

NEWSBITES



UK TRAINING SAUDI FORCES USED TO CRUSH ARAB SPRING

The Observer newspaper in the UK has revealed that Britain is training the Saudi national guard that has been deployed to crush opposition protests in Bahrain despite the Foreign office accepting the Saudi human rights record as a “major concern”. Britain sends approx. 20 training teams annually for “weapons, fieldcraft, military skills, public order and sniper training”.

The revelations came in the same week that the G8 approved funding for countries embracing representative rule, highlighting the hypocrisy of British foreign policy as Jonathan Edwards MP called in the UK House of Commons:

“I find it difficult to understand why Britain was training troops for repressive undemocratic regimes. This is the shocking face of our democracy to many people in the world, as we prop up regimes of this sort”, Edwards said. “It is intensely hypocritical of our leadership in the UK - Labour or Conservative - to talk of supporting freedoms in the Middle East and elsewhere while at the same time training crack troops of dictatorships”.

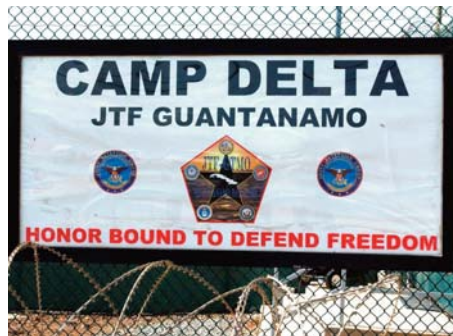
A ministry of Defence spokesman described the Gulf states as “key partners” in the fight against terrorism.

FORMER PAKISTAN INTELLIGENCE CHIEF ACCUSES THE US

Hamid Gul formerly head of the ISI told the UK Channel 4 news that he is “100 percent sure” that a recent attack on the headquarters of a naval base in Karachi where 13 were killed was an “American operation”. Gul who was the head of the ISI from 1987 to 1989 said:

“The Karachi incident was clearly an

operation by special forces, it must have taken months to plan, and the level of intelligence gathered is far too sophisticated for it to have been a raid by al-Qaeda or the Taliban... The reconnaissance and the surveillance to target three or four planes is far too advanced”. Adding later that “instability in Pakistan is the price for American friendship. There have been betrayals by Americans in the past, and there will be betrayals by Americans in the future. Absolutely they want to destabilise Pakistan because they want joint custody of nukes, to consolidate their position in the region, so a Karachi naval blockade is a natural move”.



GUANTANAMO LEAKED DOCS REVEAL THE AWFUL TRUTH

Innocents held and interrogated for years. Children, elderly and the mentally ill wrongfully held. The UK Guardian newspaper reported in late April on over 700 leaked secret files which expose the innermost workings of the camp. The files reveal a system focused more on gathering intelligence rather than containing accused terrorists. Among inmates were an 89-year-old Afghan villager, suffering from senile dementia, and a 14-year-old innocent kidnap victim.

Other revelations included that nearly 100 inmates were recognized as having mental illnesses, many attempted suicide. Many were held with no evidence of connection to terrorism - one being held solely because he had intelligence of Taliban interrogations. Reliance upon information obtained under torture was widespread and in many cases despite definitive proof that detainees had no links to the Taliban or al-Qaida they were still held. An Al-Jazeera journalist was

held for 6 years merely to be interrogated about the news network. With 172 still in custody despite Obama’s promise to close the prison, Guantanamo continues to be a severe blot on the US’s ambitions to carry its values globally.



REPORT CONFIRMS THE TARGETING OF US MUSLIMS IN TERROR CASES

US government use of surveillance, paid informants and invented terrorism plots prompts human rights concerns, according to a report by NYU’s Center for Human Rights and Global Justice. After examining three high-profile cases in the New York area they highlighted the role of the FBI and New York Police Department in creating the perception of a homegrown terrorism threat (reports the LA Times on 19th of May).

The American Civil Liberties Union and the Council on American-Islamic Relations have filed suits against the FBI, alleging that it used a paid informant to infiltrate several Southern California mosques and “indiscriminately collect” personal information on thousands of Muslims. This operation, which began in 2006, resulted in perjury and naturalization fraud charges against one member that were later dismissed.

“It’s clear the FBI is targeting people with no basis to believe they are involved in criminal activity,” said Peter Bibring, lead ACLU attorney for the Irvine lawsuit. “It’s both a poor use of limited law enforcement resources and an invitation for ethnic and religious profiling.”

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Editorial

The Global Call for Change

During this past month the momentum for change across the Middle East has not slowed. Opposition to the Assad regime in Syria has escalated; Ali Abdullah Saleh was forced to leave Yemen; opponents of Gaddafi continue to resist him; and the harsh sentence meted out by the regime in Bahrain were met by more protests.

But added to this has been Hizb ut-Tahrir's sustained called for change. For almost sixty years this Islamic party has led the way in non-violent political struggle, following the Prophetic example. Whilst, others praised the army in Egypt for not slaughtering the people as they do in Syria, Hizb ut-Tahrir has made winning the armed forces part of its method, just as the Prophet (alayhi salatu wassalam) tried to win over the most powerful factions in society as well as the general public.

This past month, Hizb ut-Tahrir held huge conferences in Indonesia filling dozens of sports stadia, with the total number of delegates attending close to

200,000. At the same time, responding to the call for change, Sisters and Brothers led demonstrations in Jordan, Denmark, Holland, Australia and London - opposing the Russian state's oppression of Muslims - highlighting the case of Sister Sidikova.

In this month's magazine, we profile some of these demonstrations as well as looking at the volatile geopolitical situation of the Arab uprisings and the decline of America in the world.

But just as the masses and good people move for change, there are those who work to oppose change and the Islamic revival in this Ummah.

We expose and refute the Saudi regime's attempts to label the Arab uprisings as illegitimate from an Islamic perspective. Also, we expose the British government's "Prevent" strategy (to prevent the Islamic revival not to prevent violent extremism as they pretend), as well as the rise of Islamophobia in the West - and its

causes.

As we go to press, Muslims can see the upper ranks of the Pakistani army have been infiltrated by people who wish to execute America's agenda in the region - and wish to purge the army's ranks of any principled opposition or Islamic sentiment. They demonise a party that stands for non-violent change, Muslim unity, Islamic government, justice and accountability; an educated population and a technologically advanced state; that supports the masses and not Western interests.

Those who oppose will plan and plot to stop it. But they cannot and will not. For Allah plots and plans - and He (SWT) is the Best of Planners.

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The Arab Spring - A Principled Stance



It has been an incredible year so far. We have witnessed seismic events take place in the Muslim world. Events which we hoped to see, but which we thought would not happen in our lifetimes. Despot by despot; town by town; country by country; people have risen up against tyranny in their tens of thousands.

The story began in 2010 in Tunisia with

a young market seller named Mohammed Bouazizi who was humiliated when an official confiscated his market stall. This though is not a one off incident. It is the kind of humiliation that takes place every day in the Muslim world – the persistent tyranny of governments that deny their citizens dignity, opportunity and the tools they need for prosperity. Only this time, Mohammed had other ideas. After

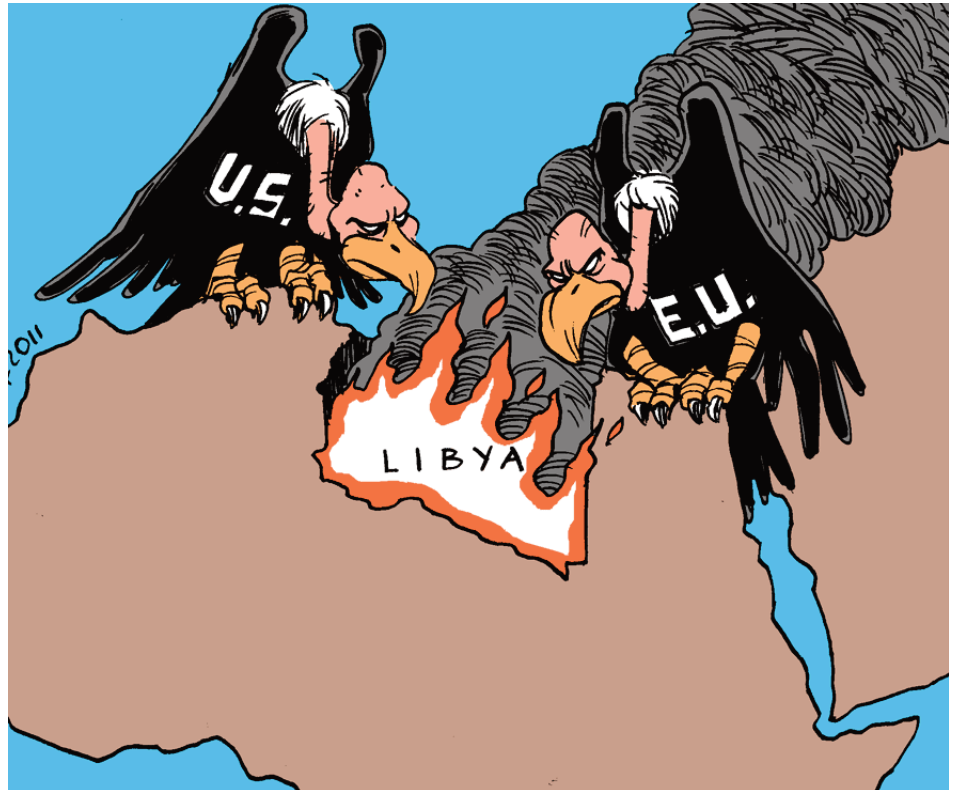
the regime refused to hear his complaints, he went to the office of the provincial government, starting a chain of events which would cause him to be burnt alive.

