the world," a report states. The parents of the missing youths and local Muslim leaders approached the Council of American Islamic Relations (CAIR) about the disappearances and the organization "immediately informed the FBI," the council said. Preliminary investigations suggest they had sought to link up with the militant Islamic groups Jaish-e-Mohammed and Jamaat ud Dawa organizations. Neither group showed interest in having them. The young men were described as devout young men who participated in a youth program at a community mosque in suburban Virginia, representatives of the congregation said Friday. A mosque representative, Abu Maryam, defended the mosque's activities, saying discussion of jihad had no place in the congregation or the youth program.[33] CAIR realized there is a problem and is "going to launch a major campaign of education to refute the misuse of verses in the Quran, or the misuse of certain grievances in the Muslim world", said Awad.[34]

This story raises many points that need to be addressed:

1- If Jihad was predominantly a peaceful concept, as many Islamic organizations promote in the West, why then did the Mosque representative say that "jihad had no place in the congregation or the youth program"? Why should Mr. Abu Maryam feel embarrassed of

---

[32] Gillani, W. & Tavernise, S. (2010, June 24) Pakistan Sentences Five Americans in Terror Case. *The New York Times.* Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com

[33] Americans arrested in Pakistan had bright futures. (2009, December 11). *CNN US.* Retrieved from http://articles.cnn.com

[34] The Missed Signal on American Muslim Radicalization. (2009, December 11). Retrieved from http://www.rightsidenews.com

teaching a peaceful concept? Avoiding discussing jihad, as the mosque representative mentioned, further confirms that the word Jihad in Muslim's jargon is basically used and understood in violent manner (otherwise the mosque would not have avoided discussing it!). In other words, if Jihad was truly a peaceful concept the mosque should not have shy away from discussing it.

2- Why did the families of these 5 young men inform CAIR organizations before doing the more simple thing - which is to inform the local police? Why the families did not think in the most logical possibility when someone disappears in US that he was (or they were) kidnapped? Informing an Islamic organization first instead of informing the police raises doubts if the families knew from the beginning that the young men went to Pakistan with some jihadist intentions?

3- The men were described by the Pakistani authorities as college students who "were of the opinion that a jihad must be waged against the infidels for the atrocities committed by them against Muslims around the world." This must make us question why these young men did not have the same negative feelings against the Muslim terrorists who kill their fellow Muslims. If these young men were truly caring for Muslim's lives as they claim, why then we have not seen them waging Jihad against Al-Qaeda for exploding Mosques, funerals, and markets that have killed thousands of innocent Muslims? Is it OK for Muslims to intentionally kill innocent Muslims but not OK for the US to defend itself against those who attacked it or threatened its security? Failure to show the same hatred or reaction against Islamic terrorists who killed thousands of Muslims all over the world raises the point that hating the US by these young Jihadists is not based on care for Muslims' lives otherwise they would have showed the same reaction against Bin laden and other Islamic terrorists.

4- It is clear that many of these young Muslims were considered "Moderates" in their universities and by their local communities. This raises an important issue of defining who should be called moderate and who should be called a radical and confirmed the need for a clear definition for radical Islam.[35] Without defining Radical Islam and putting

---

[35] Hamid, T. (n.d.). ABCs Test for Radical Islam. Retrieved from http://www.tawfikhamid.com/abcs-test-for-radical-islam/

parameters for it, many radicals can spread their toxic views in the society and radicalize more young Muslims.

5- Going to the radical Islamic groups to offer them to become volunteers showed that these young men were naïve in jihadism as, in general, sophisticated jihadi groups do not accept volunteers in this way since they usually choose their own people and new members based on certain selection criteria. More sophisticated approaches are needed to properly infiltrate such radical Islamic groups.

6- It is good that CAIR finally realized the 'ideological' root of the problem and is going "to launch a major campaign of education to refute the misuse of verses in the Quran", as Awad said. Obviously justifications for Islamic Radicalism such poverty, lack of education, and lack of democracy were not going to explain this case of Home grown Islamic radicalism among university students in the US!

7- If these young Muslims were planning to join Jihad against the US troops, should this be considered a form of treason to their country and should they be considered traitors to the US by collaborating with its enemies?

The Media Must Convey The True Message Sent By The Jihadists

CNN has reported that Adam Gadahn, also known as Azzam the American, appeared in a video that has been made available on the internet. Gadahn was portrayed as though he had offered 'condolences' for innocent victims, as seen in the text below.

"On the heels of a U.S. announcement of a massive troop surge for Afghanistan, an al Qaeda spokesman Saturday appeared to be trying to improve the group's image in the region with a new audio message in English. Adam Gadahn, also known as Azzam the American, appeared in a 17-minute video released on Islamist online forums late Friday, offering condolences to the families of innocent people killed in al Qaeda attacks."[36]

It is important to note that the title used by the CNN for this topic could be perceived by many as a positive step by Al-Qaeda, yet careful observation and analysis of what has been said clearly reveals that the condolences were ONLY offered to Muslims. Non-Muslims were not included.

"We express our condolences to the families of the **Muslim** men, women and children killed in these criminal acts and we ask Allah to have mercy on those killed and accept them as shohadaa [martyrs]," he says. "We also express the same in regard to the unintended **Muslim** victims of the mujahedeen's operations against the crusaders and their allies and puppets, and to the countless faceless and nameless Muslim victims of the murderous crusades" in Afghanistan, Pakistan's Waziristan regions and Swat Valley, and elsewhere."

The title that fits more with what Gadahn has actually said is "Al Qaeda offers 'condolences' ONLY for Muslim victims" rather than "Al Qaeda offers 'condolences' for innocent victims".

Sincere condolences should be offered for all victims who are killed irrespective of their faith. The message of Adam Gadahn was portrayed as if

---

[36] Al Qaeda offers 'condolences' for innocent victims (2009, December 13). *CNN World.* Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com

it is a good thing, yet in actuality it only confirmed that many Islamists do not see a need to offer condolences for innocent victims if they are non-Muslims. Failure to include non-Muslims in the condolences indicates serious disregard for the lives of non-Muslims.

Undervaluing the lives of non-Muslims, which is taught widely within mainstream Islamic jurisprudence and various Sharia books is one of the main factors that leads some devout Muslims to develop the mind of a terrorist that does not show respect for human lives of the 'others'.[37]

---

[37] Abu Bakr Jabir Al-Jaza'iry. (n.d.). *Minhaj Al-Muslim (Vol. 2)*. Houston: Dar-Us-Salam Publications.

Ignoring The Role Of Ideology In The Ft. Hood Massacre Is Disastrous

After the heinous attack at Ft. Hood, many questions were raised about the underlying cause of the atrocity.[38] Some pointed out that the Muslim background of the suspect, Mr. Hasan, was the motivating factor, while others presented the case suggesting that being 'teased' for being a Muslim and the US wars in Iraq & Afghanistan were trigger factors for the massacre.

This wide difference in opinions should lead us to analyze carefully the concept of the 'underlying cause' and the 'trigger' factors.

If an external factor provoked a different response in one group of people compared to others, then it is more likely that there is an underlying cause in the former that explains such a difference. For example, if two people ran 100 meters and one of them developed severe chest pain, then an underlying coronary heart disease in the one who developed the pain must be suspected. In this situation, running could be seen as the 'trigger' factor that provoked angina in a patient with underlying heart disease. Both the cause of the problem (the heart problem) and the trigger factor (running) must be addressed if we are to treat the patient effectively.

Similarly, if the external emotional or political factors were the true cause of terror acts, we would expect that these factors will produce the same response in all humans irrespective of their faith.

Basic observations of the responses of Muslim populations to insults, critiques, and to political situations in the last few decades clearly demonstrate that there is an underlying factor in Muslim societies that predisposes many of them to react in a violent manner.

Let us just examine the difference in responses between many in the Muslim world and people of other faiths when both are exposed to trigger factors: People identified as Muslims committed terrible atrocities that included killing innocents, burning places, and many other barbaric acts as a reaction to the following 'triggers':

---

[38] Whitelaw K. (2009 November 6). Massacre Leaves 13 Dead At Fort Hood. *NPR.* Retrieved from http://www.npr.org

Publication of Danish cartoons of prophet Mohamed[39]

- Critique of Islam by Pope Benedict[40]
  Comment about prophet Mohamed by a journalist in a beauty queen event in Nigeria provoked extreme violence and a Fatwa to kill the journalist[41]
- Publishing a book that was perceived as critical of Islam by Salman Rushdie[42]
- Rumors of US military personnel insulting the Quran[43]

On the contrary, many non-Muslims were exposed to much more distress yet they did not react in the same manner. The following are only few examples of many:

The Jews were put into ovens during the Nazi era and are currently called "Pigs and Monkeys" in several parts of the Muslim world yet we have not seen the Jewish people beheading the Germans or exploding themselves to kill innocents all over the world.

- Some Christian minorities who live in some Muslim majority countries have their churches burnt, their priests killed, their religion insulted, and suffer from different forms of discrimination - yet they do not attack innocents as a result.[44]
- Many Buddhists in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Thailand & Bahia in Iran suffered from severe discrimination from the Islamic systems yet we have not seen any of them killing their fellow innocent human beings to revenge this discrimination.[45]

---

[39] Muhammad cartoons: a timeline. (2006, October 26). *CBC News Online*. Retrieved from http://www.cbc.ca/new

[40] Muslims kill nun, Pope apologizes [Blog Post]. (2006, September 17). Retrieved from http://www.freedomszone.com

[41] Somerville, K. (2002, November 27). Controversy over Nigerian fatwa. *BBC News.* Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk

[42] Pollard, L. (2009, February 14) Satanic Verses' polarising untruths. *BBC News.* Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk/

[43] Afghanistan Protests Continue; 8 Killed. (2005, May 13) *Fox News.* Retrieved from http://www.foxnews.com

[44] Vermaat E. (2011, 21 January) Christians and Their Churches Targeted By Radical Muslims. Retrieved from http://europenews.dk

[45] Examples can be found at: http://www.thereligionofpeace.com/

The difference in response to the external triggers strongly supports the view that an underlying factor in Muslim societies is the main cause of the violent reactions.

In other words, why does 'teasing' or 'insulting' or a 'political situation' provoke such barbaric responses in devout Muslims at a global level but do not provoke similar violent reactions in the followers of other faiths who are exposed to much more injustice and prejudice? Since humans are born equal, the difference in responses in these situations is likely to be caused by differences in their religious education or ideological factors. These educational or ideological factors must be addressed in an honest manner to avoid further calamities and to protect young Muslims from the damaging effects of these forms of teaching.

Some may argue that if religious education was the main cause behind these atrocities then why do some Muslims not react in a violent manner while other Muslims do? The answer to this question is that this difference in response within Muslim populations can be due to one or a combination of the following factors:

1. Lack of exposure to the same form of religious education
2. Lack of exposure to the same trigger factor.
3. Lack of sufficient religious motivation or courage to perform an action that may threaten their personal life

In addition, if we accept the concept that 'teasing' and 'insults' can justify such a level of brutality, then we should ask ourselves: will we also justify the situation if non-Muslims started burning mosques in the US and engaging in killing innocent Muslims as a response to the discrimination they have in some parts of the Muslim world?

Since it is practically impossible to stop all possible 'trigger factors' it is extremely important to treat the underlying cause of the problem (or the form of religious education Muslims receive) that leads many of in the Muslim world to react in such a violent manner.

US Reaction To Muslims In Its Military MUST Be Well Calculated

After the Ft. Hood tragedy, I have been asked by many to address what the US must do with American Muslims in the military.[46] Some took an emotional response and promoted the view that Muslims should not be allowed in the US military. Others tried to approach the issue in a more rational manner.[47] The possibility of a backlash against Muslims in the military was also discussed on the CNN. I will summarize my answer as follows.[48]

There are three possibilities (or options) for the reaction:

Option 1: Stop all Muslims from working in the military

Option 2: Give permission to Muslims in the US Army so that they do not fight against their fellow Muslims.

Option 3: Do nothing

The first option (to stop all Muslims from working in the military) will deprive the US from benefiting from the experience of true moderate Muslims who also fight Islamic Radicalism. The experience of these moderates can be pivotal and invaluable in achieving the needed victory over radical Muslims. This situation makes it imperative for the US officials to set parameters to define who is moderate and who is.[49] Using proper parameters to define these terms can allow the US to use the knowledge of true moderate Muslims effectively to fight radical Islam and at the same time avoid discrimination against all Muslims. Failure to set these parameters can allow many radicals to infiltrate sensitive positions in the military and may end in catastrophic consequences.

---

[46] Whitelaw K. (2009 November 6). Massacre Leaves 13 Dead At Fort Hood. *NPR.* Retrieved from http://www.npr.org

[47] Dreazen, Y. J. (2009, November 9).Muslim Population in the Military Raises Difficult Issues. *The Wall Street Journal.* Retrieved from http://online.wsj.com/

[48] Fort Hood shooting: army chief fears backlash against Muslim troops. (2011, June 07). *The Telegraph.* Retrieved from http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/

[49] Hamid, T. (2010, August 16). A Muslim Declaration Against Shariah, Violence. Retrieved from http://www.newsmax.com

The second option (to give exemptions to Muslims in the US military so that they do not fight against their fellow Muslims) raises several important concerns as well.

1. This option could be seen as a form of discrimination against non-Muslims in the military. In other words, why should non-Muslims take the risk of going to war and die while their fellow Muslim soldiers are refusing to defend their nation? In this case we will face one of the most bizarre situations in history when non-Muslims have to die to defend Muslims who sympathize with the enemy and refuse to fight it.

2. What if ALL US military soldiers converted to Islam? Shall we just surrender to Islamic Radicals because No one in the military is willing to defend the country anymore?

3. Accepting this option casts doubt on the loyalty of these Muslims (who refuse to fight another Muslim to protect the US) to the US. If these Muslims were more loyal to their "Umma" (Muslim nation) than to the US then they should be considered a fifth column and MUST not be allowed to work in military or any sensitive position.

4. Those American Muslims who refuse to fight another Muslim to defend the US must be ready to answer the following imperative question: Is it OK for them to kill Christians or Hindus if they attacked the US but it is unacceptable by them to kill Muslims if they did attack their country?

5. If Radical Muslims declared war on the US, will Muslims in US military allow the killing of their fellow American citizens to avoid fighting their radical Muslim brothers? In other words, are the lives of their fellow Americans less in their view than the lives of the radical Muslims?

As we can see the second option raises very serious concerns.

If the third situation (Do Nothing) is accepted as the best type of reaction, many Islamic radicals will be able to infiltrate our military. In this situation, the disaster of Ft. Hood may look trivial compared to what could happen if these radicals managed to use radiological, biological, or chemical weapons against our society. In such a case, we may wake up one day to the news that an Islamic radical in US army released a lethal bacteriological or viral agent inside the US that will kill thousands (or millions) of people and will destroy the economy of the country. The tragedy that could happen in this case is far beyond words to describe it. Doing nothing and just waiting for another attack by a radical Islamist inside the US is a catastrophic approach. We were just lucky in the US that Dr. Nidal Hasan, who allegedly committed

the atrocity in Ft. Hood, did not have access to a biological weapon. An important approach to deal with such a complex situation is to educate selected officials in the US how to detect early signs of radicalization-both overt and covert- as this can allow these officials to take appropriate measures to prevent a possible catastrophe.

The Disaster at Ft. Hood Army Base in US Raises Critical Concerns

An Army psychiatrist Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan M.D., an American Muslim who counsels troops, opened fire on an unarmed crowd at Fort Hood Army base in the Texas.[50] According to officials, 13 people were killed and over 30 wounded. Before he killed his fellow human beings, Hasan made the comment "Allah Akbar", which is Arabic for "Allah is great!"

This horrible event raises some vital issues with the teachings in Sharia Law, the blame Muslims place on westerners for linking violence to Islam, and numerous decision makers not focusing on the main cause of Muslim violence.

When Sharia Law teaches disrespect for Non Muslims' life, how can we be surprised to hear about a dedicated religious Muslim follow such teachings and commit barbaric acts against Non-Muslims? Islamic Sharia, available in mainstream Islam jurisprudence books (such as Fiqh Us-Sunna for Sayiid Sabeq and many others jurisprudence books), promotes that the punishment for killing a human being "Dheia" is less in cases of killing a Non-Muslims than in cases of killing a Muslim. In fact, (according to Sharia Law) if Non-Muslims refuse to pay the Jizzia (humiliating tax) or convert to Islam they should be killed.[51] Can we expect the outcome of such teachings and interpretations to produce anything but violence and disrespect for human life?

After this attack Muslims must stop blaming westerners who link Islam to violence. Thousands of terror attacks all over the world, including Sept. 11, beheadings in the name of Islam, and many other barbaric atrocities were conducted commonly by people who are identified as Muslims.[52] It is virtually impossible to stop people from linking violence to Islam unless violence in the name of Islam stops.

---

[50] Whitelaw K. (2009 November 6). Massacre Leaves 13 Dead At Fort Hood. *NPR.* Retrieved from http://www.npr.org

[51] Abu Bakr Jabir Al-Jaza'iry. (n.d.). *Minhaj Al-Muslim (Vol. 2)*. Houston: Dar-Us-Salam Publications.

[52] Lists of terror acts conducted by Muslims are available at http://www.thereligionofpeace.com

Instead of continuing to blame the West for "Islamophobia" and for linking violence to Islam, the Muslim world should work on changing itself to stop producing generations that accept violence as integral parts of their religious teaching.

There is a tendency among various decision makers to discuss why some Muslims turn to the use violence while others do not, considering Muslims are exposed to the same religious teachings. This approach may theoretically allow decisions makers to avoid addressing the role of religious teaching as the true cause of the problem and allow them to focus instead on the individual factors that make a particular person use violence. In this regard I would like to mention the following illustrative example: When people smoke cigarettes only some of them develop lung cancer. This does not mean that smoking is not the main cause of lung cancer. The same applies to Islamism phenomenon. When Muslims are exposed to the Salafi Islamic teaching, only some of them become violent.[53] Similarly, this does not mean that the religious teaching is not the cause of developing the violence.

The most simple solution for the problems in the previous examples is simply to limit the exposure to the offending agent (either smoking or to the radical teaching) rather trying to change the response of the cells or the humans to the causative agent. This can happen in Muslim societies by providing them with an alternative to the radical teachings to promote values of love and peaceful coexistence instead of hatred and intolerance.

If I could make a suggestion to the senior officials in the Military, Intelligence, Home Land Security, and others, I would tell them to learn how to detect early signs of Islamic Radicalization among their employees in order to take appropriate measures before radicalization manifests. Failure to do so or learn these signs can lead to a disaster inside the US, especially if Islamic radicalism appears in facilities that deal with WMDs.

The American investigators of the Fort Hood case who will interrogate the suspect must be fully aware he may practice "Tequia" (Lying to Non-Muslims), or he may pretend to have a psychiatric disorder to avoid punishment. The latter can be a very viable option for a trained psychiatrist who knows the symptoms of psychiatric disorders. Relying predominantly on the suspect's words to understand his motives for doing his crime can be completely misleading in such a case.

---

[53] Note: Salafi teaching is a regressive form of Islamic teaching that currently dominates most Islamic educational systems and Institutes

We need to address in an honest and scientific manner the different dimensions of the problem of Islamic Radicalism and to be able to understand its dynamics, root causes, and devastating consequences. In addition, using proper strategies to deal with the phenomenon is imperative. Failure to do so can end in disastrous consequences.

Does Rifqua Bary have to wear the Hijab or become a terrorist to get care from the US president?

Few weeks ago the 17-year old Rifqua Bary had to flee from Ohio to Florida, where she sought refuge with a Christian couple whose church she had learned about from the Internet.[54] Rifqa said she ran away from home because her father discovered she'd become a Christian-and then threatened to kill her. Rifqua's parents say that whatever fears their daughter has of them have been put in her head by evangelical Christians hostile to Islam. The Barys said they are willing to let their daughter practice whatever religion she wishes.

If the information released to the media is correct, the law enforcement findings in both Ohio and Florida support the parents. This simply means Rifqua's life could be seriously threatened, if what she has said about her father is correct.

Generally speaking, it is unlikely that Rifqua would have this degree of fear from her family if she was not actually threatened. If she were confident that her family will not hurt her and that she would be safe with them, she most likely would not have escaped. In other words, why would a child in her age escape from his family if she did not feel threatened?

In more specific terms, Rifqua's fears are fully justifiable for the following reasons:

First, the father neither clearly rejected nor denounced the Redda Law (Islamic Sharia law that allows the killing of apostates). His statement that the parents are willing to let their daughter practice whatever religion she wishes does not negate his right to kill her according to Redda law. He can simply give Rifqua the right to practice her new religion, while at the same time giving himself or others in his community the right to kill her for apostasy. Unless Rifqua's father publically denounces killing the apostates (the Redda Law), his statements should not be taken seriously.

Second, until today ALL of the main schools of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence (Shafeii, Maleki, Hanbali, and Hanafi),in addition to the main Sheia teaching,

---

[54] Mauro, R. (2009, August 20). Honor Killings Come to America. *Front Page Magazine* Retrieved from http://archive.frontpagemag.com

approve and promote the killing of apostates. This violent form of teaching is unchallenged in authoritative mainstream Islamic books. Until the Muslim world and its religious authorities develop new jurisprudence that prohibits killing apostates, it will be extremely unsafe to force Rifqua to live in a Muslim society where any dedicated Muslim can apply the Redda law on her at any time.

Third, the deafening silence of Muslim society and organizations and their failure to take any clear stand against the Redda Law support the view that many in this society agree with such a law. This by itself casts doubt on whether Rifqua, even after converting from Islam, could be safe while living within this community.

Fourth, in the last few decades many innocent Muslims were brutally killed or attacked in accordance with the Redda Law after being declared as apostates.[55]

Shall the free world return Rifqua back to her society where she can suffer the same fate? If the Muslim majority is truly against the Redda law, why do not we hear their public condemnation for it? Where are the voices in the Muslim world or of the Muslim organizations in the West, such as CAIR and ISNA, that unambiguously denounce this barbaric law? In fact, the voices that are heard are those of the leading Muslim scholars in the West, such as Harvard Muslim chaplain Taha Abdul-Basser, who in 2009 noted in one of his blogs the "wisdom" of the death penalty for apostasy in Islam.[56]

---

[55] Examples for attacking apostates include:
1- The Egyptian thinker Farag Fouda who was declared an apostate by Al-Azhar scholar Mohammed al-Ghazali and shot to death in his office on 8 June 1992 by two Islamic fundamentalists.
2- The Sudanese reformer Mahmoud Taha was Killed by the government authority on Jan 18/1985.
3- Egyptian Nobel Prize winner Naguib Mahfouz was attacked and seriously injured by a young Muslim radical on Oct 16/1994.
4- Salaman Rushdy (author) was declared an apostate and a fatwā requiring his execution was proclaimed on Radio Tehran by AyatollahRuhollah Khomeini on 14 February 1989.
5- On the day of writing this Op-Ed Monday, September 14, 2009 Afghanistan's upper house of parliament has condemned the release of an Afghan journalist Perwiz Kambakhsh who was originally sentenced to death for the crime of 'Apostasy'. This has changed under pressure from the free world to 20 years in jail.
Afghan parliament condemns journalist release. (2009, September 14). Retrieved from http://www.metro.co.uk/news/world

[56] Landes, R. (2009, April 16). Harvard's Muslim Chaplain Notes the Wisdom of Killing Apostates [Blog Post]. Retrieved from http://www.theaugeanstables.com

Fifth, simply following news from all over the world makes it clear that the deaths of daughters at the hands of their fathers for religious causes-such as refusing to wear the hijab (Islamic head cover) or having an affair-has been frequently practiced in Muslim communities.[57]

The abovementioned points support the view that Rifqua's fears of returning to her family and to the Muslim community are based on concrete facts and were not "put in her head by evangelical Christians hostile to Islam," as her father claims.

In this context it is vital to question whether President Obama will stand beside Rifqua and support her right to convert to Christianity as he supported the rights of Muslim women to wear the hijab?[58] In fact, Nashala Hearn, a Muslim girl from Muskogee, Oklahoma, who insisted on wearing the hijab, was invited to the Iftar dinner on September 1 at the White House in Ramadan.[59] The president supported her right to wear the hijab in U.S. Is President Obama going to give Rifqua the same level of support that he gave to this girl, and is he willing publicly to show solidarity with Rifqua by clearly supporting her right to convert from Islam to another faith; or does Rifqua have to wear the hijab to get this level of support from the U.S. President?

Furthermore, the U.S. government showed much care for the detainees at Guantanamo Bay, and always wanted to make sure that they are released to countries that will not torture them. U.S. officials have said for years that they could not return Guantanamo Bay detainees to their original countries (such as returning the Uighur detainees to China) for fear of persecution or execution.[60]   The innocent Rifqua deserves the same level of concern for her safety as these detainees. If this does not happen, and Rifqua is forced to go back to a community that may kill her, then the ONLY message that can be logically concluded from this is that it is better to be a terrorist and kill innocent Americans to make the US government care for your life.

Returning Rifqua to a system that ideologically justifies her killing is like returning a Jew to the Nazis during WWII. The spirit of U.S. law is to protect

---

[57] Geller, P. (2009, July 27). More Honor Killings In The West, Yet No Outrage? Retrieved from http://www.humanevents.com/

[58] Obama. B. (2009, June 4). Remarks by the President on a New Beginning. *Office of the Press Secretary.* Retreived from http://www.whitehouse.gov

[59] Obama. B. (2009, September 1). Remarks by the President at IFTAR Dinner. *Office of the Press Secretary.* Retreived from http://www.whitehouse.gov

[60] Glaberson. W. (2009, June 12). 6 Guantánamo Bay detainees released to other countries. *The New York Times.* Retrieved from http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/

human life. Returning Rifqua to a community that accepts Redda Law contradicts this spirit, as it puts her life at risk and opens the gate for barbarism to take advantage of our laws. The message that must be conveyed to the Muslim communities regarding this subject is that freedom of religion does not include the freedom to kill apostates.

Discrimination Against Non-Muslims In The U.S. Must Stop

Upon landing in the U.S. (September 13, 2009) after speaking at a conference in Poland, I noticed that the first picture welcoming international visitors to the U.S. at Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD) was of two Muslim women wearing the hijab. The photo also portrayed a mosque and the crescent as a symbol for Islam. I have noticed on other visits to the airport that the same photo is in the same position: Window A1 of the immigration hall, where the travelers show customs officials their documentation.

I have checked the other pictures in the hall to see if other religions are also represented in the same manner. To my surprise, there were none. The ONLY religious symbols that existed in such a manifest manner are the Islamic ones.

This situation raises an important question: why don't the airport authorities acknowledge other faiths as well? If the answer is that Muslims are a minority, then why doesn't acknowledge the other religious minorities? Aren't they humans who deserve respecting for their faiths, too? Jews, Hindus, and Buddhists are also minorities in the U.S., yet their faiths are neither recognized nor respected by the airport authorities to the same extent that the Muslim faith is.

It is not only unfair but also discriminatory against other religious minorities when Islam is the ONLY faith that is respected in such a manner, while other faiths are ignored.

If the authorities in the airport want to show that they respect religions as a form of multiculturalism, they should have used photos that portray Muslim women in hijab, Christian nuns carrying a cross, a Jewish Rabbi wearing a kippah, or perhaps a synagogue with the Star of David on it as well.
The second question that occurs to many people when they see that Islam is the only faith that gets such respect in the airport is, "what did Muslim communities do to deserve such recognition?" Are they being recognized because members of their society committed the 9/11 attacks and continue to conduct barbaric atrocities and terrorist acts all over the world on a near-daily basis? If this is the case, then giving such respect to Muslims and ignoring other faiths conveys a message to other religious communities that

the best way to get respect for your faith in US is to commit similar atrocities! Is this the message that the airport authorities want to convey? Another important question is whether the airport authority has realized that, according to Sharia teachings, the hijab is a dress code that aims at discrimination? Free women are allowed to wear it, while slaves are not permitted to wear it. Is it a good choice for Dulles International Airport to display prominently such a discriminatory symbol?

In addition, Muslim women who do not wear the hijab could feel alienated if they see that such respect and recognition in the U.S. is given only to Muslim women who wear the hijab. Many Muslim women who do not wear the hijab already face some element of discrimination and disrespect from their Muslim societies for not wearing it. Is the U.S. also going to share in the crime of discrimination against these liberal Muslim women who want to dress as they wish? What would be the problem with showing respect for both types of Muslim women instead of only for those who wear the hijab?

