


O you who believe, respond to the call of Allah and His Messenger when He calls you to that which would give you life...

Khilafah

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Global Economy: in need of a New Vision

ELECTIONS UNDER DEMOCRACY ALWAYS PROTECT THE 1% - CAPITALISM & THE SEARCH FOR MORALITY - GOLD STANDARD: THE FUTURE FOR A STABLE GLOBAL CURRENCY - DEBT CRISES: LESSONS LEARNED - PREVENTING OURSELVES FROM SPEAKING OUT: HOW MUSLIMS ARE IN GREAT DANGER OF SELF-CENSORSHIP - THE ILLEGITIMACY OF THE CURRENT RULERS - US OCCUPATIONS TO CONTINUE IN THE MUSLIM WORLD - REFLECTIONS ON THE ISLAMIC WORLD 2011: WAITING FOR THE 5TH WAVE OF THE ISLAMIC WORLD, THE REVIVAL OF KHILAFAH

OBAMA CONFIRMS THE US AS A POLICE STATE

On one of the best days of the year for killing bad news (31 Dec) President Obama quietly signed into law the National Defense Authorisation Act (NDAA). Despite confirming that some of the provisions of the act "are unacceptable" Obama confirmed the law which enables anyone labeled a "suspected terrorist" to be arrested and held indefinitely in military custody.

Obama has said: "[I have] serious reservations with certain provisions that regulate the detention, interrogation, and prosecution of suspected terrorists". He also stressed in his signing statement that he felt that his administration would not resort to the unfair arrest and detention of US citizens under the provisions of the new law. As a Harvard law graduate Obama understands full well that these words have no legal value whatsoever and that if he had found parts of the law unacceptable then it would have been a matter for him to refuse it and send it back to the lower house for amendment.

Such a draconian law is not, however, unprecedented for western democracies. In 1933 Article 1 of the February 1933 "Decree of the Reich President for the Protection of People and State" suspended German civil liberties under the pretext of "protecting" democracy. Restrictions on personal liberty, the right of free expression of opinion, among other matters were easily implemented. A course which Adolph Hitler happily took advantage of shortly thereafter.



CHINA POLICE DESTROY LOCAL MOSQUE IN QINGHAI PROVINCE

Hundreds of Muslims fought with armed police who demolished a mosque in north China in the first week of January. The violence between local Muslims and 1,000 armed police began after police declared illegal a newly renovated mosque in the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region and moved to destroy it. The Mosque was first built in 1987 and refurbished last year. China's communist government monitors religious activity closely and places stringent approval conditions on the building of all mosques, churches and other places of worship as a

way to prevent their becoming centres for anti-government activity.

"Clashes happened and more than 100 people went missing," Jin Haitao told AFP. He said many villagers' injuries were caused by police using high-pressure water cannon to disperse those trying to stop destruction of the mosque.

The Hui are one of several Muslim minority groups in China. Two people were killed and 50 injured after police fired tear gas and used knives and batons to beat back ethnic Hui Muslim protesters in Taoshan village, Hexi township, as part of the government provocations. China in recent years has seen several outbreaks of violence against Muslims, mostly as the mainly Muslim Uighurs of the northwest Xinjiang region suffer under government oppression and the large scale immigration of ethnic Han Chinese into the region.

EGYPT ELECTIONS BROUGHT FORWARD TO MEET PROTESTERS' DEMANDS

Egypt's military rulers have declared that the election for the parliament's upper house will be completed on February 22, and power will then be handed over to civilians, according to the state news agency MENA. Originally, the election to the Shura was to take place in three phases from January 29 to March 11. Field Marshal Hussein Tantawi's new decree states the Shura will meet for the first time on February 28, nearly a month earlier than previously planned. As the election to the lower house is to end in mid-January, this means Egypt will progress at a swifter pace towards writing a new constitution. Since President Hosni Mubarak was deposed in February 2011, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, headed by Tantawi, has ruled Egypt.