The determined actions of individuals today are not unique. In the course of history, the actions of the Anbiyah have sparked movements for political change rooted in the just message of Allah

(swt). Think of the young Ibrahim (as), who stood in defiance against those who blindly supported the power of the idols in the temple, or the bravery of Musa (as) as he stood and challenged the powerful and arrogant Firaun in his own court. Or the events that started in Tunisia, as Mohammed's act of desperation tapped into the frustration felt by all throughout the Muslim world. Hundreds of protesters took to the streets, then thousands, then tens of thousands. And in the face of tear gas, batons and bullets, they refused to go home – day after day, week after week, until dictators who ruled for decades were forced from power.

The story of frustration should not have come as a surprise. The nations of the Muslim world won their so called independence a long time ago, but they became corrupt dictatorships, neglected their peoples and became ruthless political tools of western governments. In too many countries, a citizen like Mohammed had nowhere to turn – no honest government to hear his case; no independent judiciary to give him a voice; no transparent election where he could choose his leader.

This is despite the fact that parts of the Muslim world are abundantly blessed with wealth in oil, gas and other resources, which has led to prosperity for the ruling elites. But in a global economy based on knowledge, telecommunication and innovation, the wealth of a nation is not found in resources in the ground but in the skills and talents of its people. Yet people can never reach their potential when wealth, opportunity and education only circulate amongst the chosen few. The question before us is, what do we make of what has happened in recent months? Is what we have seen, the permanent change that people want? And what role should we now play to shape future events? For decades, the despots of the Muslim world have pursued a set of narrow interests which have sidelined its own people: securing the free flow of commerce for the west, fighting against the Islamic revival and



standing up for Israel's security at the expense of the Palestinians. Yet now, after decades of despotic rule and western interference, the political situation is in flux and we now have an unprecedented opportunity to finally shape the path to substantive change. But as we do, we must expose some myths that have gained currency over recent months.

It is clear that though there have been changes of leadership in the region, there have been no changes of regime. In Tunisia and Egypt we have seen the regime of Ben Ali and Mubarak remain in place, even though the leaders themselves are now out of power. It is also incorrect to argue that the West put people on to the streets of Tunis, Cairo or Benghazi, nor was it the power of social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter – it was the people themselves who launched these movements, who braved the bullets and it is they who are responsible for the change.

Attempts to claim the Arab Spring is akin to the fall of the Berlin Wall are correct in one sense. In the Cold War

the USSR supported the discredited regimes in Berlin, Prague and Budapest. Today the West does the same with the despotic regimes in Riyadh, Amman and Sanaa.

Indeed the West who supported the despotic governments of the region should not receive a free pass. They supported these regimes for clear strategic reasons. These strategic reasons survive today. It is for those same strategic reasons that the West supported Mubarak, and why today they support the leaders of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and call Assad a reformer. It is for these strategic reasons they support the apartheid regime in Tel Aviv and allow it to be a nuclear monopoly while lecturing others in the region. It is those reasons why they bomb Libya yet do nothing while civilians are killed in Zimbabwe, North Korea and Burma.

It is also clear that the apartheid regime in Tel Aviv has no better friends than the tyrants in Cairo, Damascus and Amman. The Israelis realise that though they can make peace with despots in palaces, they cannot make peace with



substantive economic change will occur. Unless corruption ends, innovation cannot start. Unless western institutions stop interfering, domestic institutions can never mature.

It is also not for the West to force their particular values of secular democracy. The principle of detaching religion from state is deep rooted in London, Washington and Paris but is foreign to Cairo, Damascus and Istanbul. Liberal values rooted in individual freedom that spawn corporate capitalism, sexual freedom and pure individualism emanate from the west's peculiar ideology and are alien to the people of the region.

Accountable governments under the Khilafah system are rooted in Islam's eternal values and have led to prosperity, justice and respect for minorities and women over the ages. Science, architecture and trade blossomed under the Khilafah and can do so once again. It is therefore incumbent on Muslims to speak out for Islam's core principles - principles that should guide our response to the continuing events:

For instance Muslims should oppose the use of violence and repression against any individual whether done by non state actors, the despots in the

Muslim lands from foreign occupation to ensure justice is given to those who have seen their properties stolen, their lands annexed and their dearest killed. Our support for these principles should not oscillate with the political winds - nor should they be sacrificed at the altar of political expediency, or in some vain attempt to appease the west. The west never compromises on their core principles, nor should we.

Those principles must guide our response to the change that is transforming the Muslim world - words which tell us that dictatorship will fail, that western interference will fall, and that every man and woman regardless of their creed, colour or race will be treated with justice. As the life of our Prophet Muhammad (saw) showed us, the journey will not be easy, real political change never is. There is no easy path to progress, no shortcuts to real change and hardship always accompanies the task.

But this Ummah is founded on the belief that implementing a system anchored in divine revelation does not have to contradict with the modern world. That our vision of leadership, is one that is elected by the people, not appointed by the clergy. Where those that are weakest in society, are those that require most looking after.

This is why we cannot remain silent today, this is why we cannot look away, this is why we will not stand aside while women are raped, while towns are oppressed and while children are orphaned.

As Allah (swt) commanded: *"And if you rule, rule with justice between them. Verily, Allah loves those who act justly"* [Translated Meaning of the Qur'an - al-Ma'ida:42]

Muslim world or carried out by Western military forces.

We should support a clear set of values. These values include the right to elect one's ruler; the right to protest without fear of reprisal; that minorities should be protected; that no one is above the law and that wealth should not be concentrated amongst a privileged elite - whether you live in Tunis, Cairo or Damascus.

And finally, we support the liberation of

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the masses on the street. The Muslim world is not interested in appeasing or accepting Israel's illegal occupation and will not rest until this is reversed. In addition one of the key reasons for people's discontent is the lack of economic opportunity. Yet the same crony capitalism that was practiced before, is being now advocated again.

The use of the IMF, World Bank and aid programs are also designed to keep the states weak and dependent on the West. Unless the resources of the region are used for the people of the region, no

The Three Faces of Islamophobia



A version of this article was originally published on the website New Civilisation in June 2011

When British Prime Minister David Cameron addressed a security conference in Munich in February 2011, he criticised multiculturalism and called for a more 'muscular liberalism'. Cameron has not been alone in attacking multiculturalism. German Chancellor Angela Merkel was forced to make negative comments on the policy by rising tensions and political debate

within Germany. Critics pointed out that Cameron failed to criticise the English Defence League, a militant anti-Muslim group, who held a huge rally the same weekend as his Munich speech. Multiculturalism was a policy adopted in Britain in response to rising racial tensions in the 1960s and 1970s. Many informed commentators fear that, whatever the motivation, abandoning this policy – which was supposed to lead to greater social cohesion – will open the door to more racism; a concern reinforced with the approval by Marine Le Pen, the leader of France's National Front party, for Cameron's comments.

But, as many critics of Islam point out, Islam is not a race. It is a set of beliefs and values that cross the boundaries of race. So, it is argued, it cannot be racism that drives a dislike of Islam.

This is not wholly true. Islam is, indeed, not a race. But whilst Islamophobia is not a monolithic phenomenon, a significant part is without doubt nothing less than the base tribalism of the kind we see most commonly amongst racists. Islamophobia needs to be understood if concerned individuals hope to formulate an appropriate response. In my view there are three distinct faces of Islamophobia. I define Islamophobia as those who are critical of orthodox Islamic laws and values, rather than those who simply look at it all as a kind of "racism", which I believe is not productive.

With that definition, the first form of Islamophobia is what might be labelled as old-fashioned European xenophobia, which is what the term Islamophobia has come to commonly represent. The second is the Islamophobia of liberals who, who wish to express (as they see it) the superiority of liberal values and their criticism of Islam through comment, dialogue and debate. The third type uses policy tools to establish the superiority of liberal values over Islam; and this last group includes the 'muscular liberals' like Cameron and Blair. This is the most destructive face of

Islamophobia, because it is built on false arguments and can cause huge damage in terms of community relations, the stability of the Muslim world, and damage in terms of loss of life and liberty.

Old-fashion European Xenophobia Europe has a poor history on its treatment of minorities. Much of the current commentary about Muslims is reminiscent of the way Black people, Jews, Gypsies or the Irish were treated in generations gone by – and in some cases even today.