In brief, discrimination against non-Muslims and Muslim women who do not wear the hijab must not occur in the US. If the authorities want to show religious tolerance, they must acknowledge faiths other than Islam. The U.S. is not an Islamic country, and attempts to show Muslims' contribution to the U.S. must be accompanied by recognition of the greater contributions of other faiths, such as Christianity and Judaism. The choice is either to recognize all faiths equally or not to recognize any of them. Showing respect to one faith (Islam) and ignoring the others is a form of discrimination that MUST stop.

10 Questions some Liberals Must Ask Themselves

In my opinion, there are self-explanatory answers to all of the following questions:

1. What would liberals say to women who are stoned to death for adultery,[61] to gays facing capital punishment,[62] and to Muslims persecuted or killed for converting from Islam to another faith,[63] all according to Islamic law? Will liberals say that they must show "tolerance" and accept this barbarism as a matter of respect for religious values or stand against inhumane laws?

2. Where can we find sharia books that clearly stand against the above violence? Instead of trying to convince the world that sharia law is peaceful and that it is all a matter of different interpretations, it would be much better if the Liberals asked the leading Islamic scholars to unambiguously declare that stoning women, killing gays, and beheading apostates are unacceptable.

3. Why do the liberal thinkers try to find justifications for terrorism such as poverty, lack of education, and the historical "feeling of injustice" among Muslims at the hands of the West? The Jews were exposed to some of the worst forms of suffering and torture in human history at the hands of the Nazis yet they have not performed terrorist acts and suicide bombings against German civilians.

4. Muslims in the West enjoy rights as equal citizens. However, Jews in the Muslim world are called pigs and monkeys on mainstream media in the Muslim world,[64] Christians are not allowed to build churches in

---

[61] Stoning victim 'begged for mercy' (2008, November 4). *BBC News.* Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk

[62] Eke, S. (2005, July 28). Iran 'must stop youth executions'. *BBC News.* Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk

[63] Browne, A. (2005, February 5). Muslim apostates cast out and at risk from faith and family. *The Times.* Retrieved from http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk

[64] 3-Year-old Egyptian Basmallah: Jews Are Apes and Pigs. (2002, May 7). Retrieved from http://www.memritv.org

Saudi Arabia,[65] and the Baha'i community is discriminated against in Iran.[66] Who should really feel angry?

5. Why are socioeconomic conditions and political circumstances often used to justify acts of terrorism committed by Muslims? Christians, Buddhists, and Hindus live under the same circumstances and do not instigate such a level of violence. What is the reason for this selectivity?

6. Why do liberals demonstrate against Israel for killing Palestinian civilians, which is unintentional and happens because Palestinian terrorists hide among the victims, yet do not use their passion to demonstrate against Hamas, who has intentionally killed 'Palestinian' civilians? Note: Hamas assassinated three children of their opponent Dahlan who was one of the leaders of the Palestinian authority.

7. The Arab-Israeli conflict is often viewed as a historical source of modern day terrorism, yet how could this possibly explain why Muslims have killed and mutilated the dead bodies of fellow Muslims in areas such as Iraq, Pakistan, and Algeria?[67]

8. If non-Muslims were to begin promoting the idea that "Muslims are pigs and monkeys," would the liberals stand against this or would they remain silent as they usually do when Muslims call Jews by these names?

9. If a Muslim decided to follow in the "footsteps" of the Prophet Muhammad by marrying and having sex with a 9 year-old girl, would liberal thinkers stand against this or allow it to happen out of respect for religious freedom? Note: This story is mentioned in Al-Buchary, the most authentic hadith book in the Sunni world, but it is not in the Quran and the age of marriage is different in Sheia books.[68]

How would liberals respond if radical Muslims declared war on them and used the standard sharia rule to offer the three choices of conversion to Islam, paying a humiliating tax called the jizya, or be killed? Would liberals

---

[65] Israely, J. (2008, March 19). A Church in Saudi Arabia? *Time.* Retrieved from http://www.time.com/time/world

[66] Iran: Arbitrary arrests / Prisoners of conscience. (2008, May 15). Retrieved from http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/

[67] See several examples at: http://www.thereligionofpeace.com/

[68] Al-Buchary is considered by most of the Muslim world as the most authentic books of the Hadith or sayings of prophet Mohamed

respect these religious values by accepting one of these options OR stand against such barbarism in order to protect human civilization?

US Relations With Muslim World

US Intervention in Libya MUST follow 'All or Nothing' Rule

Wednesday, 27 Apr 2011

The U.S. intervention in Libya can significantly alter the United States' image in the Muslim world. The inability of the United States to achieve a real victory in Afghanistan and in Iraq has weakened its image and thus encouraged Islamic radicals to continue their war against the West.

If Gadhafi is defeated, the United States can regain its status in the eyes of the Muslim world. But defeat will encourage radicals.

Even a protracted campaign will be viewed as failure by the Muslim world.

According to the media, Libyan soldiers break into homes and create terror by raping women, mostly married ones. Hundreds of Libyan women who had been abused and raped by Gadhafi's loyal men desperately seek to commit suicide for they do not want to live with the torture done to them in front of their children. There are even reports of those who are safe and untouched wanting to be killed by their relatives rather than face rape.

The inability of al-Qaida to protect the civilians or to prevent the rape of these Muslim women can work in the United States favor - if the United States success Gadhafi. (Protecting the women is the most important issue for Muslims.)

There is another danger to the West: If Gadhafi's defeat is not complete, he may turn to supporting international terrorism against the United States and against other countries that supported his opponents.

It's all or nothing for the United States. If Gadhafi remains in power, in any capacity, it would have been better for the United States to not intervene in Libya at all.

From Newsmax.com

Wednesday, 27 Apr 2011 08:13 AM

http://www.newsmax.com/blogs/TawfikHamid/id-59

Was Muslims' Violent Reaction To Burning The Quran Preventable?

April 1 2011

Last Friday, at least seven United Nations workers were killed (including two who were beheaded) and several more were injured after officials said a [protest in Afghanistan against a Florida pastor's burning of the Quran](#) turned violent.

On Saturday, the deadly attacks extended to Kandahar. Nine have been killed and several were also injured.

The violent reactions of the Muslim's on the streets which have resulted in the killing of many innocents are a result of the perception that Islam has been insulted. This has occurred on several other occasions such as the publishing of cartoons of prophet Mohamed by a Danish newspaper, the comments of one of the participants in a beauty queen competition about prophet Mohamed in Nigeria November 21, 2002, and rumors that US military persons have insulted the Quran.[1]

Preventing Islamist violent reaction in the future cannot simply occur by preventing people from insulting Islam. This approach can be Un-constitutional and is practically impossible.

The barbaric reaction to the Quran burning demonstrates the existence of several factors that may have contributed to such unjustifiable and unacceptable atrocities.

These factors include:

1- Tolerating - in several parts of the Muslim world the use of violence, when it empowers religious values, gives justification and prepares some Muslims psychologically to use violence or resort to its use to express their religious views and opinions.

2- Undervaluing the life of Non-Muslims- traditional mainstream Sharia Law books teach that the monetary compensation for killing a Non-Muslim is half of that of a Muslim. This is an important root cause for

---

[1] Miss World contest sparks off riots in Nigeria. (2002, November 21). *Express India.* Retrieved from http://www.expressindia.com/news

disrespecting human life and justifying attacking and killing Non-Muslims.

3- Failure to use Islamic Education to empower certain Quranic values that can prevent such violent reaction. These include "Not punishing someone for the mistakes of others" (Quran 35:18) and "respecting human life" (Quran 5:32).

4- Individual Thinking- There is a failure of the educational systems and Media to encourage individual thinking instead of the mob or "Umma" mentality. The latter way of thinking suppresses individual thinking in favor of the thinking of the group around him. This makes that person more vulnerable to participate in such violent acts.

5- Failure of legal systems to make the Mullahs who incite hatred and violence responsible for the outcome of their teaching. The violent response against the UN personnel occurred after Friday prayer. It is vital to know what has been said exactly in the ceremony that could have led to such brutal demonstrations.

6- Failure of the Islamic scholars to denounce the terrorists (NOT terrorism) in strong words that are powerful enough to deter Muslims from participating in acts of violence. Using expressions to describe these acts as being "Un-Islamic", or "No religion will justify such acts" are too weak to deter Muslims who are driven by religious zeal to participate in such violent acts.

Prevention of similar barbaric responses in the future MUST be holistic and Multi-Dimensional.

Suggested steps to prevent similar violent reaction in the future include:

1- Islamic Religious scholars MUST issue a Fatwa, calling those Muslims who contributed to the violent attacks that result in killing "Apostates"- if they do not repent. Unfortunately, such expressions are needed to decrease participation of Muslims in such violent acts in the future.

2- Islamic teaching MUST give more emphasis on the Quranic values that can prevent generalization and show respect for Human life. For example; the Quran clearly states that it is unacceptable to punish a person for the actions of another one (Quran 35:18) and that "killing an innocent human soul is equal to killing all humanity" (Quran 5:32).

The above values-if taught properly-could have prevented the attack on and the killing of the innocent UN personnel who have no relation, at all, to the act of burning the Quran.

3- Encouraging individual thinking instead of Mob or 'Umma' mentality in the Muslim world can be achieved via proper educational tactics. These tactics must modify the thinking process of individuals and can be assisted by certain Quranic verses that establish the meaning that each individual will be judged based upon his personal deeds and actions (Quran 19:95: "And everyone will come to the Lord singly on the day of judgment").

4- Negative reinforcement psychological tactics MUST be used to decrease the possibility of similar barbaric attacks in the future. These tactics include clarifying to radical Muslims that such an attack on the UN is likely to create more hatred to Islam and thus can cause more Qurans to be burned-rather than the other way around. The Muslim scholars need to explain this to the Muslim world and put the sin of burning Qurans-that may happen in the future-on the shoulders of Muslims who conduct these violent acts.

Feeling the individual responsibility for burning more Qurans as a result of the violent acts is an important deterrent factor that can prevent religiously motivated Muslims from participating in similar violent atrocities. The Quranic verse (Quran 6:108 "Revile not ye those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they out of spite revile Allah in their ignorance") can be used as a model to teach Muslims that merely insulting others-let alone killing them-is a major sin as these acts can bring more insults to the religion.

Finally, winning the war against Radical Islam cannot only occur at the Military front. Furthermore, it is practically impossible to stop criticism of Islam. The prevention of future-and probably more devastating-atrocities by violent Muslims requires the proper use of ideological, educational, and psychological tactics.

The US Need To Expand Its Focus In Fighting Radical Islam

The US costs in the War on Terror has exceeded, in some estimates, 2 trillion dollars. Despite this huge cost, the phenomenon of Islamic radicalism and terrorism has not been defeated. Killing Bin Laden has been a great step but it is certainly not the end of the story. Terrorist acts are still threatening the world and lately the attacks on Non-Muslim minorities have been on the rise in many parts of the Muslim world.

The US has reached the point where it MUST reevaluate its strategies in fighting Radical Islam.

The primary focus of the US in the war on terror has been to target the terrorists themselves. This approach, while needed, has proved to be unsatisfactory.

Albert Einstein famously defined insanity as "doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." This is a very important lesson to be learned by the US administration. They need to start thinking in alternative and more efficient approaches to fight Islamic Radicalism. The US cannot simply spend another 2 trillion dollars using the same approach again and again and hope for a different result. This approach is not going to defeat Islamic Radicalism and expecting a different outcome will be disastrous.

The US must consider expanding their primary focus in the war on terror from the Jihadists to include the Mullahs and scholars who incite hatred, violence, and dehumanization of others. The hate-filled teaching of Mullahs and scholars ultimately manifest itself as terrorism. The US must interrupt the radicalism cycle at the incitement stage. This approach is much more effective than a late intervention when terrorists have already been created.

The advantage of this approach is that the scholars who incite the use of violence-unlike the Jihadists-are fewer in number, more visible, and above all want to live. The latter point is extremely important. Targeting Jihadists does not deter other Jihadists from committing acts of terrorism because a Jihadist's motivation is martyrdom. Conversely, many of the scholars who preach violence, without participating in the Jihadi activities, are interested in living and enjoying their political power and occasionally wealth.

An example to illustrate how violent teaching can materialize can be found in the Islamic scholar from Egypt (Ashraf Abou Anas) who recently said to his followers, in a province called Imbaba, "We will not be real men if we did not burn every church in Imbaba." This simple statement that appeared on You Tube triggered thousands of Muslims to attack churches in Cairo and resulted in burning of churches and the killing of many innocents.[2] Some of these innocents were burnt alive.

When the scholar's statement was put on YouTube, he realized that he would be prosecuted and severely punished by the authorities. He immediately released another statement to change his message of hate. He replaced his message of hate with a new message, a message that promoted peace, love, and harmony. This obviously was an attempt to save himself from punishment. This illustrates how preaching can incite violent atrocities and how the scholars who incite the violence can turn to peaceful preaching but only if they believe that they will be held responsible for the violence that results from their teaching. Conversely, the threat of being punished will not easily change the beliefs of a true Jihadist.

When scholars who promotes violence realizes that they will be persecuted as terrorists and judged as a criminals they are likely to change their violent message to a peaceful one. This change can prevent many terrorist acts and atrocities. Targeting these scholars must also include targeting the individuals and organizations that help them promote their violent message. Therefore, promoting violence against others needs to be treated as material support for terrorism.

Some may argue that those who incite violent acts or justify them are protected by the laws of freedom of speech. Pastor Terry Jones, who recently burnt the Quran, was not allowed by a US court decision to demonstrate peacefully in front of a mosque. The US authorities made this ruling in the belief that this demonstration could disturb peace. Therefore, if the act of a peaceful demonstration in front of a mosque is seen as disturbance to the peace in our society; then how should the teaching of young Muslims to declare war on Non-Muslims to spread Islam is a religious duty be seen?. This same principle needs to apply to those who promote that the life of Non-Muslims is inferior to the life of Muslims. These beliefs are being taught from many Sharia books which give Jihadists the justification that they may kill Non-Muslims.

Many violent and deadly Muslims riots were initiated by Mullahs who incite violent acts. In addition, some leading Islamic scholars such as Sheik

---

[2] Muslim Salafi Sheikhs in are urging that the burning Coptic Churches & killing Christians in Egypt [Video]. Retrieved on 2011, June from youtube.com

Youssof Al-Quradawy have justified suicide bombings against Israeli civilians (to including pregnant mothers). If these scholars knew that they would be prosecuted in international courts for inciting such hatred and violence, perhaps many of them would change their message of hatred. This in turn would protect many young Muslims from the destructive outcome of violent teaching.

Expanding our focus in the fight against Islamic Radicalism is imperative. The US needs to change from just targeting the Jihadists, who conduct the terror acts, to targeting the scholars, who promote violence. Treating and persecuting the scholars who promote violence as terrorists and criminals will be a more effective tool in weakening the phenomenon of Islamic terrorism.

Analysis Of President Obama's Speech To The Muslim World

President Obama's speech to the Muslim world on June 4th was, by all means, a historical one.[3] The tension between Islam and the West has become more prominent after 9/11, after too many violent acts have been conducted by people who belong to the Muslim faith. The atmosphere surrounding the speech was nerve racking. On one hand, some in the Western world were afraid that the speech would be too apologetic, as this attitude may actually increase Islamism rather than decrease it. On the other hand, some in the Muslim world were waiting to hear an explicit apology from the President about the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Others in Muslim communities dreamed that President Obama, who has a Muslim middle name, Hussein, would end U.S. support for Israel as an attempt to have a fresh start with the Islamic world. The Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt and organizations like Hamas were also waiting to hear unconditional support for democratically elected governments so that they would receive U.S. recognition irrespective of what they will do after being in power.

In short, the expectations from the speech were numerous and reflected the desire of these various groups, but it was relatively hard to be too confrontational while addressing over one and a half billion people in the context of a very tense atmosphere at this particular time in history. However, the President did a good job in many parts of his speech.

On the positive side, it was excellent that the President not only insisted on "mutual respect" but also made it clear to the Muslim world that if they expected the U.S. to respect them they must also respect the U.S. in return. He also conveyed a very powerful message that the actions of some Muslims, including terrorism and the abuse of human rights in many parts of the Muslim world, are the main causes of distorting the image of Muslims in the West. The message was clear that it is not America's fault that Islam has a bad image as many Muslims believe and promote (these acts of violence). President Obama did a fine job of forcing the Muslim world to face reality by clearly stating that the U.S. relationship with Israel is unshakable, that Holocaust denial is wrong, and that Jerusalem is not only for Muslims. It was also important that the President set a new rule that democracy of the ballot without being associated with human rights and without a mechanism that ensures that it will persist after the election is simply meaningless. This was

---

[3] Obama, B. (2009, June 4). President Obama Addresses Muslim World in Cairo [Transcript]. *The Washington Post.* Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com

a strong message to Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood who want to use democracy only to get to power without consideration for human rights or for the persistence of the democratic process itself.

It was also great that the president emphasized the rights of minorities who live in Muslim majority countries such as Coptic Christians in Egypt and Maronites in Lebanon. It is important that the Muslim world realize that, as they expect the U.S. to respect its Muslim minority and their religious rights, they too should know that the U.S. is also expecting the same kind of respect for non-Muslim minorities.

On the other side of the coin there were also some negative aspects of the speech. Firstly, the speech was perceived by many in a way that made Israel look as if it is responsible for all the Palestinian suffering. The reality is that most suffering of the Palestinians is caused by their own leadership that refused to: accept unconditionally the existence of the state of Israel, denounce the promotion of the annihilation of all Jews, and accept that they have created a generation of young Palestinian Muslims who believe that the Jews are sub-human and must be killed on religious basis. This destructive Palestinian attitude - rather than building settlements by Israel - is what causes the Palestinian suffering. As President Obama put it in clear perspective, his responsibility as a president is primarily to protect the American people; hence people must also realize that the Israeli leadership has a primary responsibility to protect its own people. Had the Hamas organization accepted the state of Israel, vouched to stop terrorism and respect the previous international agreements, many - if not most - of the current frictions between both sides would not have existed. Israel proved to the whole world that it is a country that truly wants peace. This happened when Israel returned back all of Sinai to Egypt and got nothing but a peace agreement. It is unfair to put Israel that uses the Arabic language on its street signs to help its Arab minority and make their life more comfortable in the same basket with the Palestinian leaders that burn synagogues and promote the killing of all Jews.

Secondly, the President was ambiguous about how he would work with American Muslims to help them fulfill "Zakat". The obligation of "paying" the Zakat (or charitable donation of 2.5 percent) to the needy is one of the five pillars of Islam. On the other hand, "collecting" it by an organized group is not one of those pillars. It is important to recall that the organized collection of the Zakat was the main power behind the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate that gave the early Muslims the ability to declare wars on others and to dominate many regions of the world at some stage of history. It is not wise to allow this to happen again and supporting Zakat "collection" through organized channels overseas must be carefully calculated to avoid

the misuse of these funds for terrorism or even fueling a broader global religious war. Ultimately, it is important for the President to stress where he will draw the line for religious freedom. Is he going to allow Muslims to stone adulteries women to death? Kill homosexuals, and allow marriage of young girls to respect their 'religious rights'? The president should have made it clear that he will support the right of Muslims to practice Islam but he must have added unambiguously that this has to be within the borders of U.S. Law and that it must not be in any way a threat to the national security of his nation.

A third negative element of the speech was the use of the story of Isra to show Muslims that Muslims, Christians, and Jews lived in harmony in Jerusalem. This particular story is actually used by many Muslims and Islamic scholars to claim superiority of Muslims and Islam over all other nations and religions since the Prophet Mohamed according to the Hadith (sayings of the Prophet) was the leader or the "Imam" of all prophets at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. The president should have used an example other than Isra to make his point.

(Note: The Al-Aqsa Mosque was traditionally understood, as the King Solomon Temple as Islam had not reached this area before Mohamed was there - so how was there a mosque? In fact, the Quran did not use the word "Jamaa" or Mosque in this story but instead it used the expression "Masjid" (Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa) which means any worship place - not necessarily Islamic - where people of faith prostrate to God).

Lastly, the president should have realized that defending the Hijab (Islamic head Scarf for women) was probably not very wise in this speech as the Hijab, according the Sharia and the traditional Tafseer (Interpretation) of the Quran, is a discriminatory dress that has to be worn by "free" women to distinguish them from the slaves as the former are "more precious" than the latter. This totally contradicts the president's view that "any world order that elevates one nation or group of people over another will inevitably fail". It was good just to mention that the U.S. defended the right of Muslim women to wear the Hijab without overstating the issue of female Muslims' dress code. Many Muslim women do not wear the Hijab as it is simply not one of the five pillars of Islam. It would have been much better if the president had said 'as the U.S. defended the rights of Muslim women to wear the Hijab, he also expects the Muslim world to defend the rights of Muslim women not to wear it'.

In conclusion, President Obama managed to eloquently convey a powerful message that the Muslim world needed to hear. It made the Muslim world feel that they should share responsibility in the relationship and insisted on

"mutual" respect from both sides and not only from non-Muslims toward Muslims. He established the importance of human rights above democracy and upheld the unshakable relationship between U.S. and Israel.

Furthermore, he acknowledged the rights of religious minorities in the Muslim word and gave evidence to prove that the U.S. is not against Muslims. However, the speech put the blame of the Palestinian suffering equally on both Israelis and Palestinian leadership without making it clear that the suffering of the Palestinians is predominantly caused by the unwise decisions of the Palestinian leaders and the rhetoric of hatred and violence promoted by their religious scholars. The President could have also been better advised about certain Islamic theological issues such as Zakat, the Hijab and the story of Israel.

Weakening Islamism Is Vital To Improve US Image In The Muslim World

In the December 1, 2009 issue of the WSJ, Fouad Ajami - in an Op-Ed entitled "The Arabs Have Stopped Applauding Obama" - argued that President Obama's diplomatic approach to win the hearts and minds of the Muslim world has not been successful.[4] Poll results have shown that unfavorable views of the US are as high as 82%, 69 %, and 70% in the Palestinian territories, Turkey, and Egypt respectively. In fact, the Op-Ed stated that unfavorable views of the US in Pakistan have risen from 63% in 2008 to 68% in 2009 according to a recent Pew survey.

In addition, after President Obama came to office in 2009, the number of home-grown Islamist terror plots inside the US has risen dramatically compared to the previous years. The Year of 2009 represents the highest level of domestic home-grown Islamic radicalism in the US since 2001.

We must question why President Obama's approach with the Muslim world has not succeeded yet in at least having a more positive effect in improving the US image in several Muslim countries or in decreasing the rate of home-grown Islamic radicalism on the home front. One of the main reasons for this lack of success is that US strategic communications with the Muslim world was largely based on the assumption that the problem of Islamic Radicalism and hatred to America is primarily because of the US foreign policy with the Muslim world and thus changing this policy will change the latter. This can only work if the main problem was in the US approach; however, if the main problem was in the Muslim world, such an approach cannot succeed as it will be like trying to change the keys to open a room while the problem is in the rusty lock! In the latter situation, changing the lock - or in other words changing the Muslim world itself - is crucial to solving the problem.

Improving the image of the US in the Muslim world before the proliferation of the phenomenon of Islamism was a very different task compared to trying

---

[4] Obama, B. (2009, June 4). President Obama Addresses Muslim World in Cairo [Transcript]. *The Washington Post.* Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com

to improve its image after the phenomenon has proliferated. While traditional approaches of diplomatic, economic and social engagement had the possibility of working with the earlier situation, non-traditional ways to weaken Islamism are now needed for today's situation.

Islamism, or the broad collection of movements to impose intolerant forms of Islamic teachings and practices, has made many in the Muslim world unable to be satisfied with any political system that does not implement Sharia law in some form or fashion. Any Un-Islamic system is seen as an enemy to Islam that must be opposed through violent or even non-violent means. Bin Laden was clear is his offer for the US to convert to Islam in order to stop terrorism against it.[5]

In addition, Islamism has made many in Muslim societies dream about regaining the superiority of the historical Islamic Caliphate over the world. This is clearly observed on web sites and comments by many Muslims in the Muslim world. In this case, it is hard for many Islamists to accept a country like the US that is viewed as denying this position to the Islamic world.

Furthermore, Islamism has aggravated criticism of the US as it advocates and supports values of freedom and liberty around the world that are seen by Islamists as "Un-Islamic" - particularly the values of freedom of religion, women's rights, gay rights, and more humane punishments for criminals (e.g., not stoning women for committing adultery). Some may argue that Muslims are still very interested to come to the US even if they see it as "Un-Islamic". The answer is simply that many Muslims are attracted by the economic factors rather than the values of freedom and liberty in the US and the West.

The above complex situation illustrates that the US may need to address the challenge of weakening the Islamism phenomenon first in order to improve its image in the Muslim world as this phenomenon plays an important role in creating hatred of America. In other words, removing the obstacle that impedes improving the US image in the Muslim world or at least significantly reducing it is fundamental to succeed in this diplomatic mission.

---

[5] Spillius, A. (2007, September 08). Osama bin Laden tells US to convert to Islam. *The Telegraph.* Retrieved from http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/

Trying to satisfy the Muslim world by changing the US will not be effective unless the US is ready to end its values of freedom and liberty and adopt an Islamic Sharia system.

The US administration must realize that the problem of poor views of this country in the Muslim world could actually be predominantly in the Muslim world and not in America. In such a case, changing the latter or the Muslim world rather than the US is fundamental to improving the image of the US among Muslims. This also can lead to the conclusion that the US may need to work on changing the perception of the Muslim world to its foreign policy rather than focusing on changing its foreign policy to win the hearts and minds of Muslims. Sophisticated psychological and behavioral modification methods may be needed to achieve this.

In this context, it is also important to raise the point that the Muslim world is in far greater need than the US to improve its image in the world as its image has been painted by terrorism and barbarism especially in the last few years.

In brief, no matter what the non-Islamic world does - short of submitting to the Islamic Sharia - the Islamists will never be satisfied completely. The US must either change itself to adopt an Islamic system to satisfy the Muslim world or alternatively assist in changing the latter. Weakening the Islamism phenomenon is vital to ultimately improve the image of the US in the Muslim world as Islamism is currently a - if not the - major obstacle to enhancing the US image among Muslims.

The Missing 'Balance' In US Diplomacy With The Muslim World

The rising cases of homegrown Islamist Radicalism in the US and the several terror plots that were discovered in 2009 in the US are alarming.[6] The five Muslim students who went to Pakistan to wage Jihad against their own country, the Fort Hood Massacre, and the latest Christmas airline terror attempt are just a few examples of many. In fact, statistically speaking, the number of homegrown Islamist terror plots inside the US was the highest since 2001. In trying to understand this trend in the first year of the current Administration, one should question whether some actions of the President are perceived in a way that is encouraging the Jihadists to intensify their attacks on the US. While there could be several explanations for this sharp rise of terrorism cases in the US after President Obama took office, the possibility of adverse reactions to some of his actions should not be discounted.

Firstly, from a cultural perspective, the Arab world resonates with appearances of strength and weakness. This could be related to the admiration of the role played by wars and the military defeat of non-Muslims in the early expansion of Islam or it could be also be related to the classical Islamic notion of God that is based on 'fear' from his power. Other factors such as ancient Arabic poems that glorified tribal warfare played a role in creating this mentality that respects power. Irrespective of the cause of this psychological makeup, it is vital to mention that actions taken by the US in its outreach efforts to the Muslim world MUST be evaluated carefully so that they are not perceived by the Jihadists as signs of weakness. A delicate balance is needed so that the US can win the hearts and minds of moderate Muslims without being perceived as a weak country as this perception can actually aggravate the problem of Jihadism. Such notions are indeed, foreign to a Western mentality, but it is crucial to be able to understand these cultural "translation" issues.

Some of the actions of President Obama that could have been perceived as weakness by the Jihadists include:

---

[6] Macedo, D. (2009, December 14). Homegrown Terror on the Rise in 2009. *Fox News.* Retrieved from http://www.foxnews.com/*us*

1- Excessive bowing to the King of Saudi Arabia instead of giving him the normal Saudi greetings or hug.[7] Bowing is seen by many Muslims as a sign of extreme weakness and an act of worship that should be given only to God. President Obama could have given the king a traditional Saudi hug without doing an act of worship as the latter would only make the President perceived as weak in the eyes of the radicals.

2- Giving the closure of Guantanamo Bay a priority on the President's agenda[8] was another action that could have been perceived as a sign of weakness by many radicals. Many believed that the existence of the Guantanamo Bay prison was used as a recruitment tool for Al-Qaeda. However, statistics are showing that the number of terror attempts and attacks on the US have actually increased after active steps were taken to close the prison when President Obama took office in 2009.