It appears that the military, which is now witnessing ever increasing numbers back on the streets with demands for real change, are seeking to accelerate a process which entrenches their (military) veto position in the new constitution and confirms Egypt as a secular state. This will lessen the time available for protests to accelerate.

PAKISTAN HAS LOST OVER 3,000 SOLDIERS AND 40,000 CIVILIANS IN US WAR

The Dawn reported late in 2011 that 3,097 Pakistani soldiers and 40,309 civilians had been killed to date in the tribal regions in the American "war of terror". The military losses which amount to the equivalent of two brigades includes two 2-star generals and one 3-star general as reported by Director-General of Military Operations

Major General Ashfaq Nadeem who was speaking to the parliamentary defence committees.

With Pakistan embroiled in political scandals, assassinations, unprecedented drone attacks and a frozen political credibility radical change is sorely needed.



US SIGNS \$30 BILLION ARMS DEAL WITH SAUDI REGIME

In Dec 2011, the Obama administration announced a weapons deal with Saudi Arabia including F-15 fighter jets valued at nearly \$30 billion. As well as boosting much-needed US trade, the USA will be further stamping its footprint in the oil-rich region.

The justification for such trade is usually presented as a potential threat from Iran. Certainly, the Saudi regime has never shown any evidence of using any arms it buys from the US to defend oppressed people in the Muslim world - or indeed elsewhere. It did, however, mobilize its troops in two regions in recent years.

Firstly, in Yemen, supporting the regime of Ali Abdallah Saleh by attacking Houthi tribes people. Secondly, by aiding the repression of people in Bahrain by the regime who rose up in protest in 2011.

"When you look at the size of this package, what does it tell you about U.S.-Saudi relations?" said a senior Saudi official, who spoke anonymously because he was not authorized to speak publicly. "It says it's very strong and very solid. Any disagreements from time to time don't affect the core relationship."

The weapons package has been considered significant in size and technically sophisticated. Under the terms of the \$29.4 billion agreement signed on Dec. 24, Saudi Arabia will get 84 new F-15SA jets, as well as training, logistics and maintenance - together with upgrades to 70 F-15s in the Saudi fleet.

US officials said the planes were intended to help Saudi Arabia protect its sovereignty but would not diminish "Israel's qualitative military edge."

Editorial

This last few weeks saw the launch of a timely report titled “Gold Standard: The Future for a Stable Global Currency” from Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain. The on-going global financial crisis, as well as the Arab risings, dominated 1432/2011 – and look set to dominate 2012.

As long ago as February 2009, US Director of National Intelligence Dennis C Blair said, “The primary near-term security concern of the United States is the global economic crisis and its geopolitical implications”.

Almost 3 years later and this crisis has evolved to proportions that still has the potential to meltdown the entire finance system, lead to destructive hyperinflation and the fragmentation of the Eurozone.

Although the Euro crisis has dominated headlines across the world in the last two months (mainly because a default by one of the struggling European economies could be like a spark in a room full of gas) it is the weakening dollar, its impact on world prices, its provocation of other countries who dislike America’s competitive advantages, and the unreconstructed world of interest-based and derivatives fueled global finance that are the really serious issues facing the world.

Increasingly people across the world –

most strikingly in the ‘Occupy’ protests in Western cities – are seeing that Capitalism has manifestly failed and the world needs new solutions.

But people are often unclear as to where new ideas will emerge from.

Arguably where change is happening fastest is the Arab-Muslim world, though not in the economic sphere. It still remains in a huge state of flux with matters most brutal and heated in Syria.

Elections were held in Egypt and Tunisia, though cannot yet be said to have brought a real change for the people. In Tunisia, parties like Hizb ut-Tahrir, that challenged the status quo were prevented from contesting – and the Islamic party Ennahda, who won the largest share of the vote, seemed pressured in to burying their Islamic heritage in order to pacify interested parties in the West. In Egypt, the army just about admitted the system was designed to keep out Islamic parties – who still managed to capture an estimated 70% of public support.