The themes of the criticism about Muslims usually centre on changing the character of Britain, imposing non-British values, refusing to integrate, taking resources from the state etc. This is the language of the BNP or EDL who camouflage their attacks on Islam with the language of defending the English or British people.

This narrative is reinforced by the tabloid media who have, in some cases, actually manufactured negative stories about Muslims; or at other times report upon every negative facet of the behaviour of Muslims in a manner that links to their Islamic identity, which reinforces popular prejudice. This form of Islamophobia generates the most rigorous opposition. There is, in part, protection in law from discrimination and incitement to hatred. Moreover, anti-racist groups, the left and those with a strong moral conscience dislike the rise in xenophobic hatred. So, many Muslims think it is important to build alliances and address this kind of Islamophobia.

However, the danger in concentrating on this face of Islamophobia alone is to miss the altogether more sinister state-led and policy driven Islamophobia. Moreover, most of the people that fall into this camp are ignorant (jahil) people, and Allah SWT tells us: *“And the servants of Al-Rahman are those who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant (jahil people) address them, they say, “Peace!”* [Translated meaning of Quran 25:63]

Whilst there is a legitimate need to protect our families, our masjid etc – there is a clear lesson in this ayah of the Quran not to respond unnecessarily to ignorant abuse.

LIBERAL EVANGELICALS

Evangelism is asserting the superiority of one’s beliefs. But it is not restricted to religion.

There are critics of Islam who are not ignorant racists. They want to criticise the ideas of Islam that they disagree with from their own liberal worldview. Their aim is not usually to demonise Muslims, who carry these ideas. Their commentary can be perceived as Islamophobic because it is set against a backdrop of politically driven propaganda. Yet their criticisms are part of a debate of ideas rather than ignorant xenophobia or part of a wider political agenda.

Liberal evangelicals, who dominate the columns of the liberal broadsheets and the corridors of the BBC, can be

This group of Islamophobes believes in an ideological attack using the full force of the State – including the use of military force if it means containing the rise of Islam as a political force in the Muslim world – and some elements of civil society as well, in order to secure victory.

extremely consistent in challenging illiberal ideas from any source – whether Christian or socially conservative.

This small group will uphold their creed to defend the right of people to say what they want to say, even though they might disagree with them.

But this means that this group of people would also be the first to champion the rights of Salman Rushdie, Theo van Gogh and others who use free expression to insult the sanctities of Islam.

These people deal in ideas; and the response to them should be in terms of ideas. That is how Allah and His Messenger (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) dealt with the criticisms in terms of ideas in the Makkan era of the blessed Prophet’s (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)

mission.

This group warrant’s argument and debate in the best manner, as mentioned in the ayah of Quran.

“Invite to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for your Lord knows best, who have strayed from His Path, and who receive guidance.” [Translated meaning of Quran16:125]

Liberal evangelical Islamophobia requires engaging in a debate of ideas – and for the best idea to win. But this requires the Muslim community to adhere to the values that are under attack in a public manner, and to defend them intellectually.

The ‘Cold War’ Warriors of the State The third group of people are those who wish to see the dominance of secular liberal ideas over Islam – within Britain and across the world but what distinguishes them from the liberals mentioned before is that they do not

trust liberalism to win the debate on intellectual grounds.

Instead, they use the power of the State, and their influence in the media, to pursue policies that secure the dominance of liberalism and the suppression of Islam. They are willing to play dirty, and pursue policies that fundamentally contradict the values they purport to uphold, which are founded upon deeply flawed – even false – premises. They have played to the basest instincts of the common man to create an environment that is hostile to Islam. They have mimicked the McCarthyist policies of the Cold War era in order to create fear, and so hope to keep the Muslim community in check through this climate of fear.

In a recent column in the Evening

Standard newspaper following the publication of the Prevent review, the right-wing columnist Matthew d'Ancona wrote that "this struggle more closely resembles the Cold War than the Troubles in Northern Ireland. The most important argument advanced by the rebooted Prevent strategy is that the struggle against terrorism is, at root, a battle of ideologies".

This view is widespread amongst politicians, and pushed by right wing think tanks. This group of Islamophobes believes in an ideological attack using the full force of the State – including the use of military force if it means containing the rise of Islam as a political force in the Muslim world – and some elements of civil society as well, in order to secure victory.

But if they have their way they will destroy even further the very ideas and values they claim they seek to uphold.

This British government, like its predecessor, has decided they wish to police ideas and political views. That is something that is supposed to be 'haram' in liberal societies.

They have decided to sideline, even demonise, those who have nothing to do with violence but who hold firm to core Islamic beliefs – so contradicting the pluralism they claim to believe in. "Extremism" says the government's Prevent review document "is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs."

This definition is complete hypocrisy. The advocates of such policies have undermined the rule of law in their approach to Muslims within the UK and abroad, in pursuit of their 'War on Terror'. They have removed the individual liberty of many with the imposition of detention without trial. They have shown little respect or tolerance for those who have perfectly reasonable and rational beliefs and values that conflict with the current dominant view [though not necessarily majority view] in Britain or Europe. Where is the respect and tolerance for women wearing hijab and niqab? Or for mosques bearing minarets in Switzerland? Or for the religious sensitivities of millions of people when desecrating the Quran, or vilifying their beloved Prophet?

'EXTREMIST' BELIEFS

Mr d'Ancona identifies these. Some were mentioned in the Prevent review document and some were leaked from confidential sources under the previous administration. They include "the restoration of the Islamic Caliphate, the destruction of Israel and the global imposition of Sharia law". These are caricatures of the beliefs of many Muslims, exaggerated for full fear effect.

The restoration of the Khilafah is a widely held general aspiration amongst huge numbers of Muslims – although the numbers who actively promote this as an immediate political programme are fewer. The Khilafah holds a central position in Islam.

The destruction of the Khilafah after World War One heralded the subsequent disintegration of the Muslim world into chaos.

What is labelled the 'destruction' of Israel is what Muslims refer to as the liberation of occupied Palestine. When Argentina occupied the Falkland Islands or Hitler occupied France, people wanted liberation – and not the 'destruction' of the pro-Argentine regime or the 'destruction' of the Vichy regime – only liberation. Muslims do not wish to see a "Jewish-free" Palestine; just one where the oppressive and racist Zionist regime is abolished, and justice established in the region. Yet, it is government policy to silence this valid political opinion.

What is referred to as the 'global imposition of Sharia law' is the adoption of a legal code, described by the political thinker and British parliamentarian Edmund Burke as "a law interwoven with a system of the wisest, the most learned, and most enlightened jurisprudence that perhaps ever existed in the world". This group of Islamophobes know that the return of the Khilafah, the implementation of Sharia in terms of governance and economics, would mean a loss of control over the Muslim world and its resources. It is not about terrorism, or the safety of their citizens. It is about suppressing the aspirations of hundreds of millions for the sake of corporate security.

So, they have created a 'McCarthyite' climate, where to declare belief in these values that are attacked and criticised, sees



people labelled as 'extremists' and a mere stone's throw away from being a 'terrorist'.

But, for Muslims, upholding these values is essential. For abandoning these values would bring humiliation in this world and the next.

In fact, why does any Muslim think an anti-racist liberal campaigner would bother defending values they disagree with, when Muslims don't stand up for them even though they are supposed to believe in them!

These politicians, think tanks and sections of the media who use lies, smear, fear and propaganda, as well as the institutions of state to achieve their ends – have to be exposed for what they are.

Their arguments need to be challenged and undermined. The destructive capacity for their policies needs to be made clear for all.

Their double standards, trampling and soiling the very values they claim to support, needs to be seen by all. The Muslim community needs to be united, despite government attempts to force divisions

"And hold fast, all together, by the rope of Allah and be not divided among yourselves" [Translated meaning of Quran 3:103]

Moreover, Muslims must be confident in its own identity – then engage with others on this basis.

"Who is better in speech than one who calls (men) to Allah, works righteousness, and says, 'Verily, I am of the Muslims'?" [Translated meaning Quran 41:33]

Prevent: Radically the same



There was nothing radically different about the “radically different strategy” to prevent people being drawn into violent extremism, which was unveiled by the UK Home Secretary Theresa May in Parliament on 7th June 2011.

The core elements of Prevent, which were introduced by the Labour government in the aftermath of 9/11 – remain unchanged:

- It targets the Muslim community.
- It is based on promoting a secular state-sponsored Islam strategy and providing a platform only for ‘moderates’ who subscribe to this doctrine.

- The strategy maintains spy networks across a multitude of institutions, to inform the authorities of those who show ‘signs or are susceptible’ of extremist behaviour and influence.

- The strategy conveniently ignores the primary cause that has been attributed to the growth of radicalisation i.e. UK foreign policy, which has been aired by many political commentators, ordinary citizens; even ministers in the government: “To pretend what happens abroad has no impact is nonsense.” (Lord West, Security Minister in 2009)

“But I do believe that foreign policy is sometimes a motivating factor in radicalisation of young Muslims and the potential recruitment to terror. It is better

to be frank about it.” (Peter Reid, Home Secretary in 2006)

The only element that Theresa May introduced, which could be considered as new was the reference to tackling ‘non-violent extremism’. This adjustment in focus was inevitable for a number of reasons:

- It was the direction that the previous government had already adopted, but had not announced publicly.