3- Raising the issue of possible punishment for CIA officials for using tough measures against the terrorists could be perceived by the Radicals as another sign of US weakness.[9] This issue should have been dealt with in a very secretive manner within the government to avoid giving the Jihadists a feeling of victory that might encourage them to do more attacks on the US - as well as revealing sensitive information regarding our intelligence gathering methods.

4- Defending the rights of Muslim women to wear the Hijab without showing the same level of care to defending the rights of Muslim women who want to practice their freedom to be 'westernized' or to choose their faith has sent another message of weakness that could aggravate Islamic radicalism.[10] The president praised Nashala Hearn (a Muslim) from Muskogee, Oklahoma for standing for her right to wear

[7] Obama Bows to Saudi King [Video]. (2009, April 02). Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com

[8] Tran, M. (2009, January 22). Obama signs order to close Guantánamo Bay. *The Guardian.* Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/

[9] Obama: Charges For Bush Officials Possible. (2009, June 18). *CBS News.* Retrieved from http://www.cbsnews.com/stories

[10] Obama, B. (2009, June 04). Text: Obama's Speech in Cairo. *The New York Times.* Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com

the Hijab and invited her to be a guest in Ramadan dinner (Iftar) at the White House in September 2009.[11]

On the other hand, the President did not show the same level of care by showing a clear stand beside Muslim women who want to practice their freedom in the US. One of the recent Muslim victims for freedom was Noor Faleh Almaleki- a 20-year-old woman from Iraq who was killed in the US by her father who ran her over with a car because she had become "too westernized". Furthermore, President Obama neither praised nor invited Rifqua Bary (a Muslim) - who could be killed for apostasy inside the US according to Islamic Sharia rules - to show a similar stand with her rights to choose her beliefs.[12] Showing such care to young Muslim women who want to wear the Hijab and failure to show the same level of care to Muslim women who want to be 'westernized' or who want to practice freedom of religion in the US was another action that can only be perceived as weakness by the Jihadists that invites more aggression against the US.

The above factors may not be perceived as weakness in Western minds; however, what is more important is how they are perceived in the Jihadists' and Radical's minds. Presidential actions cannot be interpreted as weakness, because if so, this will actually aggravate Islamic Radicalism. A careful balance and consideration of cultural notions is needed in US diplomacy to 'win the hearts and minds' of Muslims without being perceived as weak. US actions need to be developed and carried out through the lens of the target audience - not from a Western perspective - in order to create a positive impact on the Muslim world.

---

[11] U.S. to defend Muslim girl wearing scarf in school. (2004, March30). *CNN Justice.* Retrieved from http://articles.cnn.com

[12] Fokianos, N. (2010, January 20) FOX 35 talks to Rifqa Bary supporter [video]. *Fox News*. Retrieved from http://www.myfoxorlando.com

The Future Of Egypt Between Secularism And Islamism

The future of Egypt has been a hot media topic in 2010. The topic has been discussed in major news media. Currently, parliamentary elections are held in Egypt to determine who will rule the Parliament for the next five years.[13] This election is seen as a significant stage on the way to the 2011 presidential election.

Critics of the Mubarak regimen believe that the country is collapsing under the current regimen. They suggest different leadership for Egypt such as Aiman Nour [leader of Al-Ghad (tomorrow) party and a founding member of Kefay (enough) movement], Al-Baradeii [former head of International Atomic Energy Agency IAEA], or one of the members of the Muslim Brotherhood.

It is almost impossible to deny that Egypt needs improvements and reforms in several dimensions; however it is also unfair to completely ignore the positive aspects of the current ruling regimen. For example, the Egyptian currency remained relatively stable over several years against the US dollar. In addition, Schistosomiasis -an endemic parasitic disease in Egypt for thousands years- has been eradicated only during Mubarak era. The regimen also maintains significant elements of secularism. For example; women are not forced by the government to wear the Hijab in public places, people are not forced to pray, and hotels can offer alcohol and gambling in casinos.

The Mubarak regimen managed to a great extent to weaken the military wing of Islamism phenomenon however the regimen could not effectively weaken the spread of Islamism at the ideological level. The Egyptian regimen is not unique in this as several regimens including western governments were also and are still unable to fight this ideological dimension of Radical Islam. In fact, after Luxor massacre in Egypt 1997 President Mubarak recognized the global nature of Radical Islam and suggested an international conference to unite the world's efforts against it but unfortunately western governments did not listen to this advice back then. [14]

The growth of the ideology of Islamism phenomenon is creating a challenge for the ruling regimen in Egypt and for others regimens as well.

---

[13] Note: This Op-Ed was written on November 28, 2010.

[14] Massacre in Luxor. (2002, December 06). *BBC News.* Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk

Allowing the Muslim Brotherhood to rule the country by will have irreversible and grave consequences on the future of Egypt and the Middle East. If the Muslim Brotherhood took power it will essentially ban what they see as "Un-Islamic" practices such women wearing swimming togs on beaches or drinking alcohol and gambling in hotels. This will certainly have major negative impact on tourism in the country. In addition, it is unlikely that tourists would love to visit the country when it is controlled by a party that promotes Sharia Laws such as stoning adulteries, hanging gays, and beheading apostates in public places. The above factors can undoubtedly ruin tourism industry. The collapse of this industry - which will inevitably happen if Muslim Brotherhood came to power- can drag the country into more poverty, more unemployment, and facilitates the recruitment of more Jihadists.

Furthermore, the Muslim brotherhood will not respect at all the peace treaty with Israel. Just a day before the current parliamentary elections in Egypt, the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, Mohammed Badie, said if his movement wins the election, it will work to sever relations with Israel. This factor can drag the country to major confrontations with Israel and end any hope for peace in the area.

Aiman Nour who might run against President Mubarak in the coming presidential elections is relatively secular; however, he is not much different from the Muslim Brotherhood when it comes to their Anti-Israel position. In 2006, the Kefaya movement launched a campaign demanding ending the peace treaty with Israel.[15]

Al-Baradeii- who might also run for the presidential elections in the country in 2011 has recently received celebration by the Muslim Brotherhood and has appeared with the flag of the Muslim Brotherhood behind him in this celebration. [16]

At this stage of history, Egypt needs a strong leader who can be strong with the Jihadists to ensure stability of the country and at the same time is secular enough to maintain -if not improve-secularism. Supporting the current ruling regimen in Egypt against the Muslim Brotherhood and at the same time working with the regimen to improve its performance in certain aspects such as improving certain minority rights and improving the relationship with Israel is fundamental to ensure stability of the country and the region. Working against the ruling regimen by supporting its opponents

[15] Hendawi, H. (2006, September 14). Egyptian Activists Turn Against Israel. *The Washington Post.* Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com

[16] Chick, K. (2010, August 1). Muslim Brotherhood supports El Baradei. *The Washington Times.* Retrieved from http://www.washingtontimes.com/news

can lead to devastating and probably irreversible negative economic, social, and political consequences.

Democracy Will Not End Radical Islam

After September 11, many voices in the West argued that the lack of democracy in most of the Muslim world is the main cause of terrorism. Their analysis was based on their assumption that when young Muslims do not find a way to express themselves or say their opinion in a democratic process, they have no other option but to start down the path of extremism. This theory, while it seems attractive, does not explain certain fundamental observations.

Advocates for solving the problem of Islamic radicalism via implementing democracy need to explain the following: Why do Christians in the Middle East, who live under the same political circumstances as their fellow Muslims, not contribute to terrorism and suicide bombings? If a lack of democracy is the true cause of terrorism, it should affect both Muslims and Christians to the same extent.

Furthermore, the 'lack of democracy' theory cannot explain why homegrown terrorism and Islamic extremism developed in democratic countries and societies such as the UK. The theory also cannot explain why Islamic extremism has developed in US, as we have recently seen with some young Muslims from North Carolina, and with some US citizens of Somali origin who travelled to Somalia to wage violent Jihad.

The following are just few examples of Home grown Islamic extremism in the US ONLY in 2008:

- A convert from Long Island joined al Qaeda (disclosed this past week) and gave the group information about Long Island trains and New York City's subways.
- A plot to kill hundreds of soldiers at Fort Dix formulated by American Muslims who have lived here for 25 years (all convicted).
- A plot to operate a terrorist training camp in Oregon(pleaded guilty).
- A plot to blow up two synagogues and a National Guard plane in upstate New York by prison converts (scheduled to go to trial).
- A plot to blow up buildings by the Liberty City 7 (all convicted).
- The cases of young Somali teenagers raised in the U.S. going overseas to become suicide bombers.

It is hard to say that all the above incidents were due to the lack of democracy in the US!

In fact, concrete evidence shows that premature implementation of democracy in some Islamic countries can bring radical Islamic regimes to power. This happened in the early 1990s when a Salafi radical Islamic group in Algeria came to power in a democratic election and vouched to end democracy itself after being elected.[17] The sweeping victory of terror groups such as Hamas in the Palestinian elections in January 2006 is another example that suggests that "Sudden Democracy Syndrome" in the Middle East can be disastrous.

Looking at democracy as a process of establishing values of liberty, and not as the end result, can help solve this dilemma. The Middle East may be better off with a non-democratic system that provides people with elements of liberty than with a democratic system that brings Islamic extremists and fascists such as the Taliban to power.

The visit of the Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak to Washington this August has stirred up this issue again, as many asked the US administration to exert more pressure on the Egyptian regime to implement democracy.[18]

The US may need to engage and co-operate with the current leaders of Islamic countries such as the Mubarak regime on three strategic steps:

Step 1: Weakening Radical Islam

Step 2: Promoting educational systems that teaches values of mutual understanding and peaceful co-existence.

Step 3: Democracy

Trying to jump to step 3 before step 1 and 2 can cause many problems, as explained earlier. In addition, forcing democracy on the current regimes can create another enemy for the US in addition to the Islamic extremists. We do not need to have more enemies to the US if we can have less.

Changing societies cannot happen all of a sudden. Working with the current political leadership of Islamic countries to bring gradual but progressive changes in society can be beneficial to the free world. On one hand, failure to support the current regimes and American allies in the Muslim world can allow radical Islamists to gain more power; on the other hand, supporting these regimes unconditionally may not be very effective either. Working

---

[17] Murphy, K. (1990, June 16). Islam Fundamentalism Sweeps Over Algeria Like Desert Wind. *The Los Angeles Times.* Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/

[18] Hassan, A. (2009, August 17). EGYPT: Mr. Mubarak and son go to Washington [Blog Post]. *The Los Angeles Times.* Retrieved from http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/

effectively with, not against, US allies in the Muslim world and using incentives for these countries conditioned by achieving progress in certain areas of education, low, and media, to modernize the society; can be the best available option.

On a personal note, I as an Egyptian citizen would prefer to live under the Mubarak regime than to live under a democratically elected Muslim Brotherhood group.

Islam In Europe

Swiss Reject Building Minarets

Last Sunday Swiss voters supported a referendum proposal to ban the building of minarets.[1] Official results show more than 57% of voters and 22 out of 26 cantons - or provinces - voted in favor of the ban.

Building Minarets was seen by many as a sign of Islamisation of their free country. The government opposed the ban, saying it would harm Switzerland's image, particularly in the Muslim world. Several points must be raised in relation to this issue:

1- Can Muslims blame the Swiss people for being afraid of Islamisation in their country? No, especially while the entire world sees the inhumane applications of Islamic Law (Sharia) wherever it is implemented?[2] It should not be unexpected that the Swiss people would not want a system that even today practices discrimination against women, gays, and minorities in the name of religion. The vivid images of stoning women and hanging gays in the Muslim world should make any sane individual inclined not to allow such an intolerant system to grow in his or her country under the banner of freedom of religion.

2- The Swiss people who rejected building Minarets may be sending a message that their tolerance did not change the Muslim world. For several decades Muslims have been allowed to build Mosques in Europe, wear their religious symbols such as the Hijab, and preach Islam to Non-Muslims. Despite such high levels of tolerance towards Muslims in the West, Non-Muslims are not permitted to practice similar rights in several parts of the Muslim world. Preaching Christianity is criminalized in a number of Muslim countries. Furthermore, Non-Muslims are not permitted to have their holy books or to build their religious temples is many Sharia controlled areas. This lack of reciprocity of the Western tolerance will naturally make many Westerners feel that showing tolerance to Muslims has not been effective.

---

[1] Bremner, C. (2009, November 30). Swiss Voters Back Right-Wing Minaret Ban. *The Sunday Times.* Retrieved from http://www.timesonline.co.uk

[2] Sharia Law promotes values of killing apostates, stoning adulteries, killing gays, and slavery for more information about this law the reader can review approved Islamic jurisprudence books such as Minhaj Al-Muslim or Fiqh Al-Sunna and observe the practices of systems that implement Sharia laws such as in Iran, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Taliban, and others.

3- It seems strange that Muslims would insist on building Minarets for Mosques in Switzerland while thousands of Mosques already exist inside the Muslim world without Minarets.

Furthermore, The Minarets are seen by many as representation of superiority of Islam, especially when their level is higher than the Churches' level; this sheds some light on the hidden intentions of those Muslims who insisted on building Minarets in the heart of Europe. It is important that Muslims in Switzerland explain why they insist on using such historical symbols of Muslim superiority when it is neither mentioned in the Quran nor considered vital to building a mosque.

4- It seems too hypocritical that Muslims demand building Minarets in Europe yet many Non-Muslims in the Muslims world are denied their basic and fundamental religious right to build churches, or even carry their holy book with them. The more important problem for Muslims in Switzerland to address is the Muslim world not giving basic religious rights to its Non-Muslim minorities, not building these unneeded Minarets.

Is The Decision Of A "Partial" Ban On The Burqa In France Enough?

French lawmakers recommended a partial ban on any veils that cover the face (the niqab), as well as the burqa - the full-body covering worn by some Muslim women or "total veil". This ban, recently announced by a French parliamentary commission, would apply in public places like hospitals and schools, and on public transport. It would also apply to anyone who attempts to receive public services, but it would not apply to people wearing such coverings on the street, the commission said.

French lawmakers believe the burqa is a growing phenomenon beneath which lies a not-so-subtle message of fundamentalism. In addition, the Ipsos poll for Le Point magazine found 57 percent of French people said it should be illegal to appear in public wearing clothes that cover the face.[3]

This step when seen in the context of banning the Mosque minarets in Switzerland last November is indicative of the beginning of a movement to reject growing signs of Islamist superiority and radicalization in Europe.

It is fundamental to raise the issue that solely focusing on the 'burqa' (Islamic dress that covers the face) may lead to ignoring the hijab (the Islamic head scarf). The latter is a much more powerful tool in promoting Islamism at the societal and community levels than the burqa as it is worn by many more Muslim women (compared to the burqa). The acceptance of some Islamic leaders in France the ban of the Burqua without addressing the Hijab can be misleading as it is like a magician that makes you focus on one hand so that you ignore his other hand that will perform the trick.

Experience over the last few decades in many Muslim countries shows that the proliferation of the hejab has been pivotal in spreading Islamism and the desire to implement Sharia Law.

Furthermore, this discriminatory dress makes Muslim women feel that they belong to the Muslim Umma rather than to their mother countries or to humanity which adds more salt to the wounds of segregation and divisions between humans. The impact of the hijab on the psyche and mind of Muslim children who grow up in a hijab -dominated society or community and the possible role of this symbolism on their radicalization and its impact on their feelings of alienation in the West must be also addressed and studied.

---

[3] France: Partial ban on any veils that cover the face. (2010, January 26). Retrieved from http://www.hotindienews.com

It is important in this context to mention that the battle against the niquab, burqa, or the hejab must not be seen by Muslims as a war against Islam. Indeed, the words "niquab" and "burqa" are not mentioned in the Quran and the term "hejab" has never been used as a code of dress in the Quran (the word hejab was used in the Quran ONLY to express several meanings, but not a dress code.[4] Furthermore, the Hadith of prophet Mohamed that described how Muslim women should dress after puberty is a weak Hadith as its narration does not follow an unbroken chain of transmission from the time of the prophet. The Hadith is ranked as Hadith "Mursal" which indicates that it is not a Sahih (or accurate) one.[5] These theological facts may explain to us some of the foundations for the recent and wise decision of Sheikh Al-Azhar (Head of Al-Azhar Mosque and University) in Egypt who decided to ban the niquab or burqa in Al-Azhar University which is the top Islamic University in the world.[6]

It is both ironic and painful to see how the liberal values in France have been used for years to protect a discriminatory dress code such as the hejab that is described in Islamic Law as a dress aimed at making a distinction between free women and slaves.[7] According to Sharia law, only the former are permitted to wear it as they are "precious"!

The burqa battle should not make us ignore the threat of the hijab which represents - based on the percentage of Muslim women wearing it in France - more threat to the values of liberty in the West than the burqa. The hejab as a widespread phenomenon in many Muslim communities represents a trend toward implementing Sharia Laws. This can lead to civil wars in the future if Muslims reached sufficient numbers in the West to demand the implementation of Sharia Laws or the use force to achieve an Islamic state in Europe. Free societies in the West need to protect themselves from this situation by limiting the growth of Radical Islam in their societies. For those in the West who are ready to accept Sharia Laws under the banner of 'the will of the majority', they better begin to collect the stones for stoning adulterers/adulteresses in public in Europe and US - as we already see in Islamic countries and societies that implement these laws!

---

[4] See Quran 7:46; 17:45; 19:17; 33:53; 38:32; 41:5; 42:51

[5] Muslim Women's League. (December 1997). An Islamic Perspective on Women's Dress. Retrieved from http://www.mwlusa.org/topics

[6] Egypt Cleric 'To Ban Full Veils'. (2009, October 5). *BBC News.* Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk

[7] The Hijab. (2009, October 12). Retrieved from http://www.bogvaerker.dk/wordpress

It is also important to note that several Islamic organizations may be erected to collect money from the whole Muslim world in order to pay for the fines that will be paid by the "Munaquabat" (or Muslim women who wears the Niquab) when they break the law in France and insist on wearing the burqa! The lawmakers in France should be aware of this possibility and take proper decisions to guard against this.

Finally, the decision of France to start a partial ban on the burqa is a good step to protect France from the spread of Islamism; however, it is still not enough to prevent the Islamisation of the country via the Hijab. Muslims need to stop fighting for the hejab and the burqa and start fighting radicalism that has spread in many of their own societies and communities all over the world. The hejab must change from a physical cover for the body to be a cover of love that surrounds the hearts of individuals.

How The "Hijab Martyr" Case In Germany Demonstrates Moral Hypocrisy In The Muslim World

The recent murder in Germany of a pregnant Muslim woman, Marwa Al-Sherbini,[8] at the hands of a German man, has provoked bitter reactions and protests in several parts of the world, and precipitated strong diplomatic responses. This can be illustrated by the following examples:

1. Demonstrations by Muslim communities erupted in Germany,[9] Iran,[10] Egypt,[11] Turkey[12] and France[13] and many other countries.

(Note: some of these demonstrations were linked with threats to Germany)

2. Strong reactions from leaders of Islamic groups and organizations in several parts of the world, including the United States

3. Diplomatic responses at the highest levels conveying condolences for the woman's death

4. Significant public response and outcry, which has been portrayed in the Arab and Islamic media Retrieved

5. Labeling the victim as a "hijab martyr"

---

[8] Hauslohner, A. (2009, July 12). Tragic Symbol: Egypt's Headscarf Martyr. *Time.* Retrieved from http://www.time.com/time/world

[9] Connolly, K. & Shenker, J. (2009, July 7). The Headscarf Martyr: Murder in German Court Sparks Egyptian Fury. *The Guardian.* Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/world

[10] Iranian Sudents Protest Agaisnst Al-Sherbini's Murder. (2009, July 12). *Tehran Times.* Retrieved from http://www.tehrantimes.com

[11] Martin, J. (2009, July 8). Egypt: Murder Case Turned Into Protest Accusing Germany of 'Racism'. *The European Union Times.* Retrieved from http://www.eutimes.net

[12] Murder of "hijib martyr" at German court to be protested in Turkey. (2009, July 17) *World Bulletin.* Retrieved from http://www.worldbulletin.net/news

[13] French Muslims Protest 'Hijab Martyr' Killing. (2009, July 19). *PressTV.* Retrieved from http://previous.presstv.ir

No righteous human can deny that to kill any person in cold blood is unacceptable and barbaric. However, in light of the reactions by Muslims to this murder, there are a few questions that must be raised.

First, why does such a reaction ONLY occur when the killer is a westerner? Thousands of Muslim women who also wear the hijab have been murdered by Islamic terrorists. Yet, when such an incident occurs, a heated response by Muslim communities around the world against the actions of the perpetrators is nonexistent. Does this silence imply tacit acceptance of such terrorist acts by Muslim communities so long as they are conducted by Muslims?

Second, would the Muslim world have reacted to the murder in the same manner if Marwa had not been wearing the hijab? Muslim communities must stop classifying women as Muhajabat, meaning "wearing the Hijab," a respected title, and Mutabarigat, meaning "not wearing the hijab," which is generally considered especially by dedicated Arab Muslims as a disrespectful description of a woman. The soul of every human being must be regarded as sacred irrespective of whether a woman wears the hijab or not.

Third, where was the Muslim outcry in March 2002 for young girls in Saudi Arabia who were burned to death in a fire at their school when religious police decided to delay their evacuation because they were not wearing the hijab?[14] These girls deserved the same public response that was evoked by Marwa's murder.

Fourth, there have been many honor killings of innocent young Muslim girls in Europe and other parts of the world.[15]

Why have Muslim communities not demonstrated against such killings, and not called these victims "martyrs"? Is the 15 year-old girl's blood cheaper than Marwa's because she was not wearing a Hijab?

Fifth, how would Muslim communities feel if an apologist claimed that we must understand the frustration and anger of the man who killed Marwa, in

---

[14] Saudi Police 'Stopped' Fire Rescue. (2002, March15). *BBC News*. Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk

[15] Chesler, P. (2010 Spring). World Wide Trends in Honor Killings. *The Middle East Quarterly, 3-11.*

Note: In a study, worldwide, 91 percent of perpetrators were Muslims. In North America, most killers (84 percent) were Muslims, with only a few Sikhs and even fewer Hindus perpetrating honor killings; in Europe, Muslims comprised an even larger majority at 96 percent while Sikhs were a tiny percentage. In Muslim countries, obviously almost all the perpetrators were Muslims.

reaction to acts of terror committed by Muslims, instead of blaming him for the murder? This scenario, while theoretical, actually occurs when some apologists attempt to justify and excuse the activities of Islamic terrorists.[16] Why have these apologists not found justification and excuses for the criminal who killed Marwa? Is it perhaps because they can only find justifications when Muslims are the killers?

Furthermore, if Muslims truly consider human lives as equal, they should have responded with the same passion as they did in the Marwa case against Islamic terrorists who have killed hundreds of thousands of their fellow human beings - both Muslim and non-Muslim - in several parts of the world, including Iraq and Algeria.[17]

In short, killing Marwa Al-Sherbini was a grave crime. But the selective reaction to these sorts of crimes by Muslim communities, and the ignorance of similar ones committed by fellow Muslims demonstrates a significant double-standard.

---

[16] Bukay, D. (2008, July 1). The Esposito School: Islamic Apologists in Action, or Who is the "Near Enemy"? Campus Watch. Retrieved from http://www.campus-watch.org

[17] For examples please visit: http://www.thereligionofpeace.com/

The Arab-Israeli Conflict

Ensuring Israel Military Superiority Is Vital To Maintain Peace Treaties In The Middle East

The recent revolutions that swept several countries in the Middle East have created a new situation that can seriously affect the current peace treaties between some Arab countries and Israel. These include the Camp David peace treaty with Egypt. Arab regimes that pretended to be friends with Israel have allowed -for several decades-unprecedented levels of anti-Semitism to flourish in their societies. Unlike anti-Semitism in the Arab world during the 1950s and 1960s that was predominantly political, the current form of anti-Semitic views in the Arab world is predominantly religious in nature. This change makes addressing anti-Semitism much more complicated and difficult to solve.

It appears that some of the former Arab leaders allowed anti-Semitism to develop to pathological levels so that they could always blame Israel for the problems within their countries. For example, it was normal for some government officials in Egypt to blame "foreign hands" (referring to Israel) to put the blame on Israel for any problem they face - including terrorist acts.

Currently, there are two important trends that can affect the course of the relations between Arabs and Israel.

The first trend is caused by having more hostile governments toward Israel as a result of these revolutions. The worst-case scenario of this trend is if such governments decided to end their peace treaties with Israel.

The second trend is one that can have a positive impact on Arab-Israeli relations and is based on the following observations:

1- Arab countries are now more concerned about their local national problems after the revolutions than with the Palestinian issue. For example, despite the attempt of some religious scholars such as Sheikh Al-Quradawy attempting to resurrect the Palestinian issue with Egyptians, the general theme of the revolution in Egypt has been focused on the domestic situation rather than the Arab-Israeli conflict.

This trend was also noticed in other Arab countries such as Tunisia and Bahrain.

2- The logic that was used in the past that Israel is behind all the problems in the Arab world has become invalid as the same logic was used by the former Arab regimes to defame the revolutions and the revolutionaries by claiming that popular revolt in the Arab world was an Israeli conspiracy and that the revolutionaries were being paid by Israel.

3- Challenges to the orthodox Islamic way of thinking that suppressed individual thoughts and freedoms are now available on mainstream media in the Arab world. For example, there is a rising doubt about the accuracy of the authentic books of the Hadith (words and actions) of prophet Mohamed. Some of these Hadith were behind the mainstream Islamic teaching that Muslims must fight all Jews and kill them. As an example of this rising doubt about Hadith books a main stream TV Egyptian Channel called Dream 2 has aired recently several discussions with Adnan Al-Refaaii that created unprecedented doubt about the accuracy of the Hadith books. These discussions (in Arabic) were on a program called "Fi Sabeel Al-Hikma" (In the Path of Wisdom).

Israel cannot rely solely on the above positive trends as Islamist based anti-Semitism is deeply imbedded in the minds of millions of Muslims. In fact, ensuring Israel military superiority is the best antidote for wars in the area. For example, the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) that repeatedly stood against the peace treaty with Israel has recently announced that they will respect the treaty. This was not simply because they changed their views about Israel and the Jews but it was primarily because of the 'fear' of the Israel Military retaliation. The MB knows very well that if they came to power and cancelled the peace treaty with Israel, the Israel military retaliation in such a case can paralyze the country and prove beyond doubt to many Muslims that the slogan of the Muslim Brotherhood "Islam is the solution" is hoax.

It is important in this context to mention that 'fear' is an important component of Islamists minds. The fear of "Hell Fire" is for example an essential component of the religious education of millions of Muslims. The fear from retaliation of "Allah" is what makes many follow the religion so strictly as they are afraid of the punishment.

Israel MUST learn the lesson that all its negotiations with the Palestinians to stop terrorism inside Israel were virtually fruitless. On the contrary, a single powerful attack on Gaza in the winter of 2008-2009 that created 'fear' in the

mind of the Palestinians from the Israel Military power managed to almost stop Palestinian terror attacks inside Israel until today. The existence of the security barrier has also possibly contributed to such an effect.

In brief, "fear' is an important and influential component of the Arab Muslim minds. If Israel lost its Military superiority in the area, the new Arab governments will be encouraged to end the peace treaties with Israel which can drag the whole area into wars. The best guarantee to maintain peace treaties in the area is to ensure the Military superiority of Israel in the Middle East.

Why George Mitchell Failed

Special US envoy to the Middle East George Mitchell, the man charged with reconciling the Israelis and Palestinians, resigned this weekend.

Mitchell, a former Senate majority leader in the US, failed to achieve peace between the two sides. There's no disgrace in that – the line of failed envoys is long and well-known. He successfully brokered peace in Northern Ireland, but couldn't even get things started in the Middle East.

The question is why.

Obviously, it's impossible to solve a problem without addressing and treating its true cause. Approaching the Arab-Israeli conflict from the perspective that it is about land, so that giving more land to the Palestinians will solve the problem, is a failed endeavor.

Israel has already given Egypt the whole of the Sinai, and got nothing in return except a cold peace and rising anti-Semitism in the country. Similarly the disengagement from Gaza did not magically lead to a decline in the wave of anti-Semitism in the Muslim world.

Pro-Palestinian Muslim demonstrators across the world repeatedly use the chant "*Khyber Khyber Ya Yahood... Gaish Muhammad Sawfa Yaood*," which reminds the Jews that the army of Muhammad is coming back for a repeat of what was done to the Jewish Khyber tribe.

According to authentic Islamic history books, the Islamic army, led by Muhammad, annihilated the Jewish tribe of Khyber, raping its women and killing all its men.