The need for political and economic ‘change’ seems to remain the on-going theme for 1433/2012.

The nature of that change is set to be the subject of the debates to come.

Islam – which was the basis of an

enlightened global civilisation in the past – will be at the forefront of this debate.

Islam’s robust view of constitutional government, accountable ruling, elected representation and independent judiciary, contrasts markedly with the appointment of unelected bankers and financiers in Italy and Greece to ‘manage and manipulate’ their way through the next few months and years.

Moreover, Islam’s economic system that prohibits riba and insists on gold and silver as currency (literally bullion, coinage or paper which is 100% backed by gold or silver) and would never have brought the world to the brink of economic collapse, whilst working to circulate wealth as widely as possible.

The coming months will see a debate between the ‘Gold Standard’ of Islamic ideas – against the paper-thin crumpled ideas of ‘Disaster Capitalism’, which people increasingly see for what it is.

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ELECTIONS UNDER DEMOCRACY ALWAYS PROTECT THE 1%



To paraphrase President Obama after the 2010 midterm elections, secular liberals have just received the mother of all “shellackings” in the elections that have just taken place in the Muslim world. In Tunisia, in Morocco, in Egypt, voters in their millions clearly expressed their opposition to secular liberal values and their strong desire for Islamic government. Indeed, the most surprising thing was that liberals were so surprised at the result. For many western analysts, elections seem to automatically equate with electing liberals, for some reason they can’t seem to fathom that people may actually want Er to vote for a different political vision. While most western commentators judge popular sentiment by their Twitter timelines, the real Islamic revival has been occurring in villages, towns and cities all across the Muslim world. While the west continues to be mesmerised by the actions of

prominent individuals, ordinary people have been sacrificing on a daily basis to initiate real change. This is illustrated by a Google Executive who was put at the very top of Time magazine’s list of the 100 “most influential people in the world” for his protests against Mubarak. Now, one US official says with mocking effect to a Financial Times Columnist: “He may be the most influential man in the world, but unfortunately he doesn’t seem to have much influence in Egypt.”

However before Muslims get carried away, they should be aware like ordinary western citizens, the political system has been already rigged against them. Worldwide protests have broken out across the globe under the Occupy movement, for a reason. From New York City, to Athens, to London, protestors across the globe are now standing up against the inequalities of the global capitalist system. Fed up with the bankers, the financiers and the excesses of Wall Street, people now believe that the system is rigged, that politicians are corrupt and that the 99% aren’t getting a fair shake. Non Muslims will be familiar with the gambling mantra that no matter how many times you try to win money, the odds are always with the house. It is the same in western politics where the odds are always stacked against the 99%!

Though elections are a critical part of any political system (including the Khilafah’s), the elections we saw in the Muslim world like the ones we see in the West, are deeply flawed. The political process though largely free and fair, has no correlation with the exercise of power in

western society. Economic policy is not decided by elected politicians, but by the rich banking lobby. Policy towards Palestine is not decided by politicians, but by the influential Jewish lobby. Policy over defence procurement isn’t decided by elected politicians but by the arms lobby. Power is distributed amongst different politicians or institutions, not to have checks and balances, but to encourage division and to stop strong leadership. Indeed elections are a necessary smokescreen to allow the illusion of societal participation to cover the real reality that power is exercised by an unelected elite. Having multiple institutions such as lower or upper houses or constitutional restrictions ensures nothing can get done which is too radical.

It is this shadow political system, like the shadow financial system that is the real problem in western society. Like banks whose activities were so opaque, so devastating, so beyond accountability, the shadow political system works behind the scenes buying politicians, writing legislation and shaping policies. In the west elections are routinely held, whether to elect someone to Parliament, someone to Congress or someone to lead a country. But who elects the lobbyists, the industrialists, the financiers, the press barons, the army generals, the people with the real power in the country, the people who can make or break politicians, who can grease their palms and who have constant access. The answer is no one and that’s the crux of the problem that elections don’t resolve. Elections operate within a rigged system,

one that allows you to play the game but only according to rules written beforehand by an unelected group. The real question for us is not whether to have elections or not, it is whether elections can truly disrupt the power paradigm in any given society?