- The Prevent Strategy has been an abysmal failure, for it was evident that ‘extremists’ were few and far between. Prevent has always been seen as a convenient cover that allowed the government to create a climate of intimidation for the Muslim community and for the government to pursue its real target i.e. those who offered Islamic intellectual and political enlightenment and alternatives.

- The concern for governments is when Muslims begin to redefine themselves within an Islamic paradigm and assert their Islamic identity beyond the spiritual and secular confines, which they had inherited and/or was imposed upon them. This concern has been consistently raised in the British Parliament over a number of decades and Gordon Brown, former Prime Minister stated, “It is also a struggle of ideas and ideals that in the coming years will be waged and won for hearts and minds here at home and round the world.”

It is an uncomfortable position for governments as Muslims openly question and seek debate on the legitimacy and application of secular values and challenge the brutal and hypocritical foreign policy that western governments have adopted in the Muslim world. To silence Muslims has become a cornerstone policy of the government and we should all expect that ‘non-violent extremism’ will become a much used household political expression.

However, the announcement of the ‘new strategy’ will do little to provide reassurance to the Muslim community, already battling with discrimination,

intimidation and victimisation that the existing Prevent strategy has created. Likewise, the announcement just adds to the increasingly held belief by Muslims and society in general that it is increasingly common for the government to abdicate and contradict core principles:

- An ethical foreign policy has been ignored for the sake of protecting British material interests by supporting brutal regimes and turning a blind eye and outsourcing torture. (In truth, there is no such thing as a secular ethical foreign policy)

- Britain abandoned sacred free market principles in order to save banks and protect and reward those that were responsible for the economic crisis that engulfed the world economies and resulted in millions of ordinary people seeing their wealth and homes taken away i.e. the bankers.

- The government selectively applies 'freedom of speech' whilst declaring itself as its most ardent guardian - yet it actively seeks to deprive people from holding thoughts and expressing themselves within the intellectual and political arena. Arrogantly and quite without evidence propounding that non-violent Islamic political thoughts (Islamism they call it) will lead to terrorism. An approach that can be used to silence any political views the government dislikes.

It is interesting to note that part of the strategy to tackle extremism, involves promoting integration, "...including through teaching our history and values in our schools..."

What will be taught in terms of history by the government to encourage integration?

- The bloody wars that England engaged in and the brutal treatment and exploitation of those it conquered?

- The mistreatment of those who lived in Scotland and Ireland?

- The truth of the brutal track record of the British Empire, which is etched in the histories of those

continents whose indigenous populations (in America, Africa, Asia and Australasia) were not spared from the criminal colonial foreign policy - including genocides, massacres, rape, exploitation, torture, subjugation, the appropriation of lands and the installation of despotic rulers to govern on their behalf? Entitled 'Genocide in Australia', Professor Colin Tatz, wrote that though no official figures exist, estimates of the Aboriginal population in 1788 range between 250,000 and 750,000. By 1911 the number was 31,000.

- Will students be taught that Sir Winston Churchill, named the greatest Briton of all time in a nationwide poll in 2002, supported the use of poisonous gas,

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stating "I do not understand this squeamishness about the use of gas. I am strongly in favour of using poison gas against uncivilised tribes". He also said: "I do not agree that the dog in a manger has the final right to the manger even though he may have lain there for a very long time. I do not admit that is right. I do not admit for instance, that a great wrong has been done to the Red Indians of America or the black people of Australia. I do not admit that a wrong has been done to these people by the fact that a stronger race, a higher-grade race has come in and taken their place."

- Will Muslims be taught of recent British history and its active support in the creation of the illegal Israeli state and the forced displacement of 5 million Palestinians? And the British creation and support of nationalist movements in the Arab world in order to divide and rule? And the instigation of assassinations to remove rulers that did not support the British agenda?

Given this, the mind just boggles what will be taught in terms of British values - given the social, political and moral decline that is evident and the alarming statistics related to poverty, social disease,

crime, drug and alcohol abuse, human trafficking, domestic violence, and so on.

But to give credit to truth, Theresa May did confirm that:

"Let me be clear: the ideology of extremism and terrorism is the problem, Islam emphatically is not....Above all, it will tackle the threat from home-grown terrorism".

We wait for the government to finally announce and admit that it is the home-grown terror that is debated, abhorred, and legislated against and within the four walls of Parliament. That which is the principle source of terrorism the world suffers from - secular extremism.

For Muslims, the agenda of Prevent has become clearer as time has worn on. It is essential that Muslims equip themselves with the cloak of Iman and to be steadfast upon the truth, engaging intellectually and politically, without deviation. Likewise, as a community, the Muslims must adhere to Islam at all times in its engagement within itself and the wider society and not allow it to become a tool in the hands of those that seek to harm its adherents to Islam and become the voice for the return of Islam as the unifying political system in the Muslim world.

"The believers, men and women, are "Awliya" (helpers, protectors) of one another; they enjoin the good and forbid the evil..." [TMQ Al-Taubah 9:71]

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Uprising in the Arab World & the Political Role of Muslim Women



Friday April 22nd marked the bloodiest day of the 5 week old uprising in Syria. Security forces indiscriminately shot and killed 73 people in an attempt to quash any semblance of revolution and toppling of the Syrian regime. Indeed the signs of unrest in Syria are testament to people's belief that they have the power to change the status quo.

The Syrian uprising follows popular uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and other Muslim countries in the Arab world. From the suppression of political expression through imprisonment to the labelling of alternate political views as 'thought crimes', the Muslims of the Arab world have experienced decades of policing and subjugation by tyrant rulers. Nevertheless, this has not deterred

Muslims from remaining politically active nor dampened their spirits of believing in their aspirations of living under a just system of government in the future. Throughout history, the question of the role of women in political life has been a subject of much interest and contention. Needless to say that much demonization of Islam has centred on the labelling of Islam as being the cause of women's lack of public and political life in the Muslim world rather than the decadent Arab cultures of bygone years or the imported systems of the east and west. History is testament to the multitude of face lifts Arab countries have had - each system and dictator promising to uplift women from oppression. Yes - women in the Arab world call for a removal of tyrant rulers, but are they craving for western

democracy instead? What role do Muslim women carry in achieving the desired change? To answer such questions requires a deeper study of the history and heritage of the Arab peoples and its impact in shaping political life and activism.

EMERGENCE OF THE DEBATE ON THE ROLE OF MUSLIM WOMEN IN POLITICS

Many ideas exist on what is the correct role for Muslim women in politics. In the book 'Women in Islam: A Western Experience' by Anne Sofie Roald, she writes: "Political empowerment of women can be looked at from various perspectives. Secular Muslim feminists focus on the top of the political ladder and thus promote female leadership, whereas Islamic women seek

empowerment on the lower rungs of the ladder so that many women are politically activated". It seems two discourses exist on this issue; firstly whether women can assume the role of head of state - which is largely a feminist construction, and secondly how it is that women should be politically activated. So why have such discourses re-emerged in the Arab world?

THE POLITICAL INVASION AND ITS IMPACT ON POLITICAL ACTIVISM OF MUSLIM WOMEN

From the time of the Arab Revolt - the biggest betrayal against the Uthmani Khilafah in 1918 onwards, North Africa and in particular Egypt and the Hijaz has been a hotbed for the introduction of erroneous ideas on women. With the west's infatuation with 'The Orient' culturally and militarily - Influential Muslim thinkers and writers fell into the trap of philosophising Islam and distorting understanding to suit the western palate. Many female figures emerged at that time in the political arena - ready to demonstrate and speak out for the causes they believed in which propelled the call for reforming Islam. The feminists of that era such as Huda Sha'rawih, Safiyah Zaghlul, Princess Nazli, Siza Nabrawi and the like, were politically activated in the wrong sense. Such women were the wives and daughters of reformists with some receiving a western education. They called for women's rights, freedom to remove the hijab and absolute equality. The motivation behind the actions of such women is the notion that western liberalism was the way forward. Deluded by the idea that the grass is greener on the other side, they failed to notice that women in England were struggling for their right to vote or inheritance when Islam had already granted such rights 1400 years ago. The reason why women in Egypt were being denied such rights was due to the absence of the Islamic State, which could implement them. The greatest danger that befell the Muslims at that time is their acceptance of foreign invasion which led to the carving up of Muslim lands and the imposition of kingships and dictatorships as political entities. Under such secular political systems; patriarchy, subjugation, oppression and the suppression of political activism of

Muslim women for decades became common practice. Such a political reality inspired Muslim women to be unified on one view - that oppression and tyranny by the political system should not exist. It also inspired some women to set up organisations and charities which provided a small voice and a cause to work for under such brutal regimes, which numb any attempt to question their authority.

MODELS OF POLITICAL ACTIVISM

Society in the Arab world has always witnessed two branches of political activism; the call from secular Muslim women and feminists on the one hand and the call from practicing Muslim women on the other.