Such barbaric statements against the Jews have been used by many in the Muslim world, and even inside the US and Europe. Sadly the chant was also used on Friday by thousands of pro-Palestinian demonstrators in Cairo's Tahrir Square.

The Hamas charter also calls for the destruction of Israel. This violent principle has its roots in the traditional Islamic teaching, based on Hadith books, that encourages the killing of all Jews before the end of days.

Until US envoys to the Middle East realize that the problem in the eyes of the Palestinians and their supporters is not the borders of Israel but the very existence of the country, all future missions will similarly fail. Solving the

Arab-Israeli conflict must be done initially at the theological rather than the political level, as the former is impeding the latter.

It is unfair to ask Israel to trust those who shamefully advocate the killing of Jews, and claim that Islamic annihilation of the Jews by an Islamic army is a model that must be emulated today.

The problem is not only in the existence of violent teachings in historical Islamic texts, but also in the dangerous desire of many Islamists and violent Islamic scholars to revive such violence in modern times. Violent texts exist in other religions as well, but we do not generally see such destructive desire to use the texts to justify killing others, and we rarely hear about modern scholars of other faiths who advocate using such texts literally.

The problem is that this disastrous anti-Semitic religious dimension is not limited to verses in books, but is also propagated by a powerful media machine that utilizes vicious, Nazi-style propaganda across the Muslim world. Publishing dehumanizing cartoons in the mainstream media, and blaming Jews for nearly every problem in the world has become much too common in the leading Arab media over the past few decades.

It is virtually impossible to promote any form of peaceful resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict without reducing such levels of anti-Semitism in the Muslim world.

Until future envoys to the Middle East understand the religious dimension of the problem, and that the Arab- Israeli conflict is not about borders but about the existence of the state of Israel, all future attempts to make peace in the area will fail.

By TAWFIK HAMID
05/15/2011 22:53
Link to the Op-Ed- see below :

http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Op-EdContributors/Article.aspx?id=220694

How Israel Should Respond To The Recent Palestinian Terror Acts

The recent Palestinian terror acts against Israeli civilians raises several questions, particularly about the timing of the attacks.

Today on March 23rd, a bomb blast in a cowardly terrorist attack in Jerusalem killed one and injured more than 20 other Israeli civilians,. The bomb, which was packed with more than a kilogram of explosives and shrapnel, was left on the sidewalk near the city's central bus station and might have been trigged by remote control just as a bus drove. One woman who was critically injured in the blast later died, according to several reports.

In addition, on March 19, Palestinian militants in Gaza fired more than 50 rockets into Israel. This was considered the heaviest barrage in two years, Israeli officials said.[1]

Furthermore on March 12th, a terrorist infiltrated the West Bank settlement of Itamar, southeast of Nablus, early Saturday and brutally stabbed five family members to death. The shocking attack occurred around 1 am as the terrorist entered the family home and murdered three children aged 11, 3, and an infant along with their parents. The victims were apparently sleeping as the killer came in.[2]

These terror attacks that occurred after a period of relative calm are likely to be attempts by the Palestinian terror groups to divert the attention of the recent Arab revolutions to the Palestinian cause as many of these revolutions did not put the Palestinian issue on their priority list. On some occasions, as the Friday prayer by Sheikh Youssef Al-Quaradawi in Tahreer square in Cairo, the Palestinian issue was mentioned; however, it was certainly not the theme of these revolutions that focused predominantly on local national issues and problems.

It is likely that the Palestinian Jihadist groups attacked Israel repeatedly during this particular time in an attempt to force Israel to respond in a strong military manner that would provoke widespread Arab anger against

---

[1] Smith, E. (2011, March 19). World Hamas Fires Dozens of Rockets at Israel, Heaviest Barrage in Years [Blog Post]. *The Blaze.* Retrieved from http://www.theblaze.com/stories

[2] Altman, Y. (2011, March 12). Horror in Samaria: Terrorist murders family of 5. Retrieved from http://www.ynetnews.com

Israel. The objective would be to bring back attention to the Palestinian cause and unite the revolutions under a common cause against the Jews and Israel.

It was wise that Israel was not dragged until the moment of writing this Op-Ed in this path as an immediate devastating military attack on Gaza or the West Bank would play into the agenda of the Palestinian radical groups such as Hamas and others. Military retaliation is certainly needed; however, what can be a more painful deterrent to the Palestinian Radical groups is that the Israeli government declared its intention to build new settlements. This "they kill, we build" strategy could be a big deterrent move on the Palestinian radical groups and many of their supporters.

In brief, the recent Palestinian terror acts on Israel are likely an attempt by Islamic radical Palestinian groups to provoke a strong immediate military retaliation from Israel to bring back the Palestinian issue to the attention of the "Arab street" since it had been largely overshadowed by recent revolutionary events across the Middle East and North Africa. The Israeli government may need to show some self-constraint at the moment to avoid helping this agenda of the radicals. However, the Israeli government MUST not stay silent and should:

1- Delay the military response for some time - as an immediate military action can work for the benefit of the agenda of the Palestinian radicals by diverting the anger in the Arab street and uniting it against Israel.

2- Declare that Israel will respond in a very strong military manner in a time that it will see as appropriate for this retaliation and that the Israeli response will make the radical groups regret that they attacked Israeli civilians.

3- Take a decision to build a new settlement in response to every attack that occurred on Israeli civilians. Ideally, Israel also should declare that some of these new settlements will be named after the names of the victims of terror to honor them and remember their names.

Why the Arab-Israeli Conflict Has Not Yet Been Resolved

The Arab Israeli conflict has repeatedly proved itself resistant to negotiated solutions. Despite peace treaties such as the Oslo accord,[3] hatred toward Jews and Israel has risen to unprecedented levels in the Palestinian areas and continues to rise in much of the Muslim world.[4] This consistent lack of progress should lead us to think anew about the underlying causes.

The view that solutions for the Arab-Israeli conflict have failed because of what some in the Muslim world call the 'expanding and colonizing ideology of Zionism' is unfair and devoid of truth. Israel proved its dedication to peace when they withdrew from Sinai, Lebanon, and Gaza in hope of peace with its neighbors.

What therefore are real factors causing the repeated failures of negotiated attempts to solve the Arab Israeli conflict? What perpetuates the stalemate?

One of these factors is that Palestinians do not accept the existence of Israel. Until Palestinian leaders, in both Arabic and English speeches, declare that Israel is their legitimate neighbor whom they no longer will strive to overrun, their participation in negotiations is fake, hypocritical, doomed to fail. It is impossible to negotiate with a partner about borders if this partner does not accept your existence to begin with.

The second factor blocking progress is the selfish mentality of the Palestinian leadership. Palestinian leaders seem to be interested in proving their "merit" by destroying Israel than in gaining a better life for their people. True leaders must be ready to do concessions to ensure better life for their people. Until Palestinian leaders are ready to make some concessions to the Israelis the problem will not be solved.

---

[3] Text: 1993 Declaration of Principles. (2001, November 29). *BBC News.* Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk

[4] Milson, M. (2008, May 27). Arab and Islamic Antisemitism. *The Middle East Media Research Institute.* Retrieved from http://www.memri.org/report

A third factor is the international community's naive belief that less radical Palestinians are "moderates." Fatah is not much different from Hamas in its refusal to accept that Israel is an established country with the same right to continue to exist as any other country in the world. Fatah is similarly virtually identical to Hamas with regard to its promotion of extreme anti-Semitic and anti-Israel propagandist incitement. Considering the Fatah leadership as 'moderate' because they are less radical in terms of their Islamic practices is like considering grade III cancer as a 'benign' tumor because it is less malignant than grade IV cancer.

The fourth reason that makes things worse is that the Palestinian leadership prefer to live -and make their population live -in delusions rather than in reality. Just recently, an official Palestinian report claimed that a key Jewish holy site - Jerusalem's Western Wall - has no religious significance to Jews.[5] It is impossible to solve the Arab Israeli conflict if the Palestinian leaders persisted on living in such delusions instead of admitting the archeological reality that Jerusalem's Western Wall is Jewish. Problems are not solved by living in fabrications and lies but rather by facing and admitting realities.

The fifth factor that aggravates inability of Palestinians to participate as serious partners in peace discussions is that the Palestinians of Gaza who elected Hamas have not had to pay the price for their choice. Hamas was elected on the promise of the Muslim Brotherhood that "Islam is the solution."[6] Allowing Palestinians to see that Hamas is unable to fulfill its promises would weaken radical Islam in the area. European and American economic support for Gaza under the banner of humanitarian aid masks the realities of the radical group's poor governance and enables them to survive.[7]

With Hamas still strong, Gazan Palestinians have zero interest cooperating with peace arrangements negotiated by the West Bank PLO leadership. To the contrary, their version of Islamic doctrine forbids any accommodation with the Jewish state.

---

[5] Hadid, D. (2010, November 11). Western Wall Not Jewish Says Palestinian Official. *The Huffington Post.* Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com

[6] Wilson, S. (2006, January 27). Hamas Sweeps Palestinian Elections, Complicating Peace Efforts in Mideast. *The Washington Post.* Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com/

[7] Global Appeal for Gaza Humanitarian Aid. (2009, January 05). *Voice of America.* Retrieved from http://www.voanews.com/english/news

What about Israel's role in the stalemate? What mistake does Israel continue to make?

The fifth factor inhibiting progress has been insufficient use by Israel of negative consequences, perhaps in part because their American and European "allies" would balk at Israel's use of such tactics.   Israel, for instance, could announce that it will build a certain number of new West Bank towns every year, or will annex West Bank land each year, unless and until Fatah and Hamas accept the minimal principles necessary for Israel to participate in any further negotiations. These principles would include: 1) Declaration of the right of the Jewish state of Israel to exist, 2) Cessation of both verbal incitement and physical violence against Israeli civilians and 3) Implementation of all previous agreements between Palestinians and Israelis.

Lastly, what of America's role? By contrast with encouraging Israel to establish negative consequences for continued Palestinian hostility, the current American strategy for obtaining a peace agreement in the region is counter-productive. President Obama's pressure on Netanyahu to make further concessions to recalcitrant Palestinian leaders adds yet another obstacle to peace.[8] Concrete evidence shows that unilateral concessions from the Israeli side without significant concessions from the Palestinian side are counterproductive.

Unfortunately, given the mentality of the Palestinian leadership, a strategy by Israel and its allies of negative consequences is probably the only strategy with potential, at last, to give peace a chance.

---

[8] Obama lead Netanyahu towards national suicide [Blog Post]. (2010, November 08). Retrieved from http://ivarfjeld.wordpress.com

Where To Point The Finger Of Blame In The Flotilla Incident

The recent interruption of the flotilla ship that was supposed to carry food and medicine to the people in Gaza has resulted in global anger and strong reactions against Israel. These reactions included many demonstrations against Israel and denouncements by different governments and government officials.[9]

The question that came to my mind when I saw such demonstrations is why we have not seen many in the Muslim world until today reacting in such an angry manner against the terrorists who actually killed thousands of their fellow Muslims. If we can see tens of thousands in the Muslim world an Europe demonstrating against the killing of the pro-Palestinian activists we should wonder why we do not also see similar powerful reaction against the Islamists who conduct terror acts nearly on daily basis and resulted in the loss of thousands of innocent lives. If the aim of the demonstrators is to show respect to human life then one should ask why the demonstrators do not respect to the same extent the human lives of the victims of terror by also demonstrating against the terrorists. In addition, why we have not seen the pro-Palestinians in the West also demonstrate with such anger in support of the human life of the Israelis who were brutally killed by Palestinian terrorists. Are these demonstrations a true expression of sincere care for human life or does it only represent a covert form of anti-Semitism that is expressed by selective demonstration against Israel. If the demonstrators truly care about human life we would have also seen them also demonstrating against Hamas as well when it killed many Palestinians in Gaza in its fight with Fatah to gain power and control over Gaza.[10]

Furthermore, a radio discussion between the IDF and the leaders of Flotilla demonstrated clearly that Israel offered the Palestinian activists to deliver on

---

[9] World condemns Israel aid ship raid [Video]. (2010, May 31). *Al Jazeera.* Retrieved from http://english.aljazeera.net

[10] Riots Between Hamas and Fatah Factions in Gaza Strip, West Bank Kill 8. (2006, October 01). *Fox News*. Retrieved from http://www.foxnews.com/story/
Issacharoff, A. (2007, December 06). At least 10 killed as Hamas forces seize Fatah HQ in northern Gaza Strip. Retrieved from http://www.haaretz.com/news

behalf of them the food and medicine to the people in Gaza.[11] If the intention of the Flotilla was only to deliver this support to people in Gaza why the Palestinian 'activists' rejected such an offer and thus resulted in such bloody end to the problem?

Before blaming Israel for attacking flotilla it is fair to mention that previous experience with Palestinian terrorists showed that on several occasions they disguised under different humanitarian covers in order to achieve violent goals.[12] In such a case, it is unfair to deny Israel the right to be suspicious about the intentions of the Flotilla especially when its leaders refused to let the Israelis deliver the support on their behalf to the people in Gaza.

To understand another dimension of the problem, let us imagine that a ship full of food and medicine has been sent to Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan- Is it correct to allow such a ship to deliver the material knowing that the main aim of Al-Qaeda is to destroy the US?

Allowing such support for Al-Qaeda can be considered as an indirect support for killing more Americans.

Some may argue that, Al-Qaeda is different from Hamas. Let us have a look on some statements from Hamas Charter to see the similarities between the two groups:

The Covenant and Slogan of the Islamic Resistance Movement

- Allah is its target, the Prophet is its model, the Koran its constitution: Jihad is its path and death for the sake of Allah is the loftiest of its wishes.

- Initiatives, and so-called peaceful solutions and international conferences, are in contradiction to the principles of the Islamic Resistance Movement.

---

[11] IDF video of 2010 flotilla timeline [Blog Post]. (2011, June 03). Retrieved from http://elderofziyon.blogspot.com

[12] Terrorist Misuse of Medical Services to Further Terrorist Activity. (2002, August 26). *Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs*. Retrieved from http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA

- It is necessary to instill in the minds of the Muslim generations that the Palestinian problem is a religious problem, and should be dealt with on this basis.

- Our struggle against the Jews is very great and very serious. It needs all sincere efforts. It is a step that inevitably should be followed by other steps. The Movement is but one squadron that should be supported by more and more squadrons from this vast Arab and Islamic world, until the enemy is vanquished and Allah's victory is realized.

Some may argue that the ship was for the people in Gaza rather than to Hamas. It is important here to mention that those 'people' in Gaza are the ones who actually choose Hamas and gave it a sweeping victory in Jan 2006.[13]

All what is needed to stop the Palestinian suffering is that the Hamas organization accepts the three basic and justifiable demands of the international community (i.e. to accept the right of Israel to exist, to respect the former international agreements of the PLO, and to stop violence against civilians). Had the Hamas organization accepted these international demands, people in Gaza would not have suffered and the flotilla incident and loss of lives would not have occurred.

So, before pointing a finger of blame at the Israelis, this finger should point first at the Hamas organization and its leadership for refusing these basic demands of the international community and also at the leaders of flotilla for refusing that the IDF deliver the support that was carried on the ship to the Palestinians.

---

[13] Wilson, S. (2006, January 27). Hamas Sweeps Palestinian Elections, Complicating Peace Efforts in Mideast. *The Washington Post.* Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com

Few Questions to Osama Bin Laden

A one minute audio message from Osama Bin Laden directed at U.S. President Barack Obama released recently through the Al-Jazeera television network says the Christmas Day attempted bombing of a Detroit-bound jetliner was part of al-Qaida's campaign against U.S. interests.[14] Osama Bin Laden not only claimed responsibility for the failed attempt to bomb the Detroit-bound airliner on Christmas, but also threatened more attacks on the United States.

As usual, Bin Laden tried to use the Arab-Israeli conflict to justify the barbarism of Al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

Some of Bin Laden's statements in this audiotape are below:

> "The message delivered to you through the plane of the heroic warrior Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab was a confirmation of the previous messages sent by the heroes of September 11th"

> "America will never dream of security unless we will have it in reality in Palestine," he added.

> "God willing, our raids on you will continue as long as your support for the Israelis continues."

> "It is unfair that Americans enjoy their life while our brothers in Gaza live miserably."

Irrespective if analysts doubt whether bin Laden was involved in the planning of the Detroit bombing attempt or not, Bin Laden and other Al-Qaeda and Taliban members must be asked the following questions:

> 1- Is exploding market places,[15] mosques ,[16] and funerals[17] of fellow Muslims and butchering them in such inhumane ways by

---

[14] Keyser, J. (2010, January 24). Bin Laden Claims Responsibility For Flight 253 Christmas Day Bombing Attempt. *The Huffington Post.* Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com

[15] Kami, A. & Al-Salhy, S. (2010, May 10). Attacks kill over 100 in Iraq, al Qaeda blamed. *Reuters.* Retrieved from http://www.reuters.com/article

[16] Attackers strike sect mosques in Pakistan; 80 dead. (2010, May 29). *USA Today*. Retrieved from http://www.usatoday.com/news/world

Al-Qaeda and its affiliates also because of the "Palestinian Suffering"?

2- Is the barbaric treatment of women and burning schools for girls to prevent them from getting an education as Al-Qaeda and the Taliban are already doing in Afghanistan, also due to the "oppression of Palestinians in Gaza"?[18]

3- Why does Al-Qaeda not attack the Hamas organization as the Palestinians "suffer" predominantly as a consequence of its decision to attack Israeli civilians and to reject the requests of the international community for peace negotiations?[19]

4- Was destroying the 2,000-year-old Buddhist masterpieces in the central province of Bamiyan - including the world's tallest standing Buddha measuring 50 meters (165 feet) in Afghanistan in March 2001, also because of the so-called "Israeli oppression of the Palestinians"?[20]

5- Are people like Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab and those who did the attack of September 11th who intentionally attacked unarmed innocent women, elders, and children true heroes - - as he mentioned - or barbarians who deserve nothing but disrespect and scorn from the entire world?[21]

6- Why is Al-Qaeda only caring for "Palestinian suffering" and they do not show the same level of care for the suffering of their fellow Muslims in Darfur as well? Are Muslims in Darfur in their view "sub-humans"?

---

[17] Abdul-Zahra, Q. & Salaheddin, S. (2011, June 6). Rocket Barrage Kills 5 US Soldiers In Baghdad. *NPR.* Retrieved from http://www.npr.org/

[18] Taliban Destroy Girls' Education, Pakistan Is Powerless. (2009, February 02). *The Huffington Post.* Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/

[19] Roggio, B. (2010, January 27). Taliban reject peace talks. *The Long War Journal.* Retrieved from http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/

[20] Taliban destroying Buddha statues in Afghanistan [Video]. (2009, June 03). Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com
Note: associated voice over includes verses from the Quran (Verses 37:83-99 that describes how Ibraham (Ibrahim) destroyed the idols

[21] Hosenball, M. (2010, January 02). The Radicalization of Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab. *Newsweek.* Retrieved from http://www.newsweek.com

7- If they (Al Qaeda and the Taliban) truly care so much for the suffering of their fellow Muslims (as they claim), then why do they not stop attacking civilians in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq to stop the suffering of the Muslim orphans and widows who mainly suffer because of their attacks on civilians as part of their "Jihad" to enter the paradise?

8- Is the barbaric stoning of women until death in public places for committing adultery as the Taliban and other Islamic countries practice and Sharia Law actually promotes until today) also the result of the "Palestinian suffering" in Gaza?[22]

We just need a simple answer for these basic questions!

---

[22] Taliban Stone Woman to Death in Pakistan [Video]. (2010, September 23). *ABC News.* Retrieved from http://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/video

Defeating Hamas Is Vital To Bring Peace To The Middle East

For more than 60 years, the Arab-Israeli conflict has inflamed the Middle East. In addition, most political attempts have not succeeded in bringing an enduring solution to the problem. Peace at government levels occurred between Israel and neighboring countries such as Egypt and the kingdom of Jordan. However, peace treaties and agreements failed to stop the ideology behind the growing anti-Semitism in the Middle East - which was fueled by the rise of Radical Islamism.

The growth of Islamic Radicalism has resulted in the creation of radical Islamic organizations such as the Hamas organization (Islamic Resistance Movement). This organization that was elected by the majority of Palestinians in a democratic election promotes religiously-based annihilation of all Jews and the eradication of the state of Israel.[23] Hamas was behind hundreds of terror attacks and thousands of rockets aimed at killing Israeli civilians.

Negotiations with Hamas failed to change its aggressive attitudes. This should not be surprising as history taught us that the ONLY way to stop tyrants and barbarians is not to negotiate with them but to decisively defeat them. Until recently, the attitude toward Hamas was in many situations characterized by softness and weakness.

Analysis of the factors that contributed to the survival of Hamas is important. These factors include:

1- Financial support by sympathizers. This support comes from individuals, from Hezb Allah in Lebanon, and from the Iranian regime that shamelessly declared its desire to erase Israel from the map.

2- Smuggling weapons via the borders between Gaza and Egypt.[24]

---

[23] Anti-Semitism at Core of Hamas Charter. (2006, February 27). *The Anti-Defamation League.* Retrieved from http://www.adl.org/PresRele

[24] Gaza Strip Underground Barrier Causes Tension Between Egypt and Hamas. (2010, January 19). *The Right Side News.* Retrieved from http://www.rightsidenews.com

3- Political support by several leaders such as former US President Carter[25] and from Nobel Peace Prize laureate Marrti Ahtisaari, former president of Finland, who supported an end to boycotting Hamas.[26] Former President Carter's book "Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid" has been used by many Hamas sympathizers to promote its agenda. This form of political support was exploited by Hamas and its sympathizers to promote and support the Hamas agenda.

4- Ideological support by well known, leading Islamic scholars such as Sheikh Youssof Al-Quaradawy who supported the suicidal ideology of Hamas and its mission to kill innocent Jews. [27]

5- A false sense of victory that was based on the soft Israeli response to Palestinian terrorism for several years.

6- The ability to 'market' their ideas under the banner of the Muslim Brotherhood or "Islam is the Solution."[28] This marketing strategy attracted many young Palestinians and Muslims all over the world to support Hamas by thinking that the Hamas Islamist agenda will solve all the problems of the Palestinian people.

A change of the above factors will be fundamental to defeating Hamas and to change the course of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Recently, several potentially positive steps to weaken Hamas were taken and must be acknowledged as they may significantly contribute to defeating Hamas and thus potentially assisting in a non -violent solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. These include:

1- The devastating military defeat of Hamas in the latest Israeli attack on Gaza in January 2009 has given the organization a sense of military defeat (even if they did not or do not admit it publicly!) and

---

[25] President Jimmy Carter pounds Israel [Video]. (2007, April 26). Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com

[26] West must stop boycotting Hamas – Ahtisaari. (2009, April 07). Retrieved from http://www.stuff.co.nz/world/middle-east

[27] Apologists or Extremists: Yusuf al-Qaradawi. (2008, July 09). *Investigative Project on Terrorism.* Retrieved from http://www.investigativeproject.org/

[28] Muslim Brotherhood slogan in Egypt elections: 'Islam is the solution. (2010, October 11). *World Tribune.* Retrieved from http://www.worldtribune.com/

dramatically reduced the number of rockets launched against Israeli civilians.[29]

2- Recently the Egyptian government took a correct decision to build a wall on its borders with Gaza to stop the smuggling of weapons to the Palestinian terrorists and to protect Egyptian national security.[30] This bold decision can significantly enhance the efforts to demilitarize Hamas to force it to accept peaceful solutions.

3- The recent apology of former President Carter to the State of Israel asking for the Jewish community's forgiveness for any negative stigma he may have caused Israel over the years is another blow to Hamas at the political level.[31]

4- Failure to achieve economic prosperity for the people in Gaza disproves the slogan "Islam is the Solution".

The missing components that are needed today to defeat Hamas and bring some hope for peaceful or political solutions to the Arab-Israeli conflict include:

1- Weakening all possible financial sources to Hamas. This approach must include weakening the Iranian regime and Hezb Allah in Lebanon so that they become unable to support Hamas. In addition, carefully tracing the money of charitable Islamic organizations is vital as some part of this money could be given to support Hamas activity.

2- Defeating the ideology of terror and anti-Semitism by encouraging and supporting peaceful interpretations for Islamic texts and developing effective educational systems to stop the ongoing hatred and anti-Semitism.

---

[29] The number of the attacks on Israel went down from 1,752 attacks in 2008 to 106 attacks in 2010 (Until Sep 30). More data about the number of Quassam rocket attacks on Israel are available at: http://www.jewishpolicycenter.org/prr/history.php

[30] Egypt completes initial building of security towers along Gaza border. *(2010, December 25). Haaretz.* Retrieved from http://www.haaretz.com/news/international

[31] Jimmy Carter Offers Apology to Jews. (2009, December 24). *CBS News.* Retrieved from http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/

3- Criminalizing the Radical Islamic scholars who promote anti-Semitism and justify suicide bombings.

4- Supporting the efforts of the Egyptian government to weaken the Muslim Brotherhood group as it is the mother organization for Hamas.

5- Standing with the Israeli government in its legitimate measures to defend itself from terrorism (such as building a security barrier) and support its actions to give Hamas a sense of military defeat as this psychological element is fundamental to bringing peace to the area. We need to always remember that peace came to the world in World War II ONLY after achieving devastating military and psychological defeat for the enemies of humanity (such as the Nazi regime).

Using this effective cocktail of approaches to achieve ultimate victory over Hamas is needed to bring new hopes for the Middle East peace process.

A New Relationship Between Muslims And Jews Is Required

The relationship between Muslims and Jews has been through several stages during the course of history. In some stages the relationship has been based on peaceful co-existence; in other stages, however, it has been characterized by anti-Semitism. Kicking Jews out of many parts of the Arab world in the 1950s and 1960s provides clear evidence for the latter. In addition, the recent wave of anti-Semitism in the Arab media is undeniable.

Many Muslim scholars and writers, despite the peace agreements between Israel and many Arab countries, promote hatred of the Jews. This has been common in mosques, television, books, and other media. [32]

Looking at Muslim-Jewish relations from a different angle reveals that Muslims should actually be grateful to the Jews instead of hating them.

First, according to the story of the Israa and Miaraj that described the ascend of Mohamed to Heaven to meet with other prophets and God, he was instructed by Allah that every member of the Muslim nation, or Umma, must perform fifty prayers per day (each one usually needs around ten minutes to perform). This would have been an unbearable burden on Muslims. According to this story, which is available in authentic Islamic books, it was only the intervention of Moses 'a Jew' that led to a change in the number of required prayers: the original fifty prayers per day were reduced to ONLY five prayers per day.[33] Five has remained the number of prayers traditionally performed by Muslims all the way through to the present day. According to the story, Moses played an advisory role to Mohamed, counseling him to go back to Allah repeatedly to tell him that fifty is an impossibly high number of prayers. If Moses had not played such a major role in changing this, then most Muslims would not have been able to perform their required prayers. This could have made them candidates for Hell, according to traditional Islamic teaching (Quran 74:42-43). Thus, Muslims must be very grateful to the Jews, as Moses saved the Muslim nation from an intolerable religious command that would have condemned them to hell fire if they could not obey it.

---

[32] Several examples of Islamic-based anti-Semitism are available at: http://www.memritv.org/

[33] These can be found at http://www.islamicity.com/mosque/isra/Israa_Miraj_Hadith.shtml

Second, the word amen, which Muslims regularly use several times in their daily prayers as well as their Friday prayers, is actually a Hebrew word that is never mentioned or used in the Quran. In fact, the word has no roots in Arabic language at all. This means that Muslims are using a Hebrew word in their regular prayer every day. Since the prayers cannot be completed without the use of this 'Jewish' word, Muslims should be also grateful to the Jews for teaching it to them.

Third, the concept of circumcision that Muslims implement is similarly never mentioned in the Quran. It is well-known to be a Jewish concept, which the Muslims just adopted from the Jews. Since Muslims consider circumcision to be an important part of the Islamic religion, they should be appreciative of the Jews for teaching them this concept.

Fourth, according to the Quran, Muslims are instructed to ask the people of the Torah (i.e., the Jews) for guidance if they do not know the answer to a particular religious question (Quran 21:7 and 16: 43). Given that the Quran itself instructs Muslims to trust the Jews and to seek their advice on issues related to the Muslim faith, how come many in the modern Muslim world consider the Jews to be untrustworthy?

To conclude, despite increasing levels of anti-Semitism in the Arab and Muslim world, deep analyses of Islamic texts can reveal some important issues that should change how Muslims should perceive the Jews. Performing a tolerable number of prayers, using the word amen, and the Quranic command for Muslims to seek advice from Jews in religious issues should open the way for a relationship that is based on respect and appreciation rather than disrespect and hatred.