The elections just held in the Muslim world will emphatically not change the status quo. Elections in Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco were all held under a rigged set

same old strategy, supporting relations with Israel, allowing the presence of western bases and continuing to support other dictators in the region. No wonder so many people are getting so disillusioned.

This would change under a truly Islamic system where an elected leader is given real power. Under Islam's tried and trusted political system, tackling poverty, jobs and housing for all citizens

They claim to want to generate wealth for the masses, yet all they really want is personal wealth in bank accounts in Switzerland and London

of rules. In Morocco they allow an oppressive King to maintain real power. In Egypt, despite overwhelming support for Islamic rule, the remnants of Mubarak's regime and the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) are still dictating the rules of the game. In Tunisia the catalyst of the change has a system designed to ensure that no one elected group can gain sufficient strength. Take Egypt for example, here the Islamic parties got over two thirds of the votes in the elections, yet what powers do these elected politicians have, what powers will the People's Assembly (Lower House) or the Shura Council (Upper House) really have? The answer is minimal! Indeed with the constitutional process appointees being rigged, a new Presidential election due in June 2012 (who will constrain Parliament) and SCAF still heavily involved in writing the rules of the game, it is clear that the political system is being rigged to protect the 1% in Egypt. Most people thought that after Ben Ali, Mubarak and Gaddafi that the Muslim world would embrace an enlightened agenda. Voting and Elections should matter after all! Yet rather than "change", vested interests are fast protecting the status quo both in domestic policies and those executed on the international stage.

On the domestic stage, accountability remains weak with real power remaining with a shadow elite, in Egypt SCAF continues to arrest and torture protestors, and attempts to reform the economy continue to benefit the rich and their western backers. On the international front, the regimes have carried on the

irrespective of their faith would be prioritised. Unshackled from a political bureaucracy, the elected Khalifah can truly get things done, unshackled by frequent elections he can make long term decisions, unrestricted by the lobbies he can make decisions to benefit people not corporations. As many Muslims are discovering they can still have elections, accountability and justice under the Khalifah, and without signing up for a rigged process, the west's democratic facade, or to some backward theocracy.

This failure to transform government in the Muslim world from a position that serves the elites, rather than those who are the most vulnerable in society, is aptly illustrated in Morocco. King Muhammad is as legitimate as Mubarak and Gaddafi, yet the west has no problem with this particular dictator. The west are enamoured with the King, because he is more geared at helping Wall Street than the Muslim Street, Israel rather than the Palestinians, Elites rather than the Common Citizens. The King like other dictators in the region blames Islamists for violence, yet ignores the violence of his own security forces. They argue that Islamists would usurp power, yet see no irony in their own family usurping power, they claim secular constitutions would protect everyone, yet are happy to torture Islamists in hell holes for wanting a different type of system. They claim to want to generate wealth for the masses, yet all they really want is personal wealth in bank accounts in Switzerland and London



But it is not just the dictators who have become diminished, the western system which is portrayed as the role model for the Muslim world has debased itself. Firstly through the financial collapse and then by the degeneration of politics so severe, that unelected technocrats are now running Greece and Italy. Never in the field of politics has so much western propaganda been spouted by so many people advocating so few solutions.

Now, some will dismiss the characterisation of the west's politics as nothing more than an ideological and conspiratorial rant. Yet what isn't in doubt is that western politics are now fully fledged soap operas, who's up and who's down, who's winning and who's losing, rather than about bettering the lives of people. Nor is it in dispute that the west today is led by a bunch of pygmies not giants, that it has a capitalist system that prioritises greed not justice and that it has a political system institutionally designed to camouflage who's really in charge. To paraphrase another US president Abraham Lincoln, It is truly a system of the 1% for the 1% and by the 1%.