The American plan of democratisation wished to force a model of democracy through man-made legislation to shape the political landscape from Indonesia to Morocco. Prior to the Arab uprising of 2011, the US attempted to 'liberate' the people of Iraq by dispelling Saddam and bring in a 'representative' government. It must be made clear that western democracy is not the simple action of voting for the leader - but to legislate and implement a secular man-made state constitution. The bastions of democracy also tried to activate women politically by the mere offering of votes which many in Iraq and Afghanistan have boycotted and labelled as rigged and the encouragement of women to be represented in parliament (e.g. The Loya Jirga in Afghanistan). According to 'The World Association of Parliaments' (IPU - an association consisting of 155 national parliaments around the world); at the end of 2010, women made up a fifth of parliamentarians worldwide, up from 16.3 percent in 2005. In 2010, 43 chambers of parliaments (most being Northern European states) met the UN target of including at least 30 percent of women MPs. 62 chambers remained below the 10% mark and 10 chambers included no women at all. Arab states remained at the bottom of the table, with an average of 11.7% in female representation in parliaments. This increase from 4.3% in 1995 to 11.7% in 2010 is due to the introduction of a quota system in Egypt and other North



African countries. Morocco achieved a 10% female representation in parliament by 2002. Saudi Arabia and Qatar have no women representation and Kuwait does not let women run for office or vote. What has changed politically from the involvement of women in democracy? The protests in all the Arab countries and particularly in North Africa is testament to the inability for female representation or democracy to solve the problems of society. If further proof is required - we need not look further than Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq where the people have spoken lowd and clear of what they think about western interference and imported western systems like democracy with or without a face change. It is also evident that following a 100 year struggle to gain equality and rights by women in the

west, western democracy (representative rule is Islamic, secular rule is not) is far from being a beacon of justice for women. With shocking statistics of rape, battery, sex crimes, prostitution and pornography subjecting women to immorality and injustice - democracy has lost the argument of taking the moral high ground or be considered as a political solution.

The political activism from secular

that is regarded as degrading to women. When asked what they resented most about their own societies, a majority of Muslim women polled said that a lack of unity among Muslim nations, violent extremism, and political and economic corruption were their main concerns. The hijab and burqa seen by some Westerners as tools of oppression were never mentioned in the women's responses' (Helena Andrews; 2006). The Gallup poll also revealed that Muslim women want

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feminists have thus focussed on the superficial, such as campaigning for women as heads of state and imams, more female representation in parliament and the like. Those who do not conform to this way of thinking and call for an alternative political system like the Islamic Caliphate are labelled 'Islamist'. Therefore, the majority of Muslim women in the Muslim world are clear that the correct Islamic political activism is not by calling for 'feminism' nor 'pro-democracy' (man-made laws). Such activism is a deviation from the Islamic political actions of ensuring Islam is present in society and ruling. The call for accountable government is not a pro-democracy call. The process of voting to elect a head of state is not exclusive to democracy; rather the Islamic ruling system also has a process of electing and accounting.

WHAT MUSLIM WOMEN WANT IN THE MUSLIM WORLD?

Gallup 2005 Survey suggests that Muslims have learnt a huge lesson from western imposition in recent times such as the Iraq and Afghanistan invasion. "70% of Moroccan women, 71% of Lebanese women and 48% of Saudi women polled did not think adopting Western values would help the Muslim world's political and economic progress. The most frequent response to the question, "What do you admire least about the West?" was the general perception of moral decay, promiscuity and pornography that pollsters called the "Hollywood image"

an Islamic system to govern their affairs and wanted an end to western interference.

Such opinions indicate that lessons have been learnt from recent occupation. Muslim women want a removal of tyrannical rule, western interference and the right of self-determination - with the majority calling for an Islamic government.

THE CORRECT ISLAMIC POLITICAL ACTIVISM FOR MUSLIM WOMEN

Unlike feminists, the solution is neither linked to female leadership nor to achieve more female representation in parliament. Such calls have produced little change and are a clear deviation from the commands of Allah (SWT): The notion that women can be heads of states has come about from feminists through the distortion of evidences. There is a clear prohibition in the following hadith; "A people who appoint a woman as a ruler will never succeed" [Al-Bukhari]. The prohibition of appointing a woman to a position of authority is linked to 'lack of success' (Qareenah), - that is, a lack of success in the afterlife - which indicates that the prohibition is decisive. Therefore, appointing a woman as a ruler is forbidden (Haram). Furthermore, the notion that female representation in a man-made democratic parliament is necessary is against the principles of the Islamic ruling system: *"The rule is for none but Allah (SWT)"*

[TMQ 12:40]

"And whosoever does not rule by what Allah has revealed such are the disbelievers." [TMQ Al Maidah, 44]

Thus, prior to the establishment of an Islamic State, Muslim women are required to engage in political actions as an obligation to her Rabb (Lord). Hence she would enjoin the Ma'rouf (right) and forbid the Munkar (falsehood, evil), account the tyrant ruler, call for the implementation of Islam, work to re-establish the Deen of Allah (SWT) and concern herself with the affairs of the Ummah. The Muslimah would be vigilant of the problems the Ummah faces and aware of the solutions to her predicament. She would only engage in the Halal and reject the call to compromise, partial solutions or adopt western inspired solutions.

Following the establishment of the Islamic State, her duty to account the ruler, enjoin the Ma'rouf and forbid the Munkar will continue, but she can in addition assume positions of responsibility within the state's political structure such as a judge, offering advice on the Council of the Ummah and in electing the Khaleefah. The prohibition of women assuming a ruling position such as a Khaleef, delegated assistant, Wali or Mayor (Aml) does not equate to injustice or inequality since the society is built on cooperation of the sexes rather than the battle for sameness.

Securing the rights of Muslim women therefore requires arduous and consistent political actions that Islam has instructed with a clear intention to please Allah (SWT). A conscious effort must be made to uproot erroneous and foreign imported political systems and to replace them with the Islamic Khilafah system.

Countering the Saudi Attempt to Silence the Word of Truth



This article is based on a more comprehensive explanation of the Islamic ruling on Protests and Demonstrations which can be read at www.icuture.org.uk

In the aftermath of popular uprisings in the Arab world some 'ulama (clerics) sponsored by the Saudi regime have given a most unfortunate regressive fatwa (religious edict) that protests and demonstrations in that land are haram (prohibited). In this article, Allah willing, we want to scrutinise this fatwa.

Muslims are commanded not to be like the Ahl al-Kitab (The People of the Book) who took their priests and rabbis as Lords (instead of Allah), accepting their judgments blindly without question.

The reasons given by government scholars and others range in gravity, from the serious charge of rebellion, to the downright ludicrous - demonstrations

will hold up traffic! Indeed it is embarrassing to read the justifications given by the 'Ulama of the Saudi government's 'Council of Senior Scholars' and those who follow them; thus legitimising the Saudi regime, which is a haven for the other illegitimate tyrants in the region - such as Mubarak, Ben Ali and now Ali Abdullah Saleh. The Saudi fatwa is premised on one principal reason: that protests and demonstrations constitute rebellion against the legitimate rulers of Saudi Arabia.

'Protection of the community is of the greatest principles of Islam. It is from the great issues that Allah commanded in His Holy Book, and condemned whoever abandoned it. Allah Almighty says: "And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves..." (Al-Imran: 103) This is the principle of protection of the community, which the Prophet commanded upon all citizens, common

and elites alike, as he (saw) said: "Allah's hand is with communion" (narrated by Tirmidhi). He (saw) also said: "Whoever held back the hand from obedience, will meet Allah on the Day of Resurrection without any justification for himself; and whoever died without the pledge of allegiance on his neck, has died a death of ignorance" (narrated by Muslim). He (saw) again said: "He who wanted to separate the affairs of this nation when they are unified, you should kill him with the sword, whosoever he is" (narrated by Muslim).'

The fatwa assumes that the Saudi regime rules by Islam and as such, they are legitimate rulers. The reality of the matter is that the Saudi Regime is far from being a legitimate Islamic authority.

WHAT IS A LEGITIMATE AUTHORITY IN SHARIA?

A state becomes Islamic when its rules and policies derive from the Islamic 'Aqidah (creed) i.e. when their basis is the Qur'an and Sunnah; meaning the sovereignty lies with the Shari'ah. That is why obedience to the rulers is restricted and not unqualified. Allah (swt) says:

"O you who believe! Obey Allah, Obey His Messenger and those in authority from amongst you; and if you differ, then refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day." [Al-Nisa: 59]



The noble ayah (verse) begins with the imperative (command) form verb *ati'u* ('obey'): the subject of obedience (i.e. those who obey) is in plural form, meaning 'ALL those who believe in Islam'; and the object of obedience (i.e. the one who is obeyed) is Allah (swt). The verse then repeats the command *ati'u* (obey) and this time the object of obedience is the Messenger (saw). The repetition of the word 'obey' and the order indicates the two basic reference points that Muslims have: the Qur'an and Sunnah. Therefore anything in contravention of Qur'an and Sunnah must be disobeyed, and anything from the Qur'an and Sunnah must be obeyed. This is the principle upon which Muslims are told to live by and this is the principle on which Muslims are instructed to view their rulers. Here the word for rulers, or those in authority, is *ulul-amr* (literal translation: 'the people of Command'). It is not restricted to the Khalifah, but also includes the wali's (governors), wazirs (ministers) and all those who have authority, especially since the word has been used in the plural form (*ulul-amr*) and not the singular *waliyul-amr*.