Is The West Pushing The Wrong Button Of The Arab Israeli Conflict?

On repeated occasions the EU,[34] the US,[35] and the UN[36] pressured Israel to make more concessions to the Arabs as an attempt to bring peace to the Middle East. The pressure on Israel was mainly to stop building more settlements in the West Bank.

The question that must be asked regarding this issue is whether pressuring Israel to make more concessions to the Palestinians is the correct way to go? In other words, is the world pushing the wrong button in its attempts to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict? Additionally, should the pressure be on the Palestinians and Arabs, rather than the Israelis, in order to solve the problem?

Evidence from the past few decades clearly shows that Israeli concessions did not bring the desired peace. Rather, they brought more Arab animosity and aggression toward the Israelis.

For example, any honest observer of the Arab media and street can clearly notice that anti-Semitism has increased dramatically since Israel has made peace treaties with the Arabs. Many famous instances of anti-Semitism in the Arab street are available on www.memri.org. These include teaching anti-Semitism to Arab children, as well as top Islamic scholars cursing the Jews and calling them "pigs and monkeys".[37] The number of examples in the Arab media leaves no doubt for unbiased observers that anti-Semitism in the Arab street has actually increased since Israel started making concessions to

---

[34] *Gutkin, S. & Charlton, A.* (2009, September 10). Israel-EU relations chill as Netanyahu lets settlements continue unabated. *The Daily Star.* Retrieved from http://www.dailystar.com.lb

[35] Hider, J. (2009, June 5). Obama delivers strong attack on Israeli settlements in speech to Muslim world. *The Times of London.* Retrieved from http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world

[36] UN "disappointed" at Israeli settlement activity [Video]. (2010, September 28). Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com

[37] See several many examples of Arab Anti-Semitism at:
Antisemitism On Egypt's Al-Rahma TV. (2009, July 30). *The Middle East Media Research Institute.* Retrieved from http://www.memri.org/report

the Arabs. In addition, the number of terrorist attacks against the Israelis was much lower when the West Bank and Gaza were completely under the control of Israel between 1967-1973; that is, before the peace treaties.

Another example is that rocket attacks against Israelis from Gaza side have not decreased since Israel withdrew from Gaza in September 2005 as part of the Israel Disengagement Plan. In fact, between April 2001 and the end of 2008, 4,246 rockets and 4,180 mortar shells were fired into Israel from Gaza, killing 14 Israelis, wounding more than 400, and making life in southern Israel intolerable. During what was supposed to be a cease-fire in the last half of 2008, 362 rockets and shells landed. After Israel retaliated in a strong manner in Gaza War, (December 2008-January 2009) there have been just over two dozen rockets and mortar strikes on Israel - fewer than on many single days before the war. Life in the Israeli town of Sderot and the area around it has returned almost to normal.[38]

If we are going to follow statistics instead of emotions, it will become clear that the Israelis have not attained true peace after making concessions to the Arabs. The main reason for this, in my view, is that concessions in the Arab-Israeli conflict have almost always been made from the Israeli side without equivalent concessions from the Arab side.

Israel gave land, yet anti-Semitism has increased. This has created a situation where many Israelis feel that they do not have any incentive to make further concessions. It has become hard to convince many Israelis that stopping the settlements will bring any peace, as they have already made many more concessions to the Arabs, and the result has mainly been more hatred and aggression. In other words, if concessions to the Arabs did not work in the past, why will making further concessions work now?

The only solution to this complex situation is that the international community must push the correct button of the conflict; in other words, it must exert more pressure on the Arabs and Palestinians, rather than the Israelis, to show a genuine interest in peace. In this case, the Israelis will feel that their previous concessions were fruitful, and they will be persuaded that concessions can work and bring true peace. An internationally-monitored incitement-free period in the Arab media has to precede any further peace talks or negotiations. When the Israelis see evidence that the Arabs are genuine about living with them in peace, they will be encouraged to continue the peace process. As long as the Arabs fail to prove that they are truly interested in living in peace beside Israel as a Jewish state, it is extremely unfair to ask the Israelis to make more concessions. It is now the

---

[38] Diehl, J. (2009, September 21). Israel's Gaza Vindication. *The Washington Post.* Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com

Arabs' turn to reciprocate the Israeli concessions by showing genuine interest in living in peace with the Israelis.

Bin Laden Lying To The West To Defame Israel

I have listened to the latest Bin Laden tape in Arabic on Al-Jazeera TV. He released it in memory of September 11.[39] It was clear that Bin Laden was trying to convince a Western audience that the attack on the Twin Towers on 9/11, and the larger phenomenon of Islamist violence, is caused by the Arab-Israeli conflict. He argued that the land of Palestine belongs to Muslims rather than the Jews, and that Muslims will never forget this.

This tape raised some questions that need to be answered:

Is Bin Laden trying to convince us that his fellow jihadists in Iraq, Algeria, and Pakistan-who explode mosques, detonate Muslim funerals to kill innocents, and behead their fellow Muslims-are committing these barbaric atrocities because of the Arab-Israeli conflict?

If the cause of terrorism against the West is the Arab-Israeli conflict, why don't the Christians in the Middle East, who live under the same circumstances, commit suicide bombings and attack Western targets as their fellow Muslims do?

If the cause of Islamic terrorism is the "occupation" of the Arab land, as Bin Laden claimed, how can he explain the lower levels of terrorism against the West between 1976 and 1993, when the Palestinians started to take more control over the West Bank and Gaza as stipulated by Oslo Accords? During the pre-1993 period, Israel fully controlled the West Bank and Gaza, but Islamic terrorism was much less common than we see today. In brief, terrorist acts by radical Muslims became much more frequent after Israel started to withdraw from these areas and cede them to Palestinian control.

If Bin Laden is using Islam in his argument and trying to convince his followers that he is a good Muslim who follows the Quran, why does he not then apply the Quranic verses that clearly and unambiguously state that the Holy Land belongs to the Children of Israel? These include the following verses:

Quran 17:104: "And we said thereafter to the Children of Israel, "Dwell securely in the land of promise.""

---

[39] 'Bin Laden audio tape' warns US. (2009 September 14). *Al Jazeera.* Retrieved from http://english.aljazeera.net/news/

Quran 26:59: "Thus it was, but we made the Children of Israel inheritors of such things [i.e. the Promised Land]."

Quran 7:137: "And We [God] made a people, considered weak [i.e., the children of Israel], inheritors of the lands in both east and west, lands whereon We sent down Our blessings. The fair promise of thy Lord was fulfilled for the Children of Israel, because they had patience and constancy, and We leveled to the ground the great works and fine buildings which Pharaoh and his people erected [with such pride]."

So according to the Quran itself, the Holy Land is the land promised to the Jews, given to them as a contract and their inheritance. How come Bin Laden ignores these unambiguous verses of the Quran?

If Bin Laden rejects these verses in the Quran he should be considered an apostate, and thus he MUST be killed according to his strict interpretation of Sharia Law!

Further questions:

If Jerusalem belongs to Muslims, why isn't it mentioned by name in the Quran even once? By contrast, it is mentioned in the Bible hundreds of times.

Muslims claim Jerusalem is theirs because the Prophet Mohamed visited it once in his vision of the "Israa." But the Jews had lived in Jerusalem for thousands of years and built a kingdom in the land of Israel far before the Prophet Mohamed saw it. The Jewish people's claim to the land is thus based on reality rather than visions. If visions are taken into considerations, would Muslims accept the idea that the Baha'i, for example, could legitimately lay claim to Mecca if one of their prophets had seen it once in his vision?

Bin Laden and his Muslim brethren destroyed the Buddhist temple in Afghanistan, stoned women until death for adultery, and burned the faces of young girls who go to schools to prevent them from getting education. Were these barbaric atrocities also due to the Arab-Israeli conflict?

I am waiting for Mr. Bin Laden to answer my simple questions!

Iran

Remove The Iranian Nuclear Cancer NOW Before It Metastasizes

The US and European approach is failing; using economic sanctions and engaging Iran via diplomacy did not halt the nuclear ambitions of Tehran.[1]

The passage of time is a factor that works only for the benefit of the Iranian regime and increases its ability to develop a nuclear bomb. Unless we improve our strategy, we may awake one day soon to the headline, "Iran has the nuclear bomb". The Iranian Islamic regime is getting closer to developing a nuclear capability that may allow it to develop a nuclear bomb. Such a development will not only threaten the Middle East but will also have grave consequences for the security and the stability of the entire world.

A nuclear bomb in the hand of civilized nations that respect the value of human life is a very different story from one where such a fearsome weapon is in the hands of a theocratic Islamic regime that shows no respect for human life. Some may think that the Iranian regime is a rational actor, however, when we know that the Iranian Mullah Regime used to send children as young as 11-12 years old to die as "martyrs" in its war against Iraq we must question this assumption.[2] Furthermore, the Iranian theocratic regimen that -until today-continues to justify the brutal killing of people if they convert from Islam to another faith or hangs or stones them to death for having sex outside marriage or having a different sexual orientation should not be entrusted with having a nuclear weapon.

Many may believe that the Iranians will need years to develop long range missiles to be able to reach the US and Europe and that our strong anti-missile system will be able to protect us from this threat. The Iranians are likely to use another but more destructive tactic to paralyze the free world. The Iranians can simply focus on smuggling nuclear bombs to the major cities in the West and inform the Western countries that Iranian nuclear bombs are already inside all their major cities. In this scenario, these bombs will be like cancer metastasis that spreads all over the world. It does not

---

[1] Parisa, H. (2009, May 4). U.S. sanctions will not halt nuclear work: Iran. *Reuters*. Retrieved from

[2] Cringely, R. (2004, November 4). *Bob Don't Know Diddy: Post-Election Reflections on Polls and Other Stuff [Blog Post]*. Retrieved May 21, 2011, from I Cringely, The Pulpit from www.pbs.org/cringely/pulpit/

need a genius to imagine the panic and paralysis that can happen to the Western world if they faced such a situation. The Iranians in this case can demand anything from the West and Western governments would be in a very difficult situation to refuse any of these demands as it will put them at a risk of destroying their capitals. Attacking Iran in this case will not be very helpful to the West as the Iranian Islamic regime would be likely to welcome dying Iranians as "martyrs" while exploding the major Western cities and capitals.

The success of drug dealers in smuggling drugs into the US and Europe and to other parts of the world is a clear evidence that our borders are not so secure to take the risk of smuggling nukes by the Iranian regime.[3]

Once the Iranian regimen develops a nuclear bomb, the simple act of releasing false rumors that it managed to smuggle several atomic bombs inside some of the key cities in the world such as New York City, Washington DC, or London and others can have a major psychological impact that can result in devastating economic consequences. Similarly, smuggling nuclear bombs into areas of oil production in Saudi Arabia and other oil producing countries can cause chaos in the world's markets and economy. The Iranians can use this psychological warfare and threaten to explode such bombs at any time to paralyze the free world and create a situation where the Iranian Mullahs impose their will on others.

It is well known in medicine that attacking the primary cancer before it sends metastasis is much more effective than trying to treat it after having metastasis. Waiting for the Iranian nuclear cancer to 'metastasize' by smuggling nuclear bombs in our main cities is an ill-considered judgment that can ruin the future of our world. Resection of this Iranian nuclear 'cancer' NOW via 'surgical' military interventions and attacks of their nuclear facilities before it can 'metastasize' is likely to be the best way to go with the Iranian regimen especially after the proven failure of other approaches. This prophylactic military approach can prevent a nightmare that could happen in the free world if Iran developed a nuclear bomb and can protect the world from a global catastrophe if the Mullah regime decided one day to use some of these bombs against other nations.

---

[3]Foundation, N. S. (2009, July 1). Border Patrol Agents to Spot Tunnels With Advanced Ground-Penetrating Radar. *US News*. Retrieved from http://www.usnews.com/

Dealing With The Iran Threat Requires Wisdom

On Monday, September 28 2009, Iran successfully tested upgraded versions of the medium-range Shahab-3 and Sajjil missiles.[4] The missile tests were meant to demonstrate both Iran's military might and its readiness for any military threat. Both missile systems can carry warheads and have a range of 1,200 miles (2,000 kilometers), putting Israel, American military bases in the Middle East, and parts of Europe within striking distance.

It is vital to make the right decisions on how to deal with such an Iranian regime. History can teach us many lessons on how we should respond to tyrants.

One of the greatest lessons that we must learn from history is that the integration of the will or the desire to do evil with the ability to do it is catastrophic. The Nazi regime, for example, would not have been capable of carrying out the Holocaust if the free world had had the conscience to stand against it at an early stage to prevent it from getting sufficient power to harm others.

Ahmadinejad expressed clearly his desire to erase Israel from the map, which would entail the killing of millions of innocent people. It would be a disaster if the free world failed to stop him from getting the power to do so. It is shameful that neither the Mulla regime in Iran nor the other Islamic scholars in the Sunni Muslim world denounced his statements to erase Israel from the map.

It is unwise not to believe the Iranian president on his statements. If we are not going to believe the Iranian regime in this, then why should we believe them when they say that their nuclear program is for peaceful purposes!

It is also important to mention that the title of the military operation to test the missiles, Al-Rasoul Al-AaZam (The Greatest Prophet-Mohamed), used Islamic names that carry certain a symbolism. "Shahab" and "Siggil" were both used in the traditional Islamic text to indicate destruction of others (see

---

[4] Iran test-fires advance missile. (2009, December 16). *BBC News*. Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk

the verses below).[5] Using Islamic names with such powerful symbolism may be an indicator of some hidden intentions of the Iranian Islamic regime.

Time is on the side of the Iranian regime: if they surprise the world with the development of a nuclear bomb, all the rules of the game will change. It will be much more complicated for the free world to deal with a nuclear Iran than to deal with it before making a nuclear bomb.

Another lesson that we need to learn from history is that those who have the intention to do crimes against humanity do not obey borders for their evil deeds. For, example the evil acts of Hitler extended to affect non-Jewish people as well.[6] This tells us that to believe that Ahmadinejad's threats against Israel will only affect the Jews is naive. Once a tyrant has the power to implement his evil upon others it will be difficult to set limits to it. Israel could be the first nation affected, but other nations will likely to be attacked next.

When we see a cancer growing it is vital to attack it or stop it at an early stage before it spreads. Failure to use this approach with the Iranian Islamic regime could result in a catastrophe. We must not wait for this regime to become able to manifest its virulent ideology. Time is crucial in this situation, as the more time passes before we take an action, the closer Iranian regime will get to a having a Nuclear weapon. Time works ONLY for their benefit, not ours.

An important fact that we need to know about radical Shia Islamists is that they master the concept of "Tequia," or "deception." Unlike Sunnis, this concept has always been a fundamental part in their theology. This fact must also be considered when dealing with or trying to understand the intentions of Shia regimes, such as the Iranian one.

The free world must be ready to launch a surgical military attack on the Iranian nuclear facilities if other economic and diplomatic measures fail. It is vital to give the Iranian regime an ultimatum with a definite day and hour by which they must comply with the demands of the international community. The U.S. and the international community must be ready to take serious actions if the Iranian regime does not meet the conditions of the ultimatum.

---

[5] (Quran 37:10) Except such as snatch away something by stealth, and they (the devils) are pursued by "Shahab" -a flaming fire, of piercing ability (to destroy them). {Quran 105:4-5} which smote them with "Sajjil"- stone-hard blows of chastisement pre-ordained, that caused them to become like a field of grain that has been eaten down to stubble.

[6] Stoddard, A. L. (2010, April 8). Why Did Adolf Hitler and the Nazis Persecute Jehovah's Witnesses? Retrieved from http://www.suite101.com

The Iranian regime is unlikely to stop its nuclear ambitions unless it feels that its actions will lead to its losing its power soon. The desire of the power-hungry regimes-such as the Mullah regimen in Iran-to remain in power can be used against them, by sending a clear message that they will lose power or be destroyed if they insisted on ignoring the demands of the international community.

The lessons that Muslims must learn from the Iranian model: Islam is NOT the solution

For decades the Muslim Brotherhood and its affiliated Islamic groups such as Hamas used the expression "Islam is the solution" as their slogan. They used it in a way to convince Muslims that Islam will bring solutions to all their problems. Many young Muslims became attracted to Islamism because they believed that using Islam in politics and implementing Sharia would bring a solution to the problems they face in their societies. The economic success of Saudi Arabia, which implements Sharia Law, and the success of early Muslims in building a huge powerful Islamic empire, were two powerful examples that attracted many of our young Muslims, myself included, to this "Islamic Solution". Failure of many Muslim societies to succeed in several fields, including economic state, has fueled the feeling that adopting the Islamic solution is the only answer for our problems.

The Iranian Revolution was also seen by many Muslims as a proof that Islam is the solution. On the contrary, the failure of the Iranian regime in bringing prosperity to its people can debunk this concept. The recent demonstrations against the Iranian regime are clear evidence that Islam is NOT the solution, as the government has not brought success and true justice to its people.[7]

The Muslim world also needs to look to other failures of the Islamic systems and regimes. Sharia laws have been implemented in Sudan, parts of Afghanistan and Pakistan, parts of Nigeria, and in Somalia. This has not brought wealth and prosperity to people as many Muslims expected. On the contrary it has brought poverty and misery to their populations. The best evidence for this is that we see tens of thousands of young Muslims applying to immigrate to the West but we do not see many of them trying to immigrate to Somalia or Taliban-controlled areas.

The Muslim world must face the reality that Islamic and Sharia-based solutions for countries have failed to bring prosperity to people in most parts where they have been implemented. The media has a role to play in showing the failure of many Islamic systems in several parts of the world. The Muslim

---

[7] Editorial: Iran's Twitter Revolution. (2009, June 16). *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from http://www.washingtontimes.com

world must wake up from its dream that applying Sharia will solve all their problems and recognize the reality that "Islam is NOT the Solution."

Iran Must Stop Blaming Others for Its Faults

On July 31, the Iranian regimen accused Western countries of deaths of demonstrators who protested the results of the controversial presidential election held in June. The Iranian foreign minister declared that the victims were the victims of Western "interventionist countries," and not abusive riot police or militiamen.[8]

On May 30, Iran also blamed the United States and Israel for a bombing in a Shiite mosque in southeast Iran that killed 25 people, saying the countries were trying to stoke sectarian tension with the Sunni Muslim minority. Iranian Interior Minister Sadeq Mahsouli said on the ministry's Web site "I announce that….those who committed the bombing are neither Shiite nor Sunni. [9] They are Americans and Israelis," who want to stoke sectarian conflict in the country. Iran has repeatedly accused the U.S. and other Western countries of backing militants and opposition groups in the country — charges they have denied.

Furthermore, at the United Nations' Durban Review Conference in Switzerland from April 20-24, a forum meant to counter racism, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the president of Iran, accused Israel of being "racist." In addition, he continually accused the Zionists of controlling the U.S. and the West. He also did not hesitate to deny the Holocaustor to shamelessly promote erasing Israel from the map.[10]

It seems that the Iranian regimen can only accuse others instead of admitting its own faults and mistakes. This phenomenon is typically called "projection" in behavioral sciences.[11] For example, Instead of blaming Israel

[8] Iran: Western countries to blame for protestor deaths. (2009, July 31). *The Jerusalem Post*. Retrieved from http://www.jpost.com/MiddleEast

[9] Dahl, F. (2010, January 14). Ahmadinejad Sees "Zionist Style" in Iran Bombing. *Reuters.* Retrieved from http://www.reuters.com

[10] DPA. (2010, September 07). Ahmadinejad Questions 'Fairy Tale' Holocaust Denies being Anti-Smite Retrieved from http://www.haaretz.com/news/international

Fathi, Nazila. (2005, October 27). Wipe Israel 'off the map' Iranian Says. *The New York Times.* Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com

[11] Projection (defence mechanism). *Psychology Wiki.* Retrieved on June 6 from http://psychology.wikia.com

for being "racist," Ahmadinejad should have accused Islamist regimes, including the Iranian one, for this negative aspect. Anyone who visits Israel can easily notice that the street signs are written in both Hebrew and Arabic as a sign of care and respect for the Arab minority. Is this a feature of a racist country? In fact, this gesture is virtually unseen in many parts of the free world.

The Iranian president should stop discriminating against his own country's Baha'i community[12] first before falsely accusing others of being racist. In light of the fact that his own country tolerates stoning women, [13] discriminating against gays, [14] and killing Muslims who convert to other religions,[15] he should be the last one to speak when it comes to discrimination and racism.

Considering that "Zionist control" of the U.S. and Europe has resulted in the creation of societies where women are treated equally, people are allowed to convert to any faith as they wish, and homosexuals can survive freely, the Iranian regimen should probably ask the Zionists to control their country too.

In reality, the Jews have built a country where all groups are allowed to partake in the nation's prosperity. The best evidence for this is that Palestinians who live in Arab countries stand in line to enter Israel to find work while Arabs who live in Israel are not relocating elsewhere in the region. If Israel is truly racist and really discriminating against the Arabs, as Ahmadinejad claims, then why are Israeli Arabs not escaping from this "racism" to live in Arab countries?

Sadly, the only place in Israel where discrimination exists is at the Muslim-controlled gates of al-Aqsa mosque, where Muslims practice discrimination against Jews and Christians by not allowing these groups to enter or visit. On the other hand, Muslims are welcome to visit the Wailing Wall and the Church of the Nativity. Who discriminates against whom, Mr. Ahmadinejad?

---

[12] Blair, C. (2010, August 09). Iran is Attempting to Decapitate its Baha'i community. *The Guardian.* Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk

[13] Dehghan, S. K & Black, I. (2010, July 8). Iranians still facing death by stoning despite 'reprieve'. *The Guardian.* Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk

[14] Kennicott, P. (2006, July 20). Pictures From An Execution Come In Foucs. *The Washington Post.* Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com

[15] Hanged for Being a Christian in Iran. (2011, June 06). *The Telegraph.* Retrieved from http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iran/

When comparing the number of mosques and churches that were built in Israel since 1948 to the number of synagogues and churches that were built in the rest of the region during the same time period, it is clear that area Muslims discriminate against minorities, not the other way around.[16] However, these Muslims are not hesitant to accuse the entire world of discriminating against them.

Ahmadinejad and the Iranian regimen must first look to their own country and fix its discriminatory policies before accusing others. They must stop the Sharia-based barbarism against women, gays, and converts from Islam instead of attacking the civilized nations.

---

[16] See the Demographic Facts: http://www.aina.org/news/20080213165617.htm

Iran's Defeat Necessary For Mideast Peace

February 16, 2010

Neutralizing Iran's mullah regime in the Islamic Republic is pivotal to any peace negotiations in the Middle East.

In a recent Op-Ed published in Haaretz, A.B. Yehoshua argued that Israeli-Palestinian peace would neutralize the Iranian threat.[17]

Deep analysis of the Iranian issue and its impact on several Islamic movements actually supports the opposite of that assumption: Defeating the Iranian regime is pivotal to solving the Arab-Israeli conflict rather than the other way around.

Whether we want to believe it or not, the main obstacle to the conflict is the widespread radical Islamic views that promote hatred of Jews in the Muslim world.

It is rather difficult, or virtually impossible, to have real peace in the area while leading Islamic scholars teach that Jews are pigs and monkeys and that Muslims must fight and annihilate them before the end days.

Radical Islamic movements that promote violent jihad instead of peaceful solutions to the Arab-Israeli conflict were both inspired and supported by the Islamic revolution in Iran in several ways.

The success of the Iranian Islamic revolution to replace a secular regime with an Islamic system was, and still is, in the view of Islamic radicals, an applicable model that encouraged many people to pursue the path of Islamism, as it was in their view a successful model to achieving power.

Defeating the Iranian regime is vital to discrediting it in the eyes of the followers of radical Islamic movements, thus weakening their interest in pursuing radical Islamism as a path. Furthermore, defeating the mullah regime can partially deprive some of its affiliated militant organizations, such as Hamas and Hezbollah, who resist peace with Israel on a religious basis, from their financial support.

---

[17] Yehoshua, A.B. (2010, October 02). Israeli-Palestinian peace would neutralize Iran threat. *Haaretz*. Retrieved from http://www.haaretz.com

This can cause an economic blow to these organizations and open the path for less radical political players to have more leadership roles in the area.

In addition, defeating the regime can bring an end to the inflammatory role played by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad for followers of radical Islamic organizations who see him as a hero, because he threatens Israeli security.

Typically, they see Ahmadinejad as the next "Saladin" who will bring victory to Islam over the "infidels."

Ahmadinejad's rhetoric continuously adds fuel to the fire regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict. Defeating him and changing him from a symbol of victory to an example of weakness can play a vital role in the psychological warfare needed to weaken Islamic radicalism.

When we know that hundreds of Iranian boys, many as young as 10, were sent to die on the front lines of the Iranian war with Iraq and that the founder of the Iranian Islamic revolution, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, gave these boys plastic keys to heaven and reassured them that, if they were killed on the battlefield, they would go directly to paradise, it becomes mandatory to defeat such a crazy regime and prevent it by all means necessary from getting a nuclear weapon.[18]

Such a weapon in the hands of such a regime not only carries a major threat to the security of the free world but also fuels a psychological sense of victory for radical Islamic organizations, encouraging them to resist any peaceful solution with Israel.

Trying to have Israeli-Arab peace before neutralizing the Iranian threat will not be effective. In fact, this approach will only buy more time for the mullah regime in Iran to achieve its nuclear ambitions.

Defeating the Iranian regime first and ending its ambitions of having nuclear weapons capabilities can weaken radical Islamic movements and open the door for actual peace in the Middle East.

---

[18] Hamid, T. (2010, Febuary 14). Iranian defeat first. *Jerusalem Post.* Retrieved from http://www.jpost.com/Opinion

Saudi Arabia

Is Saudi Arabia leading A Reformation of the Muslim World?

In the last few years especially after September 11th Saudi Arabia has been accused of promoting a radical form of Islam. It is hard to deny that the Wahabbi style of Islam promotes a value system that suppresses some of basic elements of human freedoms such as freedom of religion. In addition, it promotes suppression of women in several ways.[1]

In one of my recent Op-Eds I raised the issue that the progressive elements within Saudi Arabia need to use the power of the religion itself to promote values of freedom and liberty as the Muslim on the street needs to have religious justification for these values to adopt them. I was both happy and surprised to see an active application of this principle -which is to use religion to bring the Muslim world to modernity- by the Saudi system.

For years the religious police in Saudi Arabia ("Haiat Al-Amr Bil-Maaroof Wa Al-nahei An Al-Munkar") was advocating separation between men and women in education and daily life activity. Many other parts of the Muslim world and Islamic societies have gradually adopted the same gender separation approach.

Since the most unexpected things often happen, last week Sheck Dr. Ahmed Ibn Khasem Al-Ghamdy the head of the religious police in Mecca (that used to punish people for mixing with the other gender) has announced that mixing between males and females is completely Islamic and permissible in the religion. [2]

---

[1] Lappen A. A. (2009, February 26) The Evils of Islamic Political Ideology, Suppression of Women. Retrieved from http://www.rightsidenews.com

[2] The man of the hour [Blog Post]. (2010, April 25). Retrieved from http://saudiwoman.wordpress.com

Note: Unfortunately, the head of Saudi Arabia's powerful religious police fired Al-Ghamdy after his statements about sex segregation in Islam

Saudi Cleric Fired for Rejecting Segregation of Sexes – Ahmed Qassim Al-Ghamdi. (2010, April 21). Retrieved from http://www.realcourage.org

The Sheck actually accused those who promote a complete separation between different genders in education and in normal life activities for lack of correct knowledge about the true Islam.

It is important in this context to mention that, in traditional Islam a relative or a husband can be called *Mahram* and a stranger man is called *Non-Mahram*. A man and a Muslim woman can only mix together if he was a Maharam for her. This was the main Islamic theological reason for separating men and women in Education and in other activities.

Sheck Al-Ghamdy provided the following theological evidence to support his view that Muslim women can mix with Non-Mahram men. Al-Ghamdi's view was based on the following points:

1- Women (not men!) used to care for cleaning the hair of Prophet Mohamed.

2- The Hadith(s) (Non Quranic words of Prophet Mohamed) that forbids women from shaking hands with men or prevent mixing between men and women are *weak* Hadith(s) (i.e. neither accurate nor binding to Muslims)

3- Prophet Mohamed's disciples used to allow women to ride and sit with them on the back of the same hoarse or donkey (Note: This can be extended today to riding with a different gender on the same motor bike or a bike).