It is significant that the ayah does not repeat the verb *ati'u* when it comes to the Rulers, as it did in respect to Allah and His Messenger; this is an additional

indication alongside the clear verses and hadith that state that rulers must obey Allah and His Messenger in their ruling and exercise of authority. For example the Messenger (saw) said: **'There is no obedience (when this results) in disobedience of the Creator.'** [Sahih Bukhari] Here the *mantuq* (directly apparent meaning) is an absolute prohibition of following an order that goes against the order of Allah (swt) - whosoever makes that order. This hadith came specifically in the context of authority and ruling. Its *mafhum* (implied meaning) indicates that just as

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the person cannot obey a ruler who commanded disobedience to Allah (swt); so in the same way, a ruler or amir cannot order, enact laws or rule by anything that is in violation of what Allah (swt) has ordered.

The verse also obliges the obedience to the command of the Messenger (saw) and links that to the rulers. As long as the rulers or those in authority obey the Messenger (saw) then there is the obedience to him, otherwise there is no obedience. That is why the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said in a hadith reported by Abu Hurayrah: **'Whoever obeys me has obeyed Allah and whoever disobeys me has disobeyed Allah. Whoever obeys the amir has obeyed me and whoever disobeys the amir has disobeyed me'** [Agreed upon]. As for the statement **'whoever obeys the amir has obeyed me and whoever disobeys the amir has disobeyed me'** in the above hadith or the following one: **"Anyone who dislikes something from his amir should be patient. Anyone who abandons obedience to the amir for even a short time dies the death of the Jahiliyyah (ignorance)"** [Agreed upon]: This does not mean absolute obedience to the rulers. These ahadith are about not rebelling against the rulers due to their misappropriation of the people's rights, but not about obeying the rulers in the matters which are a clear violation of

the Shari'ah. Rather, when the ruler commands a clear *munkar*, the Muslim must disobey that command and cannot say he was following orders.

The verse then concludes that if there is a dispute over a matter, between the Muslims and their rulers, then the final arbiter must be Allah and His Messenger (saw). It states: **"if you differ, then refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day."** The last words of the ayah enjoin on the believers the importance of referring to Allah and His Messenger in ruling, by drawing

attention to the fact that not to do so is a negation of *iman*; hence it says: **'...if you believe in Allah and the Last Day.'**

This is how the Sahabah (ra) understood this matter and nothing shows this more clearly than the speech of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq when he assumed the post of Khalifah: "Help me if I am in the right; set me right if I am in the wrong. The weak among you shall be strong with me until Allah willing, his rights have been vindicated. The strong among you shall be weak with me until, if Allah wills, I have taken what is due from him. **Obey me as long as I obey Allah and His Prophet; when I disobey Him and his Prophet, obey me not.'**

The conclusion therefore is that a ruler becomes legitimate only when he bases his rule on the Kitab and Sunnah, i.e. sovereignty is for the Shari'ah, and it is for this reason that obedience becomes obligatory.

However, when we look to the case of the Saudi regime, we find that the basis of its rule is not the Shari'ah, as indicated by its persistent and constant explicit contravention of the Shari'ah; here are a few examples:

- Permission of usury (*riba*) and banks trading in usury, which is categorically prohibited in Islam.
- Submission to man-made

international law as members of the UN and other international bodies, whose charters and rules are not in accordance with Islam.

The flagrant and persistent violation of Shari'ah by the Saudi regime, even after having been accounted by the 'ulama and the da'wah carriers means that the above constitute explicit kufr (kufr buwah). Consequently, their rule is not legitimate and they need to be removed by the people of power (nusrah) and a just ruler appointed in their place.

So to claim that demonstrations against the Saudi rulers is prohibited, is misplaced as the Saudi regime does not enjoy any legitimacy whatsoever from the Shari'ah perspective. Holding on to the rope of Allah, and unity of the Jama'ah arises only when Muslims gather under the leadership of a ruler who

without consideration of its aims and purpose?

Another form of general evidences are the 'umumat (generality) and unrestricted (mutlaq) import of the ahadith that enjoin Muslims to speak the haqq, enjoin the good and forbid the evil. So for example the hadith:

'The best struggle (jihad) is the word of truth spoken to a tyrant ruler.' (Al-Nasa'i).

This hadith encouraging political struggle does not specify the manner in which the truth should be spoken to the tyrant ruler, which means any style that has not been prohibited by another text is permitted. So whether by a letter, distribution of leaflets, publication of a book, article in a newspaper or speaking directly to the ruler, these are all permissible means of fulfilling the

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rules by the book of Allah and Sunnah of the Messenger, not under the leadership of those who betray the interests of the Ummah and are only interested in being the khadims (servants) of America.

EVIDENCES FOR PERMISSIBILITY OF DEMONSTRATIONS AND PROTESTS

As for the proofs (adillah) for the permissibility of demonstration, these are both general and specific:

A demonstration or protest is a public display of opinion. The general evidences which allow people to meet and express opinions would permit people to demonstrate their opinions as long as the opinions expressed are permitted by Islam. As such protests and demonstrations are merely a permissible style, which takes its hukm (ruling) dependent on the reasons and aims of the demonstrations; thus these must be assessed before a hukm can be given, for how can a style be labelled haram

obligation.

The above hadith says **'the best struggle'**: this fits a reality where the accounting is done publicly, since that is truly a struggle, whereas it is easier to account privately. It is when the ruler is accounted in front of everyone that he is likely to kill or imprison the person accounting him.

It was the practice of the Sahabah to account the rulers in public. It is reported that a person told 'Umar b. Khattab (ra) to "fear Allah" publicly, and 'Umar responded by saying: "There is no goodness in you if you do not say it, and there is no goodness in us if we do not hear it." (Manaqib amir al-muminin by Ibn Jawzi. P.155)

As for the Salaf al-Salih, look at the example of Hasan al-Basri: he was present in Basrah when al-Hajjaj, a tyrant Wali, built his grand palace and called all

the people to witness it. Hasan knew that this was a great opportunity to remind the people about the place of wealth and status in this life. He said: "We looked at what the filthiest of filth built, and we found that Fir'awn built greater than what he built and higher than what he built, then Allah destroyed Fir'awn and what he built. Hajjaj should know that the inhabitants of the sky hate him and the people of the earth only deceive him!" It was said to Hasan "Be careful, O Abu Sa'id!" Hasan replied "Allah has taken a covenant from the people of knowledge to explain it to the people and not to be silent!" In this example Hasan al-Basri openly exposed the excesses of the ruler. (Suwar min hayat at-tabi'in, 'Abdur Rahman Ra'fat Basha p.101-102)

Furthermore, it should not be said that the advice should be private or otherwise it is ghibah (backbiting). This is because the ahadith have come in an unrestricted form, and in fact the indications of the ahadith of accounting are that the accounting is to be done in public; and as for ghibah, there is no ghibah for the one who does open fisq (transgression). Imam Nawawi in his Riyad al-Salihin, under the chapter of 'Types of Ghibah which are Permissible' listed six types, which in his view are allowed as exceptions (to the normal prohibition of back-biting); of these, three are relevant:

- a) Complaining (tazallum) to the ruler or judge
- b) Seeking help to change an evil (munkar)
- c) Mentioning the one who openly commits a sin (fisq) or innovation (bid'ah).

Indeed, under any of the above three categories there would be a dispensation to backbite against the ruler's oppression, evil actions or open sins. Some like Hasan al-Basri did not consider accounting rulers as ghibah in origin, as it is reported that he said: "There is no backbiting with regard to the fasiq (sinner who openly professes his evil)."



(al-Lalika'i, 1/140, p. 279).

As for the **specific** evidences that public demonstration of accounting is permissible, they are numerous; we shall here give two clear examples of public display of opinion. It has been reported by Al-Bukhari on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: "When the following verses were revealed: *"And warn your tribe [O Muhammad (saw)] of near kindred."* [26:214] The Messenger of Allah (saw) ascended Mount Al-Safa and started to call: "O Bani Fahr! O Bani 'Adi!" Many people gathered, and those who could not send somebody to report to them. Abu Lahab was also present. The Prophet (saw) said: **"You see: if I were to tell you that there were some horsemen in the valley planning to raid you, would you believe me?"** They said: "Yes, we have never experienced any lie from you." He said: **"I am a Warner to you before a severe torment."** Abu Lahab promptly replied: "Perish you all the day! Have you summoned us for such a thing?" Muslim has the following version reported on authority of Abu Hurayrah (ra) — He said: "When the following verses were revealed: *"And warn your tribe [O Muhammad (saw)] of near kindred."* [26:214] The Messenger of Allah (saw) called all the people of Quraysh; so they gathered and

he gave them a general warning. Then he made a particular reference to certain tribes, and said: **"O Quraysh, rescue yourselves from the Fire; O people of Bani Ka'b, rescue yourselves from the Fire; O Fatimah, daughter of Muhammad, rescue yourself from the Fire, for I have no power to protect you from Allah in anything except that I would sustain relationship with you."**

Here Allah's Messenger (may the peace and blessings be upon him), after receiving the command to carry the da'wah to his tribesmen, went out on top of Mount Safa and called out to the Quraysh to heed his warning. This was a public display of opinion by the Prophet (saw), and what is permitted for the individual is permitted for the group (as long as there is no specific nass that restricts the action to the Messenger alone). So this is specific evidence for protests and demonstrations.

The second example is the first public collective demonstration by Muslims, organised by 'Umar b. Al-Khattab, for which he was praised by the Messenger (saw), as reported in 'The Sealed Nectar': "With respect to the Muslims in Makkah, 'Umar's (ra) conversion had a different tremendous impact. Mujahid, on the authority of Ibn al-'Abbas (ra), related that he had asked 'Umar b. Al-Khattab

why he had been given the epithet of Al-Faruq (He who distinguishes truth from falsehood); he replied: After I had embraced Islam, I asked the Prophet (saw): 'Aren't we on the right path, here and in the Hereafter?' The Prophet (saw) answered: 'Of course you are! I swear by Allah in Whose Hand my soul is; that you are right in this world and in the hereafter.' I therefore asked the Prophet, 'Why had we then to conduct clandestine activism. I swear by Allah, who has sent you with the Truth; that we will leave our concealment and proclaim our noble cause publicly.' We then went out in two groups, Hamzah leading one and I the other. We headed for the Mosque in broad daylight. When the polytheists of Quraysh saw us, their faces went pale, and they got incredibly depressed and resentful. On that very occasion, the Prophet attached to me the epithet of Al-Faruq." (Al-Rahiq al-Makhtum p113 1st ed. English trans.)

Therefore, demonstrations and protests to account the rulers and expose their betrayal of the ummah's interest are permissible by the general and specific evidences regarding this subject, as long as no other rules of the Shari'ah are violated, such as destruction of public or private property, non Islamic slogans or free-mixing.

CONCLUSION

The political authority that rightly belongs to this Ummah has been stolen, usurped and abused by the tyrant rulers. Only the Islamic political struggle will bring real change for this Ummah and we are obliged to reclaim that authority by accounting them and working to re-establish the Khilafah that WILL rule by what Allah has revealed. Let us heed the words of Muhammad al-Mustafa (saw):

"Nay, by Allah, you either enjoin good and forbid evil and catch hold of the hand of the oppressor and persuade him to act justly and stick to the truth, or, Allah will involve the hearts of some of you with the hearts of others and will curse you as He had cursed them". [Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi].

Is America the new 'Sick Man?'



The term 'sick man of Europe' was coined to describe the declining situation of the Ottoman's by Tsar Nicholas I of Russia in 1853. The Ottoman territories were being swallowed by rival world powers and its debts were out of control due to a series of disastrous wars. Nicholas I of Russia described the Ottomans as 'a sick man - a very sick man, a man who has fallen into a state of decrepitude, or a sick man ... gravely ill.' The economic situation, political prowess and independence were all seen as indicators which the Ottomans were losing over a period of 100 years.

In April 2011, the credit ratings agency Standard and Poor's, whose job is to independently rate the ability of nations to repay their debts, announced that it plans to downgrade America's credit rating as it was dubious of the US government's ability to meet its debt obligations.

UNSUSTAINABLE DEBT

If one considers the US debt situation, or if we carried out a book keeping exercise, the US doesn't just deserve a downgrade, but far more than one. The US generates over \$14 trillion annually, however the national debt - this is money the central and federal governments owe to the US public and the world through the bonds they have issued - stands at \$14.3 trillion. Interest payments on this debt was \$414 billion in 2010 alone. Those who are expecting to be repaid by the US one day include governments such as China, companies and banks. The US citizenry have a huge appetite for imports and credit cards and as a result consumer debt stands at \$2.4 trillion. The desire by Americans to own their own homes has resulted in mortgage debts of \$13.2 trillion. The debts of US companies amounts to \$20.8

trillion. This means the US is indebted to the tune of \$50.7 trillion - more than the combined economies of Japan, China, Britain, Germany, France, Brazil, Canada and Italy twice over.

The US trade deficit has also continued to balloon, the amount the US imports compared to the amount it exports - in essence the money the US owes to the world stands at \$500 billion (per annum). Western values of consumerism and greed have exacerbated the trade deficit; additionally American economic policies over the last few decades have weakened America's industrialised base, hence restricting America's ability to produce goods and services cheaply domestically. This has resulted in America relying on imports and on China. Similarly the US government deficit is also growing. By way of an analogy a government deficit can be compared to the overdraft while the debt is the mortgage. The deficit is the excess of government expenditure over government income in any given year. Government debt is the accumulation of all past deficits.

SUPERPOWER

How did the US get into such a position? As the world's superpower the US has always been spending more than it possesses. The US has afforded itself this right - something it devoutly opposes for others. It has been able to get away with this as it is the world's superpower. This means all those countries, companies and

banks that have funded US debt expect to be repaid by a prudent US when the debt repayments become due. There is also one other crucial reason why the US gets away with such levels of debt and that is due to the dollar.

After World War two European nations worked on reconstruction due to the havoc caused by the war, the US positioned itself to make the dollar the reserve currency of the world. Whilst initially the US promised to peg its currency to Gold and convert any redemptions of its dollar to Gold bullion (at \$35 per ounce), by 1971 it abandoned this. This meant all international financial markets and commodity markets were priced in dollars – yet the US currency,

Ghraib have undermined America's chief export for over a quarter of a century – human rights. Similarly the US military is viewed as overstretched and America's position is seen as untenable. Both wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have cost the US astronomically large sums and whilst the rhetoric is about draw downs in both nations the US is merely changing the way it maintains its interests in these countries from military occupations to the use of agent rulers and bribes.

The US has now found itself in a precarious situation where foreign nations are actually funding it. The US budget is not sufficient for the nations consumption patterns, as a result the US resorts to selling Bonds to the world

largest economy, its share of the global economy is shrinking as nations such as China, India, Brazil, Japan, Mexico, Turkey and Russia continue their rapid growth.

American symbols are also being rapidly replaced. Today the tallest building is in Dubai, not America, the world's richest person is no longer an American but a Mexican. The world's largest traded company is in China and the world's largest plane was constructed by Russia and Ukraine. London is the world's largest financial centre and the world's largest Sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF) is in the UAE, not New York. Beijing has the world's largest mall, whilst the US only has one mall in the world's top ten. The world's biggest movie industry is no longer Hollywood, but is now Bollywood in India. Similarly the world's largest ferris wheel is in Singapore, whilst the world's largest Casino is in Macao. Only 10 years ago the US was at the top of all of these lists.

32% of US debt is held by foreign entities, whilst 17% of this is held by China and Japan. China has accumulated over \$2 trillion in dollar reserves due to this.

the dollar was not backed by gold, and therefore had no realistic control over its volume in circulation. Today this means the US can actually print more currency to meet its debt obligations. It is able to do this because it has imposed its currency on the rest of the world. So fundamentally America's political power is what allows such out of control spending policies to continue.

From a bookkeeping perspective America is bankrupt, spending is out of control and shows no sign of being fixed anytime soon and its debts continue to balloon. The US will manipulate the currency policy of the entire global system for its own benefit, both congress and the upper house as well as the Federal Reserve have no problems with this. But this can only continue so long as the US remains the world's superpower. All indications are that this is waning.

END OF THE AMERICA CENTURY

The US lied about weapons of mass destruction in its invasion of Iraq and a quick victory gave way to a long occupation, which has seen corruption and incompetence at the highest level. The cost to the US has been massive and continues. Guantanamo bay and Abu

which it will repay over a period of 10 – 30 years in the hope the US economy will by the time the Bonds mature have generated sufficient wealth to repay them. 32% of US debt is held by foreign entities, whilst 17% of this is held by China and Japan. China has accumulated over \$2 trillion in dollar reserves due to this. Described as China's "nuclear option" China could trigger a dollar crash if it decided the dollar was not worth holding and switched to Euros.