4- According to accurate (Sahih) Hadith any slave girl used to hold hands with the Prophet Mohamed and take him to where she wished.

5- Accurate Hadith supports that it is permitted for Muslim women to look to men.

(Note: In the above given examples men were considered Non-Mahram to the women.)

To understand the significance and the difficulty of making such a change in the Saudi society it is important to remember that Saudi Arabia's religious police stopped schoolgirls from leaving a blazing building in March 2002

because they were not wearing correct Islamic dress, according to Saudi newspapers.[3]

This novel approach -to allow the mixing of Muslim females and males- by some of the leading Saudi scholars gives evidence that Saudi Arabia is currently pursuing a gradual and 'hopefully' progressive form of reformation of the Muslim world via providing fresh theology.

The initiative of interfaith dialogue by King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia[4] and his decision to start the first University in the country that does not segregate students based on sex[5] are two other steps taken by Saudi Arabia that must be applauded and encouraged as they can ultimately lead to a desperately needed reform in the Muslim world.[6] I hope we will see more progressive steps by Saudi Arabia and other Islamic countries in the same direction of reform, freedom, and modernity

---

[3] Saudi police 'stopped' fire rescue. (2002, March 15). *BBC News*. Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk

[4] King Abdullah addresses UN meeting on interfaith dialogue. (2008, November 13). *Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia.* Retrieved from http://www.saudiembassy.net/affairs

[5] Boys and girls together in Saudi primary schools. (2009, October 20). Retrieved from http://www.asianews.it/

[6] Ulf Laessing, U. & Alsharif, A. (2009, September 24). Saudi Arabia opens first mixed-gender university. *Reuters.* Retrieved from http://in.reuters.com/article/

A Man Charged With Sorcery And Sentenced To Death In Saudi Arabia May Be Beheaded This Friday After The Prayer

A Lebanese man charged with sorcery and sentenced to death in Saudi Arabia is scheduled to be beheaded on Friday, the man's lawyer said Wednesday.[7]

This Sharia (Islamic Law) based sentence in Saudi Arabia raised several questions and concerns:

1-Why did the Saudi system not think to conduct a 'rehabilitation program' for this man to treat him from using sorcery (the supposed use of magic). Are rehabilitation programs and soft approaches using art therapy only limited to the terrorists who kill innocents in a barbaric manner?

2-People who claim that Sharia Law is 'peaceful' MUST stop bragging about the 'tolerance of Islam' until these barbaric laws are banned in Islamic laws.

3-Will the CAIR organization and leading Islamic scholars criticize the Wahhabi religious system in Saudi Arabia for having such inhumane laws that belong only to the dark ages?

4-The free world needs to realize that such laws that teach young Muslims intolerance are the root causes of terrorism. A Muslim child who learns that it is OK to kill a human being because he thinks differently (e.g., by practicing sorcery) will become a very suitable candidate to be convinced that it is also OK to kill others because they are different or non-Muslims. We cannot defeat terrorism without ending the barbaric Sharia laws that ultimately feeds it.

---

[7] Lawyer: Beheading planned in Saudi sorcery case. (2010, April 1) *CNN World.* Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com

5- I am not surprised to see such barbarism that allows the killing of magicians when mainstream Islamic books that are used to teach Islam globally are published in the West like London and NY and are sold on Amazon.com shamelessly promoting the killing of magicians in our modern times.[8]

6- It will be a good step if the Saudi king intervened to stop killing this man. However, this is not sufficient to addressing the problem at its roots. Changing these laws that teach barbarism and intolerance is fundamental - especially when we know that the law of killing magicians is not in the Quran.

---

[8] Al-Jaza'iry, A. B. (2001). Minhaj Al-Muslim (The Way of the Muslim), 2 Vols. Dar-us-Salam Publications.p.527

Saudi Fatwa Against Terrorist Finance Is A Good Step, But More is Needed

Saudi Arabia's highest religious authority issued a fatwa (edict) denouncing all acts of terrorism and criminalizing of its financing, the Asharq al-Awsat Daily reported on April 14, 2010.

The London-based newspaper said The Council of Supreme Scholars declared "any act of terrorism, including providing financial support to terrorists, a crime," regardless of where it takes place.

According to the fatwa, the financier of acts of terrorism will be considered a "partner" in the crime. The fatwa begins with a clear definition of terrorism, which it calls "a crime aiming at destabilizing security." The document goes on to list examples of this criminal activity: "blowing up of dwellings, schools, hospitals, factories, bridges, airplanes (including hijacking), oil and pipelines." It doesn't mention any geographical area where such actions might be permissible.

David Ignatius addressed the issue in his Op-Ed in the Washington Post on June 13, 2010.[9] The Pentagon also spoke positively about the fatwa.[10]

Generally speaking, the denouncement of an action or wrongdoing in the Muslim and Arab world can be effective in deterring others from doing this act if the denouncement follows certain criteria:

1- It is directed against a person rather than just the act itself. For example, the Quran did not only denounce adultery, but also warned that the 'persons' who do it will face severe punishment in hell (Quran 25:68-69).

---

[9] Ignatius D. (2010, June 13). Saudis act aggressively to denounce terrorism. *The Washington Post.* Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com

[10] Ignatius, D. (2010, June 13). Pentagon impressed by Saudi fatwa: Terrorism is wrong. *The New Haven Register.* Retrieved from http://www.nhregister.com/articles

2- It uses powerful expressions such as 'Kufr' (*Kufr* is the act that makes a person an Infidel or a *Kafer*) and 'Redda'(Apostasy). There are several levels of describing mistakes in Arabic and Islamic jargon. In order of less severe to more severe, the following Arabic words could be used to denounce a person who commits a wrongdoing:

Level 1: Khatyea (made a mistake),

Level 2: Muzhneb (committed a minor sin),

Level 3: Daal (on the wrong path),

Level 4: Faal Fahesha (committed major sin),

Level 5: Mujrim (criminal),

Level 6: Kafer(Infidel), and

Level 7: Murtad (apostate).

3- It is Unconditional- Denouncement for the evil nature of the act itself, not because it was 'not beneficial' to Muslims. The latter implies that it is okay to take a particular action if it is beneficial to Muslims.

4- It must be general to all acts irrespective of the faith of the victim. Denouncement of acts of terror for killing Muslims is indirect approval of acts of terror that kill non-Muslims.

5- It does not give any justification for the act of terror.

Fatwas that do not fulfill the above criteria can only serve the purpose of improving the image of Islam in the West without upholding the main role of fatwa. The main role is to deter young Muslims from doing these acts of violence or participating in them in any way ever again.

An example of the powerful Fatwa is the Fatwa issued recently by Shaikh Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri against terrorism at the Institution of Mechanical Engineers in London on March 2, 2010. In this Fatwa the Shaikh described the terrorists as "Infidels" who would go to "hell." [11]

---

[11] Power, C. (2010, March 12). Can a Fatwa Against Terrorism Stop Extremists? *Time.* Retrieved from http://www.time.com/time/world/

Another powerful message of disapproval of terrorists was displayed when Indian Muslims said they did not want the gunmen, killed by security forces during the attacks in Mumbai, to be buried in a Muslim cemetery. They considered the terrorists non-Muslims or Apostates.[12] Refusal to burry a Muslim in a Muslim cemetery is extremely powerful message that can deter young Muslims from pursuing the path of terrorism.

The Saudi Fatwa mentioned above is a promising one as it considered the act criminal activity (level 5 denouncement), did not give any justification for terrorism, and did not limit the Fatwa to denouncing killing Muslims. However, this religious edict could have been much more effective if it:

1- Considered the terrorists as "Kafer" (Infidels) or "Murtad" (Apostates) as this is the highest level of denouncement.

2- Mentioned that the terrorists will be punished in the day of judgment by "Hell Fire" (In normal circumstances, I would not recommend using these words with others , however, Radical Islamists have a different mindset that makes the use of words such as hell fire effective and useful to achieve the aim of the Fatwa)

3- Stated that the terrorists must not be buried with Muslims in Muslim's cemeteries.

Muslim Scholar Issues Fatwa Against Terrorism [Video]. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://en.kendincos.net

[12] Ahmed, Z. (2008, December 01). Muslims refuse to bury militants. *BBC News*. Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk/

Egypt

Is There A Way To End The Riots In Egypt Peacefully?

Jan 28 2011

Riots have escalated in Egypt all over the country. Initially, the protestors demanded solutions for unemployment and poverty. Later on, some of them demanded an end to President Mubarak ruling the country. The demonstrators shouted against the president and his son Gamal "Oh, Gamal say to your father ALL the nation hates you".

The government initially responded with heavy-handed violence until the demonstrators started burning and causing damage to private and public property as the police become more aggressive. This has resulted in several causalities and deaths on both government and civilian sides.

As a result of the chaos, Egyptian currency and stocks suffered severe losses. In addition, demonstrators continued burning more places, including the main office of the National Democratic Party that represents the government. The government responded by ordering a curfew all over the country and asked the Army Forces to intervene.

The escalation of these events occurred very fast and threatens the stability of the country.

The problem that currently faces the country is that if the Mubarak government collapses, the country can sink into chaos for an unknown period of time.

In such a situation, it will not be surprising if internal divisions within the Mubarak regime may end his control over power so that those who will revolt against him may be perceived as heroes by the protestors and thus can remain in power.

In this critical situation, wise decisions must be made to save the country from an uncontrollable situation. The following are some suggestions that hopefully can bring a peaceful end to this bloody situation - although only in the near-term.

1- President Mubarak MUST address the nation (he has not done so as of the time of writing this Op-Ed) to show demonstrators some respect. This can absorb part of their anger.

2- He needs to give people hope without appearing weak as weakness may actually aggravate the riots. The president MUST clarify to individuals that violence affected the economy negatively and this can make prices of food and other consumer products even higher. The president must welcome peaceful expression of opinion and be clear that there will be zero tolerance of violent demonstrations.

4- The president MUST appoint a Vice President at this stage. Appointing a Vice President who is not hated by the Egyptians can be very helpful to give people some hope for a change in the political situation and can put an end to their anger that is partially related to the inheritance scenario for the presidency that gives power to the son of the president.

5- Defining clear time limits for the government (e.g. 3 months) to take some decisions and active steps to relive extreme poverty in the country. Giving promises without having a time line makes the situation worse as for several decades people have been used to hear lip service without actions from some government officials.

6- President Mubarak MUST declare that he will appoint a special advisory committee for his office at the presidential level. This committee must include leaders of different opposition groups and respected individuals such as Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, and others including those of the Muslim brotherhood (even if he disagrees with their views). This approach may provide some relief and absorb some anger that developed after the recent election when the government nearly controlled every seat in the parliament with no representatives from the opposition. The public will see this as a form of respect to some of their demands which may help in calming the situation.

These short term solutions aims at controlling the current situation until more complex long term solutions such as proper economic reforms to decrease poverty take place.

Finally, the First True Reformation Of Islam Is Starting

Jan 27 2011

A historic and potentially momentous event occurred on January 24, 2011 impacting the teachings and understanding of Islam.

To put that event in perspective, we have seen over the last few decades problems related to Islamism, including terrorism, suicide bombings, but also suppression of values of human rights in several Islamic societies.

Reforming the understanding of Islam has been suppressed for hundreds of years after the leading Sunni scholars stopped the process of Ijtihad or renewing the understanding of the religion. As a result, young Muslims did not have options to learn Islam except from anachronistic and old fashion interpretations and jurisprudence books.

On January 24, 2011, the first document advocating the renewing of Islamic teachings and understanding has been published in Al-Youm Al-Sabeii (The 7th day).[1] According to the journal, 25 leading Egyptian thinkers and Islamic scholars including scholars from Al-Azhar University contributed to the document.

The importance of this event cannot be overestimated. Here are some of the Journal's main points that are the subject of renewal.

1- New evaluation of the Hadith books and better selection for the Hadith of prophet Mohamed.

2- Changing some traditional teachings regarding the concept that Non-Muslims must pay Jizzia (humiliating tax) to Muslims.

5- Changing the traditional Islamic understandings in relation to dealing with women

7- New understanding for the concept of Jihad

8- Allowing Muslims to use Non-Sharia compliant banking systems.

---

[1] http://youm7.com/News.asp?NewsID=343007

9- Better preparation of the preachers and allowing independent thinkers who were not educated in Islamic institutes to contribute to Islamic teaching and reform.

10- Separation between the Mosque and the State

11- Accepting that women and Christians can lead Islamic countries

12- Modernizing Al-Azhar Islamic education

13- Creating better relation with Non-Muslims via the school and houses of worship.

It is fair and accurate to say that this step and approach-if applied correctly- can be considered the first significant change that ever happened in the history of Islam toward its desperately needed reformation.

The power of this step stems from the fact that it acknowledges the existence of a problem, addresses its root cause(s), and admits the need for a change in Islamic teaching and education. On the contrary, to the appeasing approach that denies the existence of an ideological component for the phenomenon of violent Islam, the previously mentioned honest approach is the ONLY approach that will ultimately lead to a real and long term solution for the phenomenon of Islamic Radicalism.

The impact of this step- if it resulted in a real change in the educational systems of the Muslim world- can be tremendous despite the fact that many regressive minds in the Muslim world will resist such a change. The use of modern Internet technology and T.V. satellites can speed up the process of reformation. It is reasonable to say that the new document heralds the beginning of vital change within Islam and that this change may not influence every Muslim as there is no single control system for Sunni Islam but certainly, such an approach can produce a significant change in Muslim population toward modernity. The educational change can prevent radicalization of many young Muslims.

How The United States Can Act To Help The People Of Egypt And Win The Hearts And Minds Of The Entire Muslim World

Jan 30 2011

Egypt has been always considered the heart of the Arab and Muslim world. Currently the country is in a crisis that threatens to create a vacuum of power and may allow Islamic Radicals to gain a greater foothold in governing the country. Egypt will very soon find itself with food shortages as a result of the ongoing chaotic situation.[2] Such an inevitable shortage of food will only aggravate the current situation making it even more uncontrollable.

The US has been trying for years to win the hearts and minds of the Muslim world. The attempts included president Obama addressing the Muslim world after his election in 2009, the use of US media channels such as Al-Hura Radio & Hi Magazine to reach the Muslim world, political statements, supporting the building of Ground Zero Mosque and the wearing of Islamic Hijab by Muslim women. None of these measures were at all effective in ending the negative image of the US in the Muslim world.

On the contrary, after a long period of hatred of the US during Nasser's time, the US won the hearts and minds of the Muslim world during former president Sadat's presidency by using simple yet effective tactics. One of these tactics was helping to solve the shortage of certain food items such as the shortage of chickens during the late 1970s. At that time, Egyptians used to stand in very long queues for hours just to get one or two chickens for their families. The relations between US and Egypt improved dramatically during that time as the US was seen strongly providing the people of Egypt with frozen chickens packaged in the insignia and colors of the American flag. This USAID successfully contributed to the creation of a very positive image of the US in the minds of many Egyptians as their brains linked the US and US flag images to a good thing given to them as an act of kindness. In memory, studies such links are created via a mental process called the Spreading Activation Model. It was a gift given because there was a need,

---

[2] Abelaziz, S. Food staples starting to run out in Egypt. (2011, January 31). *CNN World.* Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com/2011/world

and it was received as an act of friendship from the people of America to the people of Egypt.

What the US needs to do in the current Egyptian crisis to truly improve its image in the Muslim world is to repeat the same mechanism by sending urgent food packages that are wrapped in the American flag to the Egyptians to help them deal with the current problem of food shortage. When the chaos and fighting leaves the front-page the next chapter to fill the screen will show anger borne of hunger because there is no food. The United States can foresee this and act quickly to provide the needed foodstuffs. If this is done during the current crisis, i.e. starting NOW, the US can forestall the next problem of food shortage and food riots, be seen as a good friend who cares for Egyptians despite the riots, and significantly improve its image not only in Egypt but in many other parts of the Muslim world as well.

Egyptians typically get their monthly salaries at the end of the month, (Note: many may not be able to get these salaries this month due to the current chaotic situation) and many people just barely survive on a daily income. This situation of disruption of normal business adds to the difficulty where food channels and supplies are in short supply. This makes an American gift of ready-to-use-meals to the Egyptian people during this disaster an invaluable tool to win the hearts and minds of many people in the country. Timing is crucial as Egyptians might be fighting to get food a few short days from now. The signs of this problem are already starting. This precious and needed American aid can also impede the attempts of Islamists who may utilize the food shortage problem for their benefit. A late reaction or no reaction in helping to solve this problem will be perceived by many in the Muslim world as the United States not caring enough about the Muslim, and letting people down in crucial times of need. The benefit to be gained by doing the right thing, not for political gain but because America sees the need of the Egyptian people, will create the same positive image that prevailed during the Sadat years when America also interceded for good.

This is a unique opportunity for the US to raise its stock among Muslim nations throughout the world by doing what it has always done; come to the aid of those in need. Saving the people of Egypt from chaos and deprivation will do more to restore civility between Islam and America than all the political showmanship that has been offered so far.

Possible Case Scenarios For The Future Of Egypt

Feb 2 2011

Violent clashes erupted in Egypt between the anti-Mubarak groups and others who were described as "pro-Mubarak". Some of the pro-Mubarak groups attacked the anti-Mubarak demonstrators while riding on horses and camels thundering through the central square of Cairo, "Liberation Square". The latter who were described in some official Egyptian media as "Pro-Stability" attacked the former with clubs and rocks. Ultimately, the once uniform demonstration against the government has now escalated into a two-sided, pro and anti-Mubarak confrontation. At the moment of writing this Op-Ed, these very violent clashes, including the use of Molotov cocktails, is becoming uncontrollable mayhem and chaos.

It is clear that violent approach of the pro-Mubarak groups, who may or may not be supported by some elements in the government, was completely the opposite of the initial peaceful demonstrations of the Anti-Mubarak groups. The violence of the Pro-Mubarak elements has changed the ongoing scenario from peaceful demands to violent confrontations that could spread to others areas.

The anti-Mubarak groups were not satisfied with the promise of President Mubarak that he will not run for re-election in the coming election simply because the very same president promised that he would not seek a third term when he came to power in the early 1980s (he is now in his 5th term!). Many Egyptians, including myself, heard these promises in his speeches to the nation. Therefore, in the current situation the anti-Mubarak groups are not ready to trust him again with such promises.

It is clearly observed that when opponents of Mubarak felt that they have no representation in Parliament after the recent elections brought nearly 100% of the seats to the Mubarak supporters, they turned to the streets to express their opinion in the form of peaceful demonstrations. If the Pro-Mubarak alliance continues to suppress this as well, as they are currently, doing, the next stage which is now beginning, will be a change from peaceful to violent demonstrations but even more so violent clashes between opposing forces. If the latter option is also blocked, they may become small groups of guerrillas doing violent acts as we see in Iraq which will be another step beyond control to an actual civil war.

President Mubarak could have avoided the current disaster and protected the country from a possible bloody case scenario if he left power yesterday or within a few days to prove to the people of Egypt that his promise is serious this time. Now the Military must simply choose between protecting Mubarak or protecting Egypt and the fate of the next real government will be in their hands.

Islamic elements supported by Hamas, Hezb Allah, and Iran may utilize this opportunity to end true popular rule in the country. In fact Islamists have been seen in the demonstrations and some of them were involved in damaging the ancient Egyptian historical monuments as they is seen by the Islamists as "Idols" that must be destroyed.

The highly expected long-term economic problem that will inevitably occur as a result of the current chaos can actually increase the possibility that anti-Mubarak groups can turn to the use of violence. The loss of enormous amounts of money coming from tourism directly into the hand of many Egyptian businesses and workers, and the likely shut down of many of these businesses as a result of the problem can add more fuel to the fire of poverty that is already so prevalent in the country. This poverty can only work to increase Islamic Radicalism and that most likely is their goal.

In brief, the loss of hope that the change can happen peacefully, the unavoidable economic crisis that will certainly follow, and the possible role for Islamists in the coming stage, can end in collapse of the country. In fact, as I am writing this Op-Ed demonstrations are erupting outside of Cairo to support the Anti-Mubarak groups.

The more the Military of Egypt delay in their intervention to remove Mubarak and take power the more likely they will be seen as collaborators with Mubarak and the less likely that people will accept them in the future. The same lack of urgency that cost Mubarak the initial peace now may claim the military in the same way. They must urgently act now to save Egypt!

In my view, the most effective way to avoid this destructive case scenario is the following:

1- Military in Egypt MUST remove President Mubarak from power NOW and take control of the country.

2- The Military MUST inform the people of Egypt that they will investigate the rumors that the Mubarak family used the power of the president to steal the money of Egypt and that they will bring this money back to the Egyptians if these rumors were true.

6- Announce that they will act under Martial Law for short period of time and will have no mercy with those who will threaten the security of the country (to deter those who are thinking of using violence)

14- Announce that the government will restore the Internet and that the banking system will start very soon and announce a specific time to resume normal activities. (This can give people in Egypt a desperately needed hope which is vital to create stability in this situation)

15- Emergency food aid MUST be sent to those who are unable to get food due to the current crisis. If US started now sending some USAID to Egypt they would be the first country to do so. Again, this act of friendship will mean more to the Egyptian people than all the claims of leadership by the Obama Administration.

Note: It is clearly observable that ALL demonstrations that occurred around the Egyptian Embassies in Europe and in the US in relation to Mubarak were anti-Mubarak (with NO single exception until now). This complete lack of pro-Mubarak demonstrations outside Egypt make it more likely that the so called "Pro-Mubarak" demonstrations in Egypt are actually created by the government itself rather than a genuine reaction of the Egyptian people to support the President (otherwise we would have seen some of these demonstrations outside the borders of the country).

The Delay In Removing Mubarak Can Change Chaos In Egypt From 'Reversible' To 'Irreversible'

Feb 4 2011

The single most important desire of millions of the protestors in Egypt is to end the presidency of President Mubarak immediately. This desire is not coming from one single group but, on the contrary, it represents the desire of most sectors in the Egyptian society irrespective of their faith, socio economic class or level of education.

President Mubarak said that he is worried that if he left now chaos will ensue. The reality is that he is the one who started this chaotic situation when he refused to leave power until now.

There are several factors that can lead to a destructive vicious cycle. These factors include:

1- The expected collapse of the tourism industry.

2- The likely weakening of the Egyptian currency.

3- The loss of trust in the Egyptian economy which discourages foreign investors.

These factors can significantly increase the already existent very high levels of poverty. Such an increase in poverty can lead to an increase in crime rates and in Islamic extremism, which can accelerate previously mentioned destructive vicious cycle described.

If President Mubarak continues to refuse to leave power, it is likely that a percentage of those millions who are currently demonstrating against him will turn to the use of violence. This -in the current gloomy situation- can bring the above mentioned destructive cycle to a situation of irreversibility and make is much harder to control.

There Is Nothing That Can Stop This Nightmare But The Resignation Of The President Immediately

Feb 4 2011

Timing is very crucial as the more the president remains in power the more likely the problem will become more complicated and difficult to cure. In addition, the delay of intervention by the military - who were celebrated by the protestors in the early stages of the demonstrations - to remove Mubarak will be seen by the Egyptian people as collaboration with a tyrant and will make the job of the military much more complicated to control the country in this unusable and explosive situation.

The delay in removing Mubarak by the military can change the situation in a way that makes it uncontrollable by any one. The respect that the military have in the hearts and minds of the Egyptian people can be lost if they do not remove him NOW. This respect for the military is fundamental to bringing stability back to the country.

The time factor in this situation is similar to the situation of coronary heart disease when the delay in treating a heart attack can change it from reversible angina to irreversible myocardial infarction. In other words, giving a correct treatment to a patient after his death is useless.

The plan of Mubarak was simply to create this situation of chaos so that he finds a reason to remain in power (to control it). What we need to realize is that the more the delay in removing Mubarak the more the problem is likely to change from a potentially controllable situation to an uncontrollable one. If the US informed the Military in Egypt that the US will stop its military aid if they did not immediately remove Mubarak it is likely that he will be removed within 24 hours of receiving this information.

Playing Chess With The Muslim Brotherhood

Feb 9 2011

The US is facing a dilemma on how to deal with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. On one hand, accepting them means accepting an Islamist system that will certainly have an anti-American and anti-Israeli agenda, and on the other hand rejecting and delegitimizing this group can turn some of its members to the use of violence. The group has very strong anti-American and Anti-Israeli views, and hence defeating them requires wisdom similar to playing chess rather than direct confrontations especially in the current volatile situation. This approach is possible because we know that the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood, unlike other Jihadi groups, can sit at a table to negotiate. In chess, one may win the game by executing a proper gambit', or a well-calculated sacrifice. Direct confrontations with the Muslim Brotherhood may be much less effective than well planned 'gambits'.

The current reality in Egypt is that despite being officially banned, the Muslim Brotherhood exists. For nearly 30 years, the Mubarak regime has been unable to suppress the spread of the ideology of this group. For example, the Brotherhood managed during the ruling of President Mubarak to increase the Islamic-based hatred of Israel and both anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism have reached very high levels in the country. In addition, they managed to Islamize a significant portion of the society. Currently, most Muslim women are wearing the hijab, Islamic jargon is used in mainstream media, and the support of Sharia is prevalent among the population. During the time of President Sadat, anti-Semitism and anti-Americanism was declining and during Nasser's time, signs of Islamisation of the society were virtually non-existent. This indicates that the Muslim Brotherhood achieved its best success during the time of Mubarak.

The reliance of Israel and the US on one person in power in Egypt without pressuring him to change the educational systems and the government-controlled media to actively fight anti-Semitism and anti-Americanism was a shortsighted approach that was doomed to fail. It was much better that the US - instead of pressuring Mubarak on democracy - should have used its relation with the President to make changes in education and to implement effective strategies to weaken Islamism. This would have guaranteed a much better long-term relationship between Egypt and the US and Israel.

Mubarak's approach that allowed anti-Semitism to flourish in the country while pretending to be a friend to Israel was schizophrenic and indicates that he was not a true ally to these countries. His refusal to visit Israel even for once during his 30 years of presidency is another indication of the lack of sincerity in his relationship with Israel - despite receiving billions of dollars in aid from the US. A man who truly believes in peace would not have allowed anti-Semitism to flourish to such pathological levels in his country. For example, President Sadat who believed in peace took many active steps to change Egyptian society and used religion effectively to fight rather than promote anti-Semitism. Sadat's approach was to a great extent successful in decreasing anti-Semitism in the country - despite him being assassinated by extremists who deemed him an "apostate."

While the Muslim Brotherhood flourished over the last few decades in Egypt, they lost a significant amount of their popularity in the last few years due to several reasons. These include:

1- The emergence of open criticism of Islam and the exposure of radical teachings that contradict human conscience. The Internet and modern media allowed a level of debates and discussions that weakened the appeal of political Islam to many people. This was evident by the refusal of the protestors in Egypt to use the flag of the Muslim Brotherhood.

2- The failure of sharia-inspired Islamic groups in Somalia, Taliban, and Gaza (Hamas) to provide a better life for their people contradicted the basic slogan of the Muslim Brotherhood that "Islam is the Solution". Furthermore, the failure of the Islamic solution proved too many that the wealth in Saudi Arabia was not necessarily because they implement Sharia.

3- The refusal of the Muslim Brotherhood to join the demonstrations at the beginning (they only joined them when they started to succeed!). This made the group to be perceived by many as a group of political opportunists. The Muslim Brotherhood had no other option to use their flag in the protests but to arrange a few separate insignificant parallel demonstrations. It is important to note that, the prayers that were held during the protests represented a common ritual level of Islam in the country rather than an ideological movement belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood.

In the current volatile and exploding situation in Egypt, dealing with the Brotherhood has become a very sensitive and demanding issue. The following are a few - but essential - recommendations on how to handle the

current situation with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt in a way to avoid complete collapse of the country.

1- Try to 'contain' or 'accommodate' the group to some extent as direct confrontations with them in this situation can turn some of its members to become violent or support other more violent Islamic groups to do terrorist acts in the country. Stability at this stage is vital to defeat this group in the long run.

2- Allow some of the members of this group to have limited roles in the next government in areas that do not allow them to control the strategic policies of the country, education, or the sensitive security and military apparatus. One could assign more technical ministries to them to test their competence - such as the ministries related to environmental affairs, or water and irrigation or housing and utilities. This offer to the Muslim Brotherhood MUST be conditioned by their approval of the former international treaties of Egypt including the peace with Israel.

3- Fight the group ideologically - as putting their members in prisons without fighting their ideology has been ineffective and failed to stop the proliferation of their ideology.

4- Use religion to fight the Muslim Brotherhood and embarrass them. For example the secular government can declare that they must respect the peace treaty with Israel and ask the group to agree with this as the Quran stated clearly that:

Quran 17:34 Fulfill (every) promise and treaty

Quran 5:1 O ye who believe! Fulfill (all) obligations.

Quran 13:20 Those who fulfill their oath and never break their treaties (the context is praising them)

5- Provide humanitarian aids from non-Islamic organizations to compete with the Muslim Brotherhood in using this humanitarian tactic to win the hearts and minds of people.

This 'gambit' to accept a limited and controllable role of the Muslim Brotherhood in the next stage of Egypt's political future, while using effective approaches to win them at the ideological level, will be vital to avoid further instability in the country that can breed uncontrollable radicalism.

Note: This does not in any way mean that I do not see the threat of the Muslim Brotherhood. I am only trying to put pragmatic approaches that deal with the reality as banning the group simply did not stop them from promoting their ideology.

The Egyptian Revolution: A Brief Moment of Opportunity For Israel

Feb 8 2011

Israel is facing a dilemma on how to deal with the current situation in Egypt. There are fears that the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel can be at risk if Mubarak is out of power. There are at least three sources for the anti-Israeli views in the country: the well-organized Muslim Brotherhood, the ordinary individuals who have been brainwashed anti-Semitism through the Arab media and religious education, and the secularists who hate Israel for political reasons as many of them are followers of the anti-Israeli views of Nasser (former president of Egypt).

Israel is fully justified in concerns that the coming leaders in Egypt may try to end the peace treaty with Israel. They are particularly fearful of change bringing an increase in power for the Muslim Brotherhood with an Iran-like enemy state arising on their borders. In response to this concern, Israel must sustain appropriate military preparedness.

At the same time, supporting Mubarak and standing against the will of people in this stage of history can actually make this scenario more likely to happen because Israel will be perceived as supporting an oppressive tyrant. Mubarak has killed many peaceful demonstrators in the latest demonstrations. According to several news media, he has stolen 40-7- billion dollars from his people. And he permitted chaos and violence to spread all over the country when his Interior Minister (Habib Al-Adli) released secretly thousands of criminals and thugs from the prisons of Egypt in order to create fear that would motivate his population to turn them against the demonstrators and believe that Mubarak is vital for the security of the nation.

The collapse of 'Mubarak' is inevitable. Siding with him -given the profoundly negative image he has for most citizens in Egypt -will only work to increase the already dominant anti-Semitic views in the country.

By contrast, siding with Egyptian demonstrators, supporting their right to live in freedom and sending them the best wishes of the people of Israel could prove very fruitful. Israeli support could create doubt among many Egyptians that their traditional judgment that the Jews are bad people might be unfounded.

The Jewish people have a very strong point to use to win the hearts and minds of Egyptians at this critical time. Jews lived in Egypt under oppression from the Pharaohs. Their story of achieving freedom after years of slavery and suppression could resonate with modern Egyptians. Informing Egyptians that the Jewish people feel for their suffering having endured and then escaped from similar circumstances years ago could have huge positive impact on Egyptians' images of Jews.

Israel would do well to convey this message by quoting the following Quranic verse describing the suffering of the Jews in Egypt thousands of years ago. (Quran 28:4-5) "Truly Pharaoh elated himself in the land [of Egypt] and broke up its people into sections, depressing a small group among them [The Jews] their sons he slew, but he kept alive their females: for he was indeed a maker of mischief. And we wished to be Gracious to those who were being depressed in the land (The Jews), to make them leaders (in Faith) and make them the heirs."

The message that should reach the Egyptians now is that Jews do not hate them but rather wish them success in their struggle for freedom.

This message would remind Egyptians of 1940s movies such as "Fatima, Marica, and Rachel" or "Hassan and Mark, and Cohen." These films portrayed Jews, Muslims, and Christians living together in peace. History can give permission for Egyptians to believe that the three religions could live in true peace together once more.

Siding with Mubarak now is like betting all your money on a failing hoarse. Switching support to the protestors after the inevitable end of Mubarak will be perceived as hypocritical. Doing this step NOW could however be perceived as genuine, opening open a new era of mutually respectful dialogue with the Egyptian people

Israel must seize this historical opportunity.

How Further Radicalization Of Egypt In Post-Mubarak Era Can Be Prevented

Feb 10 2011

The revolution in Egypt can take one of two more likely directions. On one hand, the values of liberty and freedom may prevail and on the other hand, Islamic radicals may hijack the revolution and create a theocratic state. The future of the country and the Middle East largely depend on which of these case scenarios will succeed.

It is important to mention that unlike the Iranian revolution - which was clearly an Islamic one - this revolution is not religious in its roots. However, the more the delay in ending the power of Mubarak, the more likely the country will collapse economically which can allow Islamists to direct the revolution to serve their Islamic agenda.

On the positive side, Islamists have suffered several blows in this revolution. These include:

1- Unprecedented unity between Muslims and Christians. Both Friday Muslim and Sunday Christian prayers were held in the Tahreer Square with support and blessings from the protestors.

2- Clear rejection to giving the revolution any religious title. In fact, many protestors prevented the members of the Muslim Brotherhood from using the flag of their organization.

3- The founders of the revolution have been inspired by the values of freedom. The very same people who started the revolution are unlikely to accept an Islamic agenda that will inevitably suppress their freedoms.

4- The logic that was regularly used by many Islamists that the US and Israel are behind all the problems in Egypt has been discredited as the Mubarak government tried to accuse the demonstrators that they are paid by the US and Israel. This despicable lie is likely to diminish the ability of Islamists to use such reasoning to further ruin the already negative image of the US and Israel.

5- The refusal of the Muslim Brotherhood initially to share in the demonstrations will make them loose some of their already declining credibility in the Egyptian street.

Despite the above mentioned potentially positive points against the Islamists, the following factors can significantly nullify such points and on the contrary allow Islamists to hijack the revolution. These factors include:

a- The expected economic crisis that is likely to happen in the country as a result of a sudden collapse of the tourism industry.

b- The contradictory statements of some US officials regarding the exact position of the US regarding to the revolution. On one hand Frank Wisner, a US envoy to Egypt, suggest that Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak President Hosni Mubarak should remain in office and on the other hand the Obama administration was clear in that there is a need for power transition in the country.[3] This ambiguity has been used by Al-Jazeera (Arabic) to convince many Egyptians that the US is supportive of Mubarak against them. The US disowned his comments, however; the exact US position is still unclear in the eyes of many Egyptians. Such lack of clarity-at least as perceived by many - about the real US position can create a wound between the US and the Egyptian people that may take long time to heal.[4]

c- The delay of the Egyptian military in taking a clear stand with the people against Mubarak will make them perceived by many as traitors who supported one person against the will of a whole nation. This delay of the military in taking a clear side against Mubarak has put the country into a state of chaos and economic crisis that can ONLY work for the benefit of Islamists and can make many Egyptians unwilling to cooperate with the military in the future.

d- A sudden termination of the Emergency Law in Egypt as the US demanded from the Mubarak regime may allow many Jihadists to utilize the chaos and conduct acts of terror that can further aggravate the already existent economic crisis and increase radicalism.

The following can help to avoid more Islamisation and radicalization of the country after the inevitable collapse of Mubarak:

---

[3] Hosni Mubarak should remain in office during a democratic transition. (2011, February 05). Retrieved from http://www.newstimeafrica.com

[4] Egypt unrest: US disowns envoy comment on Hosni Mubarak. (2011, February 5). *BBC News.* Retrieved from http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada

1- Immediate economic support to prevent the economic crisis to block the positive feedback potential of the vicious Poverty-Terrorism cycle where poverty (in the presence of radical Islamic ideology) facilitates recruitment for terrorist groups who commit terror acts that further aggravate the poverty situation.

2- Immediate support for the efforts of the Egyptians to get Mubarak's family and -if possible-money back to the country if the allegations are true that they stole $40-70 Billion dollars from public money.

3- Clarifying that the US position is for freedom of the Egyptian people and against Mubarak. Currently, the US can choose either to loose Mubarak and the Egyptian people or loose the former and win the hearts of the Egyptians (and many in the Muslim world as well). An unambiguous US position in this critical time is vital if the US is interested to win many Egyptians to its side.

4- Immediate intervention of the Egyptian military to remove Mubarak.

5- Modifying (NOT suspending) the Emergency Law to avoid using it against innocents or against political opponents of Mubarak and limit its use to the terrorists. A strong punishment MUST be given to those who use this law against innocents or to suppress political opposition of the government. Unfortunately, this law is needed, at least in some situations, to prevent some devastating terrorist acts.

6- Building on the positive momentum that has been described earlier against the Islamists via proper use of media campaigns. For example, well organized media campaigns to discuss, for example, how the Muslims and Christians united during the protests, how the Muslim brotherhood initially refused to share in the demonstrations, and how the conspiracy theories can be incorrect- can assist in preventing more Islamisation of the country after Mubarak.

Failure to IMMEDIATELLY give attention to the factors that can drag the country toward more Islamism can jeopardize all future relations between US and Egypt.

US Must Strike While The Iron Is Hot

Feb 15 2011

Despite spending hundreds of millions of dollars to improve its image, the US failed to significantly improve its image in the Muslim world. In June 2010 Andrew Kohut, president of the Pew Research Centre, said the 'bad news' was that the Muslim public is more critical of US than in last year's study.[5]

In Egypt the percentage of Muslims expressing confidence in Obama fell from 41 percent in 2009 to 31 percent in 2010, while in Turkey it fell from 33 percent to 23 percent during the same period of time. In the 2009 survey, only 13 percent of Pakistani Muslims were confident in Obama. That figure fell to 8 percent in 2010.

Overall, the US image fell in Egypt and Jordan. 33 percent of Egyptians held a positive view of the United States, dropping from 42 percent the year before, and in Jordan, the image slumped from 31 percent to 26 percent.

For several years, the US has been trying to use different approaches and tactics to win the hearts and minds of the Muslim world. These include USAID, American media channels such as Al-Hurra Radio, publishing magazines in Arabic such as Hi magazine, etc... None of these made a significant improvement of the US image.

This tells us that winning the hearts and minds of Muslims is not a matter of how much money is being spent for this target, but rather how this money is being spent.

For example, the US now has a golden opportunity to win the hearts and minds of millions in the Muslim world if they utilized the Jan 25 Revolution in Egypt properly and in a timely fashion. The US MUST "strike while the iron is hot" and send a message to congratulate the Egyptian people for the success of their revolution and convey to them the best wishes from the American people to continue their path successfully to have freedom.

In the Egyptian culture, it is practically meaningless to congratulate someone after a long time of their success. The US needs to congratulate

---

[5] US image stays high in Europe; weak in Muslim countries. (2010, June 18). Retrieved from http://www.monstersandcritics.com/news/usa

the Egyptians in Arabic language via major advertisement pages in leading Egyptian newspapers that are seen and read by millions of Egyptians. Sending congratulations as verbal messages in the media is not as effective as having it printed in Arabic in such key Egyptian newspapers. The words MUST be carefully selected to avoid any misunderstanding.

The US needs to do this within 72 hours of the celebrations that will start in Egypt this Friday on February 18, 2011. Timing is a crucial factor as sending these congratulations after a long period of time will make it loose its effectiveness. Publishing these congratulations in Egyptian Newspapers this Friday (Day of celebrating the Revolution), Saturday, or Sunday can create a very powerful positive psychological link to the US.

If the US did this it can win the hearts and minds of millions in Egypt, weaken the negative perception of the US in the country, and open the gates for a new relationship with the Egyptians. Furthermore, these advertisements can limit the ability of people like Ahamdy Najad to ruin the image of the US in the Muslim world by claiming that the US is not happy with their revolution. Unfortunately, many in the Muslim world have tendency to believe such lies especially when they damage the image of the US.

Compared to the hundreds of millions of dollars that were spent by the US and were ineffective in winning the hearts and minds of the Muslims world, printing such congratulations "from the American people to the Egyptian people" in major newspapers all over Egypt will only cost few hundred thousand dollars and can be much more effective in improving US image in the Muslim world.

Because of the historical position of Egypt in the Arab world, the positive outcome of these congratulations in major Egyptian newspapers can go beyond the borders of Egypt and affect many others in the Arab world. The US MUST utilize this historical opportunity in Egypt to direct its money more effectively to win the hearts and minds of the Muslim world.

What's Next For Egypt?

Feb 13 2011

The Future of Egypt will be largely determined by the Military, the Media and the Muslim Brotherhood group. The former groups and the main street can follow the progressive way of thinking of many of the initiators of the Jan 25 revolution and move in the direction of liberty& modernity or, on the contrary, they can become more radicalized and follow a more oppressive form of Islam.

In general, the initial trend of the above-mentioned key players -until the moment of writing this Op-Ed -is in the direction of more liberty. For example, the Military repeatedly asserted that they give power to the people via democratic elections; the Muslim Brotherhood welcomed a non-theocratic country and accepted the Peace treaty with Israel. In addition, the official Egyptian Media is currently taking a more honest position in addressing problems of the country.

The causes for such initial pro-modernity trend differ among these groups. The Military recognized the power of people and realized that the people can repeat the revolution-which could be bloody next time- if the Military betrayed them. The official Media learnt a lesson, that they can't deceive people forever especially in the presence of competing media, satellite T.V., and the Internet. Factors that were involved in initiating some change in the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) included failure of the MB to move the masses since they started in 1928 compared to the liberal and progressive founders of the revolution who managed to move the masses and make a change in relatively very short period of time. Furthermore, the Slogan of the MB "Islam is the Solution" has lost a significant portion of its appeal after the miserable failure of Islamic regimens in Taliban, Somalia, and Hamas controlled Gaza. It is unclear yet if this change in the attitude of the MB represents a genuine desire toward more liberty or a tactical step to get to power and ultimately implement oppressive Sharia Laws.

It is also fair to say that some Islamists are trying to hijack the revolution by creating an Islamic leadership for it. Their attempts included having huge Friday prayer service in the Liberation Square led by famous and radical Islamic scholars such as Sheik Youssef Al-Quradawy who justified terrorist acts against innocent Israeli civilians. These ceremonies while frightening could not change -until today- the nationalist theme of the revolution to an Islamic one. For example; most protestors -until today- carry the flag of Egypt rather than the flag of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Several factors (see below) can impede this initial pro-democracy trend and can actually reverse it toward Islamic radicalism. These factors include:

1- Sudden Economical failure: Economic failure due to collapse of tourism industry and escape of foreign investing can aggravate the levels of poverty in the country which may increase the crime rates and thus cause further weakening in tourism industry and diminishes foreign investing. This cascade can drag the country into further economic failure. This disastrous negative vicious cycle can also open the gate for many Islamic radical groups to dominate the society. The delay in removing Mubarak from power has aggravated this problem.

2- Lack of hope: Loss of hope in improving the living standards of individuals on the short term can make people turn to the use of violence. People can tolerate a decline in their living standards after the revolution if they have a hope that their situation may improve in the near future. If this hope is lost many will lose the trust in democracy and thus can turn to radical forms of Islam with the hope that this may solve their problems. Giving hope to people in this crucial time is fundamental to the future stability of the country.

3- Lack of trust in the leadership: Despite the fact that several former Egyptian government officials in the Mubarak regimen have been put - after the revolution -in prison due to accusations of corruption, the Mubarak family seems until today to be above the law. Despite allegations that Mubarak family has stolen 40-70 Billion dollars from public money, unlike many other officials who were put in prison for corruption allegations, no single member of Mubarak family has been put in prison for similar allegations.[6] The people who suffered as a result of corruption by the former rulers of the country will never trust the new system that currently rules the country until they see that they apply the law on Mubarak family as well. In other words millions of Egyptians will lose their trust in the current leaders of the country until they see members of Mubarak family persecuted by law. The double standards in applying the law will open the gate to civil disobedience and nourishes radical views in the society that will ultimately impede the path toward modernity. If the people of Egypt felt that the current leadership is more faithful to Mubarak Family than to their own people they will gather around an Islamic leadership to resist this form corruption.

---

[6]) Inman, P. (2011, February 04). Mubarak family fortune could reach $70bn, says expert. *The Guardian.* Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/world

4- Terrorist Acts: Radical groups such as Al-Qaeda may utilize the current chaotic situation to ruin the hope of modernity in the country by conducting some terrorist activities. In fact, Aiman Al-Zawaherri expressed his opposition to the Jan 25 revolution as it is based on Democracy rather than on Islam.

The above factors -if not immediately addressed -can reverse the direction of the initial pro-modernity trend and direct the country to the path of more radicalism instead of more modernity.

The following suggestions can help continue the initial pro-modernity momentum and prevent a catastrophic reversal of the trend toward more Islamic Radicalism:

1- Immediate measures to deal with the post-revolution economic crisis to protect the country from succumbing to the formerly mentioned disastrous cascade. This step can be facilitated and assisted by urgent active steps to get some of the stolen public money back to the country.

2- Current Egyptian leaders MUST immediately give the people in Egypt 'HOPE' that their situation will change on the short run by decelerating that the income of Suez Canal that used to go to the president and his surrounding presidential guard will be from now on directed to the people of Egypt.

3- Current Egyptian leaders MUST regain 'TRUST' of the Egyptian people by proving to them that Mubarak and his family are NOT above the law. This may need freezing their assets inside Egypt, preventing them from travelling overseas, and even putting members of Mubarak Family in prison to be treated in the same way as the other former corrupt government officials of the Mubarak regimen have been treated.[7] These officials who included ex-ministers of Interior, Tourism, Housing and business mogul Ahmed Ezz are now in prison waiting for the results of the investigations of the allegations against them. Failure to treat the Mubarak family in the same way as these officials have been treated will end trust in the leadership and is likely to cause in a disaster for the whole country that may drive it into more radicalism.

4- Amending the Emergency Law so that it cannot be used against political opponents of the government yet can still be used to stop

---

[7] Egypt corruption probe: Ex-minister, state TV boss held. (2011, February 24). *BBC News.* Retrieved from http://www.bbc.co.uk/news

possible terrorist acts. A specific Anti-Terrorism Law can be a suitable substitute for the current Emergency Law.

A reconciliation program that allows former corrupt officials to apologize for the people of Egypt, repent from their wrongdoings against the nation, and taking active steps to return back significant portion of the stolen money to contribute to building the country can help in preventing the escalation of destructive forms of anger within the society.

In brief, the future of Egypt will be largely determined by the immediate actions that will be taken by the current military leaders. If the above issues are addressed by the Egyptian leaders without delay there will be a high possibility that Egypt can progress toward more liberty. On the contrary, if the Egyptian leadership ignored these recommendations or took long time before implementing them the country is likely to succumb to Islamic radicalism.

How The US Should Deal With The Muslim Brotherhood

April 26 2011

The Muslim Brotherhood and how to deal with it is a Political dilemma for decision makers in the US. Recently, Rep. Sue Myrick held her House Subcommittee on Terrorism, Human Intelligence, Analysis and Counterintelligence hearing to examine the history, beliefs and positions of the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Muslim Brotherhood does not seem to be as violent as Al-Queda. However, it is hard to completely separate them from the phenomenon of Radical Islam. The word they use for their slogan is "Wa-aidou" which is Arabic for "prepare." This is taken from verse 8:60 of the Quran which states, "Prepare (Wa-aidou) against them (the Un-believers) to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into (the hearts of) the enemies of Allah and your enemies, and others besides, whom ye may not know, but whom Allah doth know. "Therefore, the use of "Wa-aidou" underneath the two swords in the MB flag indicates this is much more complex word than many can imagine.

Initial statements by some leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood after the January 25th revolution in Egypt seem promising. However, what the group says today can be very different from what they will do when they come to power.

The statements from the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood are typically general statements without addressing the specifics of the issues. This approach allows the leaders of the MB the flexibility to completely change what they will say if they come to power. For example, the leaders of the MB defended religious freedom. However, this is not specifically state if a Muslim can convert to other another faith without being killed. Recently, a leading member of the MB mentioned on one of the mainstream Egyptian TV channels that it is so easy to convert to Islam but it so hard to leave it (his facial expressions actually changed from a peaceful smile when he was talking about entering into Islam to expressing anger and disgust when he mentioned leaving it). In addition, they speak about equality and yet they refuse to allow a Coptic or a woman to be the president. This was recently illustrated when several Islamists (including members of the Muslim brotherhood) in the Upper Egypt province of Quena, started a civil strike protesting the new governor mainly because he is a 'Copt'. "It is hard to

witness such destructive discriminatory reactions, but this superiority complex rhetoric is often found in Islamist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood. These groups cannot accept Infidels or Non-Muslims as a ruler over Muslims."

To understand how the US should deal with the Muslim Brotherhood it is vital to mention the following facts:

1- The fall of Mubarak was inevitable and any intervention by the US to stop it would have failed. So, it is better to deal with the current reality than just blame the US government for not standing beside Mubarak.

2- The MB is a reality on the ground. Ignoring their existence does not change the reality.

3- There are growing internal conflicts and divisions within the MB. Some young members, female members, and some senior members have expressed several views that contradict the traditional views of the organization. These include acceptance of Copts in leadership positions, more roles for women in the organization, and different views about some of fundamental Hudud (punishments) in Islam such as stoning for adulteries.

4- Due to several ideological reasons, the Muslim Brotherhood cannot be a sincere ally to the US. They can only have a parasitic form of relationship with the US. The MB will use the US support until they become more powerful.

5- Anti-Semitism and Anti-Israeli views in Egypt are not limited to the MB. Secular groups in Egypt also share the same views.

The following are some recommendations for the US decision makers on how to deal with the MB:

1- The US government MUST understand the reality of what they are dealing with. Asking about the specifics rather than general issues is vital. For example, it is important to know clearly the position of the MB on the intentional killing of Israeli civilians by Palestinian Islamic groups. It is also crucial to ask the MB about how they can respect the peace treaty with Israel (as they claimed) and at the same time uphold the Islamic principle, which is used by Hamas organization, to destroy Israel and erase it from the map. Furthermore, it is imperative to know how their new party that is called Al-Hureia Wa Al-Adala or 'Freedom and Equality' will practically deal with freedom of Muslims to covert to other faiths. Or, how will they deal with equality between

Muslims and Non-Muslims and between different genders. Pushing the MB on these specific points can help the US officials to understand the real views of the organization.

2- Maintaining a good relationship with the secular elements of the Military in Egypt. These military leaders are vital to protect Egypt from becoming another Taliban.

3- Direct more of USAID or other humanitarian support to Egypt toward the humanitarian efforts of secular organizations. In this way these organizations can compete with the MB in their humanitarian work. This will create a needed balance, allowing Egyptians to see that the MB is not the only giver of food and humanitarian work.

4- The MB MUST know clearly that if they supported terrorist groups, such as the Hamas organization, they will confront a very strong action from the US and they will also be considered and treated as a terrorist group. The "Paradise and Hell" approach of traditional religious education mimics the intentions of "Carrot and Stick" policies. Thus, a strategy of negative and positive consequences is effective when dealing with any Islamist groups.

5- The USAID to the country, if the MB took power, MUST be linked to their implementation of Human Rights.

In brief, the US may soon face the situation where the Muslim Brotherhood is in control of the government of Egypt. It is vital that the US clearly understands the position of the MB towards the activities of terrorist groups such as Hamas. Equally important, is to convey a powerful message to the Muslim Brotherhood that any support for any terrorist group will have grave consequences both on the MB and on the whole country. US support or Aid to Egypt needs to be used wisely to avoid giving support to Islamist groups that can ultimately turn against the US.

The Straw That May Break Egypt's Back

May 18 2011

Suzanne Mubarak, the wife of Egypt's ousted president Hosni Mubarak, was granted bail in a corruption probe after agreeing to hand over her assets inside Egypt amounting to 24 million pounds," (around USD 4 million), as her husband pledged to do the same, in a bid to secure an amnesty.

She had been held on corruption charges in a 'luxury' hospital at the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, along with her husband, who is also being investigated for allegedly ordering the shooting of anti-regime protesters.

Meanwhile, Mubarak, 83, is said to be preparing to hand over his assets in Egypt and apologize to the Egyptian people in return for an amnesty from the military rulers who took power when he was overthrown on February 11.

This situation and decision, that aims at avoiding punishment of Mubarak's family, is likely to initiate a destructive process within the country, and can be "the straw that will break the Camel's back".

After the Jan 25 revolution many poor Egyptians lived with the hope that some of the public money that was stolen from the country by the Mubarak's family which amounts -according to the Guardian-to 70 billion dollars[8] and according to other sources 700 billion dollars will come back to them and this will relieve, or even end, their suffering.[9] Many Egyptians have started to calculate how much money they will have after the government brings back Mubarak's money from overseas.

Many Egyptians trusted the new military rulers of the country and lived with the optimism that the new leadership will care for and stand by the people of Egypt.

Furthermore, many Egyptians lived with the dream that the time of corruption of Mubarak's family is over and that after the revolution no one will be above the law.

---

[8] Inman, P. (2011, February 04). Mubarak family fortune could reach $70bn, says expert. *The Guardian.* Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/world

[9] O'connor, Clare. (2011, April 11). Egyptian Estimate Of Mubarak's Wealth Soars To $700 Billion [Blog Post]. *Forbes.* Retrieved from http://blogs.forbes.com/clareoconnor

The release of Susan Mubarak and the possible release of the former President is likely to have serious, uncontrollable, and irreversible consequences on the country.

The loss of hope, that the money that will come back from Mubarak's family to the people of Egypt will drive many of them to become violent. In addition, the loss of trust in the current leadership will make many unwilling to listen to their instructions or orders. Moreover, the feeling that Law is not above everyone will give a justification for many deprived people to do criminal acts as they will simply say "Why should we follow the law if the leadership of the country allows the Mubarak's family to be above it".

The cumulative effect of the above factors i.e. losing hope in a better future, losing trust in the current leaders, and losing respect for law can cause a significant increase in crime rates, which can further weaken the economy. In addition, this atmosphere creates a very fertile ground for Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups to orchestrate a wave of terrorist acts within the country and make it like Iraq. The economic collapse that can result of   an increase in crime rates and terror acts can lead to loss of more investors, and result in the collapse of the tourism industry, which will further aggravate poverty, and increase the crime rates. This negative feedback loop can cause uncontrollable negative consequences.

On the contrary, the current leadership of Egypt can prevent this disastrous case scenario, if they actually did the opposite, and instead of releasing the Mubarak(s), put more pressure on them to bring back the stolen money. Only in this situation can the current leaders regain the trust of the people and bring them hope for a better future.

To conclude, due to several factors, Egypt is already suffering from major economic and security problems. The decision of releasing Susan Mubarak and the possible release of the former President as well, is likely to be "the straw that will break the camel's back" and can initiate a destructive cascade of increasing crime rates and terror acts and works only for the benefit of Islamic radical groups.

Book Review

Who Really Does Speak For Islam?

Analysis of the book "Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think" by John L. Esposito and Dalia Mogahed

The Gallup Polls have a reputation as genuinely reliable surveys. Indeed, sophisticated statistical methods and sampling techniques are used to collect survey data across many different populations. However, in the book Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think, published late last 2007 there are major deficiencies at several levels that need to be addressed concerning the questions and the interpretation of the data collected in this survey.

First, the authors did not appear to take into consideration that certain aspects of Islamic culture may have had an influence on the responses given by those who were surveyed, which would have surely impacted the collected data. One such factor includes *al-Taqiyya*, an Islamist concept that it is permissible to lie in order to defeat an enemy.[1] In addition, many of the participants live in suppressive political environments, which may have reduced the willingness of those polled to freely criticize their societies. Furthermore, there is a great sense of intense cultural pride in many parts of the world where this survey was conducted that may have led participants to answer questions in a way that honors their culture irrespective of whether the information given is true or not. By not taking into account these three points, the authors ran the risk of conducting inadequate data analysis as well as drawing flawed conclusions.

Given this circumstance, how can we eliminate as much as possible the effect of potential cultural bias?

Using internet polls that already exist in the Muslim world, such as those conducted by Al-Jazeera or Al-Arabia, may provide some insights, as the participants express their views anonymously and remotely. This reduces the potential for embarrassment or fear, thereby increasing the likelihood of questions being answered freely.

---

[1] The concept of Al-Taqiyya means to hide ones believes to deceive the unbelievers. This concept is more prominent is Sheia theology than Sunni teachings however it do exist in the latter as well. The concept is based on the traditional understanding of the following verse in the, Quran 3:28, Let not the believers Take for friends or helpers Unbelievers rather than believers: if any do that, in nothing will there be help from Allah. Except by way of precaution, that ye may Guard yourselves from them. But Allah cautions you (To remember) Himself; for the final goal is to Allah.