The US is also facing numerous political challenges in regions of the world which only a decade ago it completely dominated. In the Middle East apart from needing the help of regional surrogates the region is gradually shifting from being a uni-polar region in which the US enjoyed uncontested hegemony to a multi-polar region. The Arab Spring has also shown that the Muslims of the region want change, which complicates the architecture the US has long relied on. The US is also facing more competition from China and Russia over access to Middle East oil, and increasingly competing with India and Japan as well as the European Union for the lion's share of the regions black gold. Similarly whilst the US economy is the world's

Both the British Empire and the Soviet Union were engulfed by unsustainable debt which led to the collapse of their superpower status. The US is in a much worse position than both powers ever were. This situation is not sustainable. Despite quantitative easing (2 phases) and various stimulus packages (for example car purchase incentive scheme, bank and homeowner bailouts) the US has failed to come out of recession convincingly, putting doubt on where the growth will come from to repay US debt in the years to come. These factors alongside a falling dollar places the US in a situation where it is now reliant upon foreign nations to fund it. These are remarkable times as the world is witnessing the direct impact of American imperial hubris and overstretch. We may be witnessing the beginning of the end of America as the world's superpower. America has all the hall marks of the new sick man.

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Water distribution under the Khilafah



Throughout history water has been considered as one of the most important commodities for mankind; it has fulfilled the various needs of mankind. Water is required in almost every process for example, it is used for oil refining, for liquid extraction in hydrometallurgical processes, for cooling, for scrubbing in the iron and the steel industry and for different operations in food processing facilities, etc. It is also vital for all known forms of life.

A majority of the Muslim world does not

have access to clean drinking water or a continuous supply of water. As a result, water related illnesses have occurred which have resulted in death and widespread diseases. For example in Pakistan it is estimated each year, that more than three million become infected with waterborne diseases of which 1.2 million die. Of these 250,000 are children under five years of age, who succumb to diarrhoea and vomiting. In Bangladesh sanitation faces its own set of challenges, with only 39% of the population estimated to have access to

adequate sanitation facilities.

In Taiz (Yemen), the frequency of public piped water delivery is only once every 40 days. People have to rely on more costly water that is provided by private wells to supply water tankers. The quality of this water is questionable as these tankers have often been used for other purposes without appropriate cleaning. An intermittent water supply within Pakistani urban areas is common; the Asian Development Bank (ADB) indicates continuity rates of 1 to 10



hours (Karachi), 11 to 15 hours (Rawalpindi) and 16 to 23 hours (Lahore) per day.

Hence a lack of water sanitation within the poor parts of the Muslim world has resulted in illness and disease. The root cause of a lack of water sanitation within the Muslim world is due to the corrupt governments failing to invest in projects to improve sanitation or upgrading the water infrastructure. The current infrastructure used in the cities of Pakistan to deliver clean water to residents is old and requires upgrading. Water contamination i.e. dirty water mixing with clean water is a major problem across the Muslim world. Until water sanitation is improved, we will continue to see the current water related problems throughout much of the Muslim world.

Under the Khilafah, the state will ensure that all its citizens have access to clean water and a continuous supply of water as this is something enshrined within Islam. Muhammad (saw) said:

"The son of Adam (Muslim & non-muslim) only has a right to three things, a house to live in, clothes to cover his nakedness, and dry bread and water."
(TIRMIDHI)

Water will not be privatised as water is considered a public property within Islam. However there will be a service charge which the citizens of the state will pay as there is a cost in processing and distributing water. The Khilafah will have the following policies in place which will ensure that the highest standard of clean water supply is given to all its citizens:

CLEAN WATER

Providing clean and pure water to the citizens of the Khilafah is an obligation of the Khaleefah. The Khilafah will have checks and balances in place to ensure that the highest quality of water is provided to its citizens. One method that the state will adopt to ensure that the supply of water meets high standards will be to take water quality samples from the water network and check them on a regular basis. This process does not

currently exist within the majority of the Muslim countries.

Continuous supply of water
The state will provide water to its citizens continuously without interruption. The occasional planned interruptions are an exception; for example, if the state was to carry out work on the infrastructure and an interruption was required, then in these circumstances the state will notify citizens that will be affected by the planned interruption and give an alternative supply of water for the duration of the planned interruption. Other rare circumstances are unplanned interruptions, for example if a pipe feeding 1000 citizens was to burst, then this pipe will require an isolation (for a repair) which will result in a loss of water. An SLA (Service Level Agreement) will be in place which will ensure that repairs on damaged pipes are completed within a given time.

LEAKAGE AND WASTAGE

Islam encourages conserving water, hence under the Khilafah, there will be a

big incentive to save water and minimise the leakage and the wastage of water. The state will have educational programs and targets in place that will encourage the citizens of the state to not waste water.

ACCOUNTABILITY

One of the key factors' that has contributed to the distribution of poor quality of water within the Muslim world is a lack of accountability. Governing bodies that have been set up to oversee water quality are not being

Amongst the many advantages existent within the Muslim world, is that the majority of the Muslim world has a coast and the water off the coast can be used to meet the water requirements of the Muslim world through the usage of desalination plants.

accounted for poor water quality. For example in Pakistan the Ministry of Health is expected to set water quality standards and monitor drinking water quality in the country. A lack of coordination and accountability between the ministry and the government has resulted in the ministry of health of not being fully in charge of water distribution within Pakistan.

Under the Khilafah accountability will be linked to providing clean and a continuous supply of water to the citizens of the state; i.e. if the state fails to provide clean water to its citizens, there will be accountability measures in place that will ensure that government officials are held accountable.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The Khilafah will invest in projects that will lead to the enhancement of the water infrastructure. The various projects will include the upgrading the distribution mains (these mains are used to distribute water to citizens within a city) and the installation of trunk mains (these are large mains that are used to distribute water from city to city). There will be a ring main installed within some of the key cities of the Khilafah. The purpose of the ring main is to distribute water to a part of the city, should the water supply be affected. The ring main will take water from one part of the city

and then supply water to the affected part of the city.

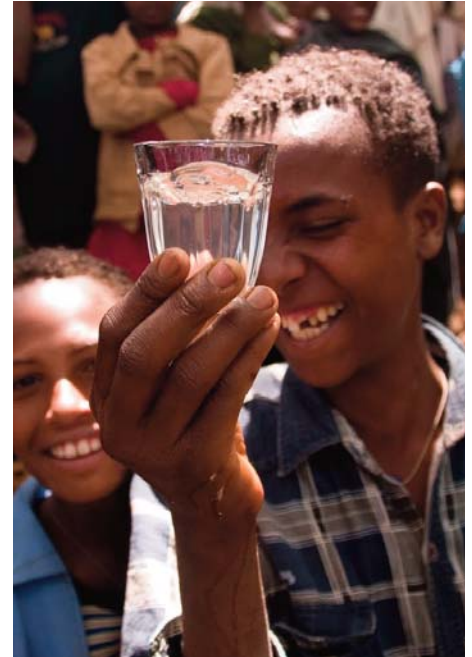
Water will be brought into the cities of the Islamic state via different sources such as bore holes (water from the ground), rivers, reservoirs, seas', and recycled water. Each city will have multiple pumping stations, sewage and clean water treatment plants. The clean water treatment plants will take water from the various sources that have been mentioned. The objective of the clean water treatment plants and pumping

stations will be to treat water and distribute water into the city. There will be laws in place which will ensure that the citizens of the state are receiving a good flow of water and at the right pressure through their taps. Within some parts of the Muslim world, water pressure is so low that it does not reach the high points of a city.

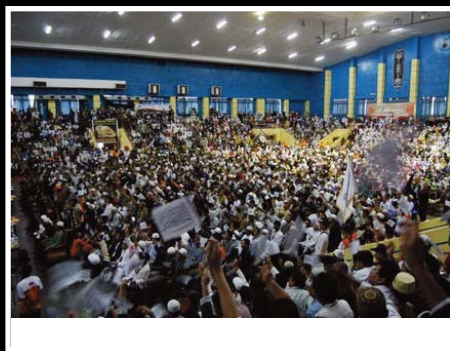
Currently some of the largest desalination water plants exist within the Muslim world i.e. UAE and Saudi Arabia; a desalination water plant turns salt water into drinkable water. As UAE and Saudi Arabia are considered dried lands, these countries take water from the sea and convert sea water into drinkable water by the usage of desalination plants. The Khilafah will also take advantage of desalination plants as the usage of these plants will ensure that the water demands of any city within the Muslim world are met. Amongst the many advantages existent within the Muslim world, is that the majority of the Muslim world has a coast and the water off the coast can be used to meet the water requirements of the Muslim world through the usage of desalination plants.

CONCLUSION

The Muslim world has the wealth to build an advanced water infrastructure, however the major obstacle that has



stopped the Muslim world from advancing are the governments who have stolen the wealth of the Muslim world; if the wealth was used wisely the Muslim world could have achieved much. At the peak of the Khilafah, the state had designed and developed infrastructure which was used to distribute water into major cities. For example, the famous Muslim engineer Al-Jazari developed the earliest water supply system to be driven by gears and hydropower, this was built in the 13th century and this water system supplied water to Mosques and hospitals within Damascus. Al Jazari lived during the reign of the Khilafah, and the Khilafah encouraged progress through the utilisation of the best technology of the time. The future Khilafah will in the same way encourage progress, hence the water engineers of the state will design and develop the best water infrastructure in the world, and this water network system will provide clean and pure water to all the citizens of the state.



June/July 2011 - Hizb ut-Tahrir held Khilafah conferences in Tunisia, Indonesia, Malaysia, UK, Australia and other places

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