While in general, random human to human based surveys that are not Internet-based are more accurate than those that are (due to the former's capacity to represent a wider range of the population), the complex and sensitive nature of views concerning religion and politics in the Muslim world may necessitate the increased use of the latter as well.

The exponential growth in using the Internet in many parts of the Muslim world especially among the educated gives more support for using Internet polls on larger scales. Generally speaking the Internet-based Polls are easier to conduct and can be less costly than traditional human to human based surveys. Evaluating the feedback of Muslim societies on the news is another way to give an indication about the views of these societies in a cost effective manner. In both human to human surveys and Internet data analysis bias elements of the study must be considered and minimized as much as possible.

The striking difference between the authors' interpretation for the Gallop Surveys and the relatively limited Internet-based polls of Al-Jazeera certainly deserves some attention. For example, according to the authors' interpretation of Gallup survey results, less than 10% of the Muslim world supports terrorism yet according to many Al-Jazeera polls, the majority of participants showed support for it in some fashion. In an Al-Jazeera poll from July 1, 2006, 57.9% of respondents showed support for Ayman al-Zawahiri. In another poll from April 4, 2004, 75.5% showed approval for kidnapping and killing innocent civilians in Iraq. Furthermore, a poll from December 12, 2007 recorded 54.7% support for Al-Qaeda attacks in Algeria against innocent civilians (that killed nearly 200,000 innocents). It should be noted that a Gallup poll typically represents the views of 1,000 individuals selected randomly, which represents more segments of the population than internet polls. The 2006, 2004, and 2007 Al-Jazeera internet polls represented the views of 30,487; 2,556; and 30,009 individuals, respectively. These results raise the need for further analysis and evaluation of the true views within the Muslim world.

Second, when the authors evaluated the support of the Muslim world for women's rights, focus was placed on issues such as the freedom to drive cars and vote instead of giving attention to more serious topics related to sharia law. For example, the permissibility of beating women and stoning them to death for adultery was not covered. These are fundamental issues in the Muslim world and should not have been ignored.

Third, the authors concluded that the vast majority of Muslims are "moderates" simply because the survey results indicate that they do not support terrorism. This analysis raises an important question regarding the authors' view about Muslims who reject terrorism but at the same time

believe in killing apostates, hanging gays, calling Jews "pigs" and "monkeys," and promoting barbaric punishments for women such as stoning to death for adultery. Should we really classify these Muslims as "moderates" just because they reject terrorism? Defining what is meant exactly by terrorism is also crucial as some may give an answer that they are against terrorism but they may only consider killing fellow Muslims (not non-Muslims) as terrorism.[2]

Fourth, when the authors mention the topic of jihad to explain to the readers its meaning they quote the following phrase from the Hadith, "We return from the lesser Jihad [warfare] to the greater Jihad [struggle against ego, selfishness, greed, and evil]" but they do not clarify to the reader that this Hadith is Hadith Daeif, or weak and non-binding according to standard Islamic theology.[3] This vital fact about the Hadith should not be ignored.

Fifth, in order to distinguish Quranic from non-Quranic sources of sharia to present the view of some Muslim Reformers who want to separate the two sources to give more adaptability to the religion, the authors mention that the source of prayer rituals in Islam is the Quran. One of the basic facts of Islam is that the rituals of the five prayers have never been described in the Quran itself and to begin with, the concept that there are five prayers is actually derived from non-Quranic sources.[4] The authors should have been aware of this fundamental tenet of Islam.

In conclusion, while the goal of this Gallup survey was laudable in attempting to understand public opinion in the Islamic world on some complex issues, the uncertainty and ambiguity of many of the questions highlights the need for a reassessment of the questions used in the survey. More importantly, the editorial and speculative conclusions drawn from the data do not capture potential cultural biases and, in many cases, indicate a

---

[2] It is not sufficient that Islamic organizations or individuals denounce killing innocent people without defining what do they mean by the word "innocent" as radical Muslims may consider that Non –Muslims are not innocent as they do not follow Islam. It is vital in such a case to insist that the denouncement is for killing civilians irrespective of their faith and to clearly articulate that the denouncement includes killing Non-Muslims.

See the following video: British Muslim leader: Only Muslims are innocent [Video]. (2006, December 17). *Jihad Watch.* Retrieved from http://www.jihadwatch.org

[3] Al-Jaza'iry, A. B. (2001). *Minhaj Al-Muslim (The Way of the Muslim), 2 Vols.* Dar-us-Salam Publications.

[4] The ONLY verse in the Quran that mentioned clearly the times for performing the prayers mentioned 3 times (not five): (Quran 11:114) And establish regular prayers at the two ends of the day and at the approaches of the night: For those things, that are good remove those that are evil: Be that the word of remembrance to those who remember (their Lord).

fundamental unawareness of basic Islamic tenets. In the important arena of understanding public opinions in the Islamic world, scientific polls need to be used to discover trends and serve as the inputs for rigorous analysis - not as support for pre-determined viewpoints.

Miscellaneous topics

The Torture of an Indonesian maid in Saudi Arabia raises several concerns

Last week an Islamic Sharia court in the Saudi city of Medina has sentenced a Saudi woman to three years in jail[i] for the severe physical abuse of her Indonesian maid. Sumiati Binti Salan Mustapa, 23, was admitted to hospital in November with broken bones and burns to her face and body. The Saudi woman for whom she found work as a maid was arrested after allegedly beating Ms Sumiati so severely she had broken bones and internal bleeding. She was accused of putting a hot iron to Ms Sumiati's head and stabbing and mutilating her with scissors.

The case received worldwide attention, and prompted the Indonesian president to demand justice for her "torture".

This "Sharia" punishment raises several concerns about the so called "justice of Sharia" Law as demonstrated two years ago when Abdul-Aziz al-Mutairi, a 22 year old Saudi , suffered a spinal injury which left him paralyzed when he was struck with a cleaver intentionally by another man. Saoud bin Suleiman al-Youssef, a Sharia judge of the northwestern Tabuk province contacted several hospitals in the area to see if they could perform a surgical procedure on the attacker which would paralyze him[ii],[iii]. The sentence was based on the Sharia concept of "An Eye for An Eye". This concept has roots in the Quranic verse {5:45 We ordained therein for them (the children of Israel): "Life for life, eye for eye, nose or nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and wounds equal for equal."

In the case of the Indonesian lady it is reasonable to ask ourselves why the Sharia judge did not use the same Sharia principle "An Eye of An Eye" that had been used in the other case. Can this be related to the fact that the victim was not a Saudi citizen? In other words, was the Sharia court going to limit the punishment to only 3 years in prison for the assailer assailant if the situation was the other way around and the Indonesian servant was the one who tortured the Saudi lady?

Furthermore, when we, on one hand, see that the punishment of the Saudi Lady was only 3 years in prison after torturing another human being to this extent and, on the other hand, realize that a Lebanese man charged with sorcery (*or* future telling) had

been sentenced to death in Saudi Arabia and was scheduled to be beheaded in March 2010[iv], we must question not only the "Sharia Law" but the whole justice system that permits this bizarre situation to exist.

I hope that the soft punishment that has been given to the Saudi lady for torturing her maid is not in any way based on or related to the Sharia rule that a free man is not to be killed for the killing of a slave[v].

Didi Wahyudi, from the Indonesian consulate in Saudi Arabia, told the BBC that this country would press for a harsher sentence. "We are going to file an objection to the judge's verdict because the sentence is too light compared to the maximum jail sentence of 15 years according to Saudi law, whereas Sumiati has suffered extraordinary consequences." In addition, the defendant's lawyer also said she would appeal against the sentence, reported Saudi Gazette.

The Saudi Sharia judges should at least seek justice between humans irrespective of their class or nationality as the Quran states clearly {4:58 God doth command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due; And when ye judge between humans, that ye judge with justice: Verily how excellent is the teaching which He giveth you! For God is He Who heareth and seeth all things. In addition, these judges need to learn from the Hadith of prophet Mohamed that described the reason for destroying some ancient nations was that they used to avoid punishing the criminals if they were from higher class and on the contrary they used to give touch punishment for the criminals if they were from a weak family.

In brief, the Saudi scholars need to reevaluate the sentence in Ms.Mustapa's case and enforce true justice.

[i] http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-12151454

[ii] http://searchwarp.com/swa616763-Saudi-Sharia-Law-In-The-News-Again-Man-Sentenced-To-Be-Paralyzed.htm

[iii] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G03-0jr0q00

[iv] http://articles.cnn.com/2010-03-31/world/saudi.arabia.sorcery_1_appeals-court-saudi-ministry-saudi-city?_s=PM:WORLD

[v] See: Fiqh: According to the Quran & Sunnah Compoled -by Muhammad Subhi bin Hasan Hallaq Vol:2 Darussalam Publications

The Israeli Gambit that can save the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty

By Tawfik Hamid

 www.tawfikhamid.com

Recent attacks from the Sinai and Gaza on Southern Israel triggered strong military responses from Israel followed by angry reactions from within Egypt.

Egypt's response has been two-fold: attempts from the leadership to negotiate a cease-fire, plus calls and protests from the citizenry demanding an end to the Israeli-Egyptian peace agreement of 1979. The latter protests are telling.

Thousands of Egyptian demonstrators have been demanding an end to the peace treaty with Israel. These outcries have unmasked the pathological levels of popular hatred toward Jews and Israel that had been nurtured in Egypt during the several decades of Hosni Mubarak's rule.

Hostility to the peace treaty with Israel is not simply the outcome of removing Mubarak from power. Rather, it is the outcome of the Mubarak regimen's blind eye to, and maybe even encouragement of, anti-Israeli propaganda.

The result is that nearly 30 years after the treaty was signed, values of peaceful co-existence toward Israelis have not taken root among Egyptians.

Unfortunately, virulent hatred toward Israel and demands to end the peace treaty are also winning tactics for garnering political support in the coming

Egyptian elections. Public surveys confirm the unfortunate reality that a majority of Egyptians want to end the peace treaty with Israel.

The current Egyptian government and the Military Council of Egypt therefore now face a Catch-22. On the one hand they want to respect the international commitments of the country. They also realize that war will bring the opposite of prosperity to their nation.

On the other hand they want to satisfy the desires of their local population, if only to gain and keep political legitimacy.

In crisis lies opportunity for creative new approaches.

The current Egyptian hysteria about ending the peace treaty with Israel stems from failure of many Egyptians to understand the negative consequences of ending this treaty.

Egyptians in general understand only one aspect of the agreement - normalization of the relations between the two countries. The part of the treaty which they ignore or forget is that in exchange, Israel returned the Sinai to Egyptian control.

Tourism in the Sinai brings Egypt much-needed foreign currency, as does American foreign aid that has been paid to the country after signing the treaty. In addition, Egypt's control over Sinai brings billions of U.S. dollars every year to the country via the Suez Canal.

Egyptians need to be informed that ending the peace treaty with Israel does not simply mean ending the normalization of the relations between the two countries as they wish, but it also mean a return of Sinai back to the control of Israel.

The latter fact by itself can significantly diminish the emotionally based demands of the Egyptian street to end the peace treaty with Israel.

Furthermore, many Egyptians will also start to realize the major economic disasters to Egypt's economy if they ended the treaty. For example, the Sinai's tourist cities would become part of Israel, along with the Sinai's oil potential.

Worse still, with abrogation of the peace treaty, Israel might end up controlling one side of the Suez Canal. Paralysis of the Suez Canal could levy a further significant blow to Egypt's economy.

Statements by Israeli officials that show how the peace treaty with Egypt is very important to Israel are misinterpreted by many Egyptians as it confirms to them their unfounded belief that the treaty is only beneficial to the Israelis. This actually increases animosity toward the treaty and encourages many Egyptians to demand ending it.

Israel can offer the following gambit to change the Egyptians' public opinion about the treaty.

The Israeli government can clarify in a clear message to the Egyptian people that if the Egyptians insisted on ending the peace treaty, Israel will accept this as it means a return of control of Sinai back to Israel.

This gambit from the Israeli government is a winning tactic as the Egyptians will never accept ending the treaty if they realized that this also means a return back of Israeli control over Sinai.

Emotional reaction in the Egyptian street against the peace treaty with Israel must be faced with facts and realities. Informing the Egyptians about the negative consequences of ending the treaty can bring the whole topic from

the emotional and irrational parts of their brains to the rational centers of their mind.

This can create major change in the attitude of the Egyptians toward the treaty.

In brief, the feelings of many Egyptians that the peace treaty with Israel has been beneficial only to the Israelis must be confronted with facts and reality. The more the Israeli government mentions and publicizes how important the peace treaty is for Israel the more the Egyptian street demand an end for the treaty.

On the contrary, Israel can reverse the anti-peace treaty attitude in the Egyptian street if it announced that it will not hesitate to accept ending the treaty if the Egyptians want to end it - as this means the return of Sinai back to the control of Israel.

Calculating the future US-Pakistani Relationship is Crucial

The US-Pakistan relationship has been shaken after the killing of Bin Laden. Many could not believe that Bin Laden stayed for years inside Pakistan without the knowledge of the leaders of the country or its military and intelligence organizations. An investigationhas been ordered into how Bin Laden managed to hide under the nose of Pakistan's military in Abbottabad for this long period of time.

In addition, the Obama administration is facing a clash with Congress where pressure is buildingto slash the huge aid budget to Pakistan as punishment for Osama Bin Laden's presence in the country.

It is important to calculate the different possibilities of a possible Pakistan-Bin Laden relationship correctly as wrong decisions in this time of history can end in disastrous uncontrollable consequences.

Generally speaking, there are two main possibilities regarding the knowledge of the Pakistanis of the whereabouts of Bin Laden.

The first possibility is that a low ranked intelligence officer knew about his location. In this situation if this officer was a supporter for Bin Laden he would not tell any higher ranked officer in the government about this piece of information. On the other hand, if this officer was against Bin Laden he would likely try to directly inform the Americans to get the 25 million dollars bounty on Bin Laden. It is hard to image that someone who opposesBin Laden would resist the temptation of getting this amount of money.

The second possibility is that a high ranked officer in the government or the military or intelligence communities had known about Bin Laden's location.

In this case, this knowledge is likely to be limited only to this individual as it is very unlikely that the government as a whole would risk its relationship with the US and the potential loss of billions of dollars in aid. It is also fair to say that the government of Pakistan that choose secular government officials such as Taseer Salman, the prominent governor of Punjab Province, who was recently killed by religious extremists for standing against the blasphemy law in Pakistan, is unlikely to hide a terrorist like Bin Laden. However, it is more likely that the government has been infiltrated by Al-Qaeda sympathizers who may have aided Bin Laden.

In all the above mentioned possibilities, it is unfair to accuse the government of Pakistan as a whole for assisting the hiding of Bin Laden. However, it is realistic to say that the government of Pakistan MUST takes active steps to stop infiltration of its system by radicals and to get the radicals out of the government.

Accusing all the Pakistani government of assisting Bin Laden and stopping the US support for the country can push Pakistan toward more radicalism. This case scenario is frightening knowing that Pakistan is a nuclear power and pushing it to become more radical can help terrorist Islamic groups to get a nuclear bomb. Furthermore, if the Pakistan-US relationship is damaged, the Pakistan can become an ally to the Iranian regime which can make counterterrorism efforts much more complicated and can helpIran to become another nuclear power.

To conclude, calculating our future relationship with Pakistan is crucial. Judging the government as a whole as collaborators with Bin Laden and taking decisions to stop aid to the country can push Pakistan toward more radicalism and result in uncontrollable consequences. Working with the secular leadership in the Pakistan government to strengthen them and to decrease infiltration of the radicals is a more pragmatic approach to deal with this complex situation. Distinguishing between the radicals and the true moderates is vital

for the success of the latter approach.

For links to some of Dr. Hamid articles, Op-Eds, and media appearances see next pages:

Analysis of the current situation in Egypt: Who the US Should Support in the New Egypt

Sep 6 2011

It is still unclear how the future of the NEW Egypt is going to be. Several groups are currently fighting to gain power and to have control over the country. The US support for the wrong group can be disastrous to the whole of the Middle East as changes in Egypt typically affect neighboring Arab countries as well.
Currently, the following powers or groups may have control over the New Egypt:
1-The Military
2-The Liberals
3-The Islamists

The Military:
The Military declared that they wanted to leave the power into the hands of the civilians. This could be true however the current security situation in the country especially from Radical Islamists may need some form of military control for longer period of time. In addition, some persons in the Military may have difficulty to let the civilians control them. This may create **fight for power in the future** that can cause more problems to the country. The desire of the Military to have more power in the NEW Egypt can be observed when several people of the Military declared on the Egyptian media that the Military is not only a protector for the revolution but it is an integral and essential part of it.
In general, the Military is committed than the other groups to keeping the peace treaty with Israel. Furthermore, the Military can give more protection to Coptic Christians. After the revolutions the Military re-built several churches that had been attacked by Radical Islamists. The Military is not faultless; however, currently it is the most reliable power that can protect the US interests in the region. The fears that the Military can be another Mubarak ruling the country is exaggerated as **the rules of the game has changed**. After the revolution the Military realized the power of people

which will make them more likely avoid Mubarak's style of ruling the country.

Currently the Military is **trying to satisfy all the other players** in the game of democracy. For example, on one hand they sit with the Muslim Brotherhood in their celebrations and on the other hand they rebuilt the destroyed churches to satisfy the Coptic Christians. In addition, they try to satisfy the liberal groups by showing some acceptance to having foundational rules for the new Egyptian constitution to protect secularism of the country. Also, an attempt to satisfy the Egyptian street the Military decided to put Mubarak behind bars in a court room.

Mistakes of the Military after the revolution included choosing some Islamists such as 'Subhi Saleh' in the committee that modified the constitution of the country in the transitional stage. This could be partially due to sympathy with the Muslim Brotherhood but is more likely to avoid frictions with Islamic groups during the unstable transitional stage after the revolution. Frictions with Islamic groups during this stage can bring more instability to the country.

During Mubarak time and the Jan 25 revolution there was a feeling that if Mubarak left power the Military will take over the control of the country. Currently, the feeling among the Military is that if they lost the power in a disorganized manner the country as a whole will collapse as there will be no one to lead it but radical Muslims. This feeling probably led the Military to peruse touch approaches such as holding Military Tribunals for many civilians who spokek against them.

<u>The Islamists:</u>

Several factions work under this title for the aim of Islamizing the country. These include the Muslim Brotherhood, the Salafi groups, and the Jihadists.

Despite the relatively moderate image of the **Muslim Brotherhood** *compared to* the other groups they certainly pose several threats. Initially some of the leading members of this group such Essam Al-Irian declared that he wants to encourage more tourism to the country. Later on his real intentions became clearer when he and other members of the group announced that they will not allow alcohol to be sold in the country expect probably for tourists (as they are Not Muslims[i]). Al-Irian said that tourists can bring g their alcohol with them. In addition, members of the Muslim Brotherhood strongly rejected that female tourists be allowed to wear Bikini on the beaches of Egypt. This is a clear sign that if the Muslim

Brotherhood came to power we will certainly see **Religious Police** (as is the case in Iran and Saudi Arabia) in the country to implement such laws. It is also likely that if these values are implemented tourism industry will collapse and poverty levels and thus radicalism are likely to increase. This can certainly negatively affect the future stability in the country.

Furthermore, the Muslim Brotherhood until today do not refer to Israel on their official website statements but by the expression "the entity" *without* mentioning the word 'Israel[ii]' or 'Zionist' as they see that these words will make the website 'filthy'.

The **Salsfi groups** on the other hand expressed their reality in a hostile demonstration to support Sharia implementation in Egypt. Many of them un-shamefully expressed their full support for Bin Laden. These groups –if in power- will simply make Egypt another **Taliban**.

The difference between the ideology of Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafi groups has been elucidated when the former started a musical song in Tahreer Square to support the revolution and the Salafists objected to them and wanted to stop the song –as musical songs, in their view, "Un-Islamic".

The **Jihadists** showed their teeth in Sinai area by repeatedly attacking the gas pipelines to Israel and by declaring parts of Sinai an Islamic state. Many of these groups collaborate with Palestinian terrorists in Gaza.

All these groups are united in implementing Sharia Laws and in their extreme animosity to Israel which is likely –if Islamic groups came to power-to end in declaring war against the Jewish state. If this happened we are likely to see **a very destructive case scenario in the Middle East**.

The liberals:

In general, these groups are **dedicated to secularism** of the country. Unfortunately, they may lose the battle against the Islamists as the latter use the power of religion and have already Islamized a significant portion of the society during Sadat & Mubarak time.

On one hand, the biggest advantage of the Liberal groups is their dedication to values of liberty and freedom. On the other hand, their biggest problem is that they are **idealists** in implementing their values. For example, they do not allow any level of flexibility in accepting that the Military can have a political role in the NEW Egypt. This has made the Military more inclined to accept Islamist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood as they are less likely-at least at this stage- to try to deprive the Military from all its political powers.

In fact, in the day when Essam Al-Iran of the Muslim Brotherhood was leading some of the demonstrations to support Sharia with the Salfi groups in Tahreer Square he was shouting in support of the Military Council by singing loudly "Ya Musheer Ya Musheer Alf Taheia Min Al-Tahreer" which means "O' General Tantawi...we send you a 1000 greetings from Tahreer Square".

Liberals need to accept more roles of the Military in the New Egypt to avoid pushing the Military toward the Islamists.

The **population** of Egypt wants a hybrid system that combines elements of the above powers.

1-They want to feel secure with the Military as they have been under military control for several decades. This feeling has increases because of the post revolution increase in crime rates.

2- They want to have a role of Islam in the society[iii].

3- They want some level of freedom[iv] and liberty so that the country does not become like Saudi Arabia or Iran. For example, Egyptians will not tolerate another man of Religious Police beating their wives for dressing "improperly".

In brief, the Military feel that they have been fundamental to the success of the revolution (which is true) and thus deserve more political role in the NEW Egypt. The Muslim Brotherhood will accept that the Military have more role as long as they allow them to implement some Sharia Laws in the society. The Liberals are idealists and their trend to insist that the Military play no political role in the NEW Egypt may end up in **pushing the Military more toward Islamic groups** which means that we will end up with an Islamic theocracy in Egypt supported by the Military. The latter case scenario is frightening to the whole of the Middle East.

The best situation for the NEW Egypt that allow the country to remain part of the international society, to respect the peace treaty with Israel, and to avoid succumbing into the path of Radical Islam is the situation of **Turkey 30 years ago** when the Military remain in power to protect secularism of the country. A Liberal-Military form of coalition to weaken the Islamists is likely to be the best case scenario for the New Egypt. This means that the Liberals need to show more flexibility to allow more role of the Military in the New Egypt.

Despite the fact that the model of Turkey 30 years ago is not an ideal one in the view of many, it could be -in the meantime- the best situation that can

protect the US interests in the area. The US administration may need to consider supporting this option to protect its interests in the Middle East as demanding an ideal democratic situation can turn into the opposite and can actually be harmful to US interests in the region.

---

[i] How about the Muslim tourists? Will the Muslim Brotherhood treat them as tourists or as Muslims?

[ii] Interestingly, the Muslim Brotherhood avoids using the word Israel on their official statements despite the fact that it exists more than 40 times in the Quran while the word Palestine NEVER existed in the Quranic text.

[iii] People may differ in the extent of this role.

[iv] Egyptians in generals love jocks, watching movies, and listening to songs. Islamists, generally speaking, will try to prohibit these activities.

Stop Misleading the West

The mother of Zakareia Mossawi El-Wafi, spoke to CNN at a recent conference in Dublin organized by Google to tackle extremism and promote reconciliation.

Last Friday, [CNN](CNN) mentioned parts of the comments of El-Wafi about the radicalization of her son and her failure to recognize this early enough.

El-Wafi, who was born in Morocco, believes Moussaoui was victimized because of the color of his skin. "He loved a girl he was forbidden from seeing... well the Islamists and the extremists found a grievance in the heart of my son. My son was born in France, my son loves France ... but he was not accepted. He was rejected by French society. In addition, she said, "My son suffered a lot from daily racism". In the city of Narbonne, he was called a "dirty Arab and dirty negro" and told to go home. "These are words that kill a child when he is 16, 18, 19 years of age."

These quotes presented Mossawi as if he is the victim and not the criminal. In addition, these quotes failed to explain to us how racism against Mossawi by some 'French' in '*France'* should lead him to kill '*Americans' in the US*!

While it is fair to say that racism against someone can contribute to the development of radicalism, it is also fair to ask how young Pakistanis in Pakistan are radicalized to become suicide bombers. Is this also because these young Pakistanis also suffer from discrimination and racism by their own people inside Pakistan?
Portraying the story of Mussawi as if he has been the victim of racism is misleading as it diverts us from giving attention to more important causes for the phenomenon of Islamic radicalism namely - the Ideology behind it.

In our modern history, the Jews suffered some of the worst forms of discrimination and racism in human history. Yet young Jews did not become suicide bombers to kill innocents.

The comments of Mossawi's mother also failed to explain to us why young Buddhists, Hindu and Bahai minorities in France did not become suicide bombers. In other words, why does racism effect young Muslims in a different way than it effects other religious minorities in Europe?

It is important also to question if the Islamic values and teachings that reject western values of freedom and equality, promote discriminatory forms of dress code such as the Hijab for women, and forbid Muslims from sharing in activities that serve alcohol are contributing factors to the failure of acceptance of Muslims in some western societies.

In brief, racism against someone can certainly contribute to the development of his or her radicalism however it is very misleading to present the case of Mussawi - Who was convicted on being the "20" hijacker of Sep 11 - as if is the victim. Ignoring the pivotal role of the religious ideology in creating Islamic Radicals is dangerous as it makes us blind to the main underlying factor that breeds Islamic terrorism.

Articles/Op-Eds

1. The Wall Street Journal:

- *[The Trouble With Islam](#)*

- *[How to End Islamophobia](#)*

- *[Islam Needs to Prove it is a Religion of Peace](#)*

- *[A Muslim Response to Quran Burning](#)*

- *[A Symposium: What is Moderate Islam?](#)*

2. New York Daily News:
- *[Call Radical Islam by Its Name](#)*

4. The Jerusalem Post:
- *[Former al-Zawahiri Disciple Backs Alternate Islam](#)* (about Dr. Hamid)

- *[Fight Radical Islam with Ideology](#)* (about Dr. Hamid)

- *[Gaza Solution is in the Hands of Palestinians](#)*

- *[Iranian defeat first](#)*

- *[Why George Mitchell failed](#)*

- *[Playing chess with the Muslim Brotherhood](#)*

- *[How the US can help the Egyptian people](#)*

- *[Can we blame the Swiss?](#)*

5. The Hudson Institute:

[The Development of A Jihadist's Mind](#)

6. The Huffington Post *(about Dr. Hamid):* [*Inside Jihad: Lessons on Brain Washing-Pat 1*](#)

Speeches/talks

1-   At US Congress *(*[*Testimony of Dr. Hamid at the US House Armed Services Committee*](#)*): The Evolution of Strategic Communication and Information Operations Since 9/1:*

2-   On [C-Span](#): *Future of Egypt:*

3-   On [ABC News 20/20](#) *: Islam*

4-   [On Fox News](#) *Bin Laden Killing:*

5-   At the European Parliament
Part 1: [*http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cu93J4fSt_E*](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cu93J4fSt_E)

Part 2: [*http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9IrzEWqWcbs*](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9IrzEWqWcbs)

Quotes

In the Washington Post:

[*http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/15/AR2009061502584.html*](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/15/AR2009061502584.html)

In Voice Of America VOA

On Egypt:

[*http://www.voanews.com/english/news/US-Aid-to-Egypt-Depends-on-Events--114983219.html*](http://www.voanews.com/english/news/US-Aid-to-Egypt-Depends-on-Events--114983219.html)

[*http://www.voanews.com/english/news/usa/US-Egypt-Military-Relationship-Might-Impact-Crisis-114979569.html*](http://www.voanews.com/english/news/usa/US-Egypt-Military-Relationship-Might-Impact-Crisis-114979569.html)

On Iran:

http://www.voanews.com/english/news/middle-east/Egypt-and-Iran-Thaw-Once-Frosty-Relations-121597409.html

In The National Journal

http://www.nationaljournal.com/nationalsecurity/the-culture-of-egypt-s-military-could-determine-mubarak-s-fate-20110131

DVD

Dr. Hamid DVD 'In The Red Chair' is now available Online (You Tube):

You can watch the full episode here (20 minutes):

http://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_568600&feature=iv&v=tmW4irQUByE

Books

Inside Jihad: *Understanding and Confronting Radical Islam*