Capitalism & the Search for Morality



The recent speech (December 2011) by British Prime Minister David Cameron marked the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible. Cameron remarked that Britain should be proud of its Christian heritage, and that Christianity has “helped to shape the values which define...” Britain politically, culturally and morally. Cameron makes a valid point that Christianity has influenced many aspects relevant to British heritage such as architecture, literature, culture, music and politics, and perhaps in some respects been a source of reference by individuals to fill the moral void within secular society.

This is certainly not the first instance that Cameron has openly highlighted the moral decay in society. Following the UK riots of August 2011, Cameron vowed to tackle “slow-motion moral collapse”. This analysis faced a fightback from Tony Blair who commented: “Blaming moral decline for the riots makes good headlines but bad policy”. There is clearly a difference of

opinion from a political perspective on what is the cause of moral decline. Cameron believing the very cause is one of family breakdown; Blair on the other hand attributes the moral decline to disaffection and alienation of youth from the social mainstream. Both Cameron and Blair view moral decline as a problem of individuals or the family but fail to identify the real cause behind the moral decline which stems from the roots of capitalism.

Morals & Institutionalised Morality
Morals are related to conduct. Conduct is not just a set of actions, but actions undertaken with reason or intention. An action is viewed as moralistic based on a clear criterion of right and wrong. In western society, what is morally repulsive on one occasion can become morally acceptable on another. Take the example of gay marriages – until the 21st Century – this practice was morally unacceptable. This inconsistency is due to the ever changing notions of what society views to be right and socially acceptable and what

it doesn't. Therefore gone are the days where Britain's morals were shaped by Christian teachings.

In the early works of the philosopher John Dewey, entitled “Essays & Outlines of a Critical Theory of Ethics”, he describes how a child grows up within moral institutions and through this develops a morality:

“The child is born as a member of the family; as he grows up he finds that others have possessions which he must respect. He runs upon the institution of property... as he grows ... he finds persons outside of the family of whose actions he must take account of as he respects his own: society.... Then he finds the political institutions; the city, state and nation. He finds an educational institution, the school, the college; religious institutions, the church etc., etc. Everywhere he finds men having common wants and thus proposing common ends and using co-operative modes of action”.

According to Dewey, institutions promote moral codes of conduct, and the individual learns this in his lifetime. Western Capitalism has no fixed moral code of conduct that is intrinsic within Capitalism. Therefore, morality must be borrowed and is somewhat institutionalised. For example, it is an expectation that schools not only teach a National Curriculum, but also address the morality dilemma by creating a ‘liberal’ sense of right and wrong. The church is just another institution to help compensate for the moral void of Capitalism. Changes in society mean that some moral codes of Christianity are often viewed as outdated. What is evident is that from Moses and the 10 commandments, to modern day Christianity, Christianity has provided nothing more than moral codes

which are devoid of systems of governing giving way to secularism. Therefore secularism was a compromise reached due to this aspect. For Cameron to now go back to Christian roots and ask the Church for some help to tame secular society is highly hypocritical.

TENSIONS: INDIVIDUAL VS COMMUNAL

Morals are not a unique system in themselves in society, but allow individuals and society to hold a value position. The view of right and wrong in Capitalism however is a difficult balancing act, since its view of right and wrong continues to change. The Criminal Justice System is a clear example of the ever changing moral framework that society is held to believe is acceptable and right. Secularism has proved that when man is the decider of what is right and wrong, the moral code can no longer be saved by the remembrance of Judeo-Christian roots or the 10 commandments.

Secular society in the UK prides itself on tolerance of other religions and of the acceptance of religious freedoms. Individuals are 'supposedly' left to adhere to different moral codes from a variety of sources under the condition that they are law abiding. Therefore, where the individuals religious view of right and wrong conflicts with what the law upholds, the law comes first. Furthermore, the idea of freedom and the hedonistic ideals of maximising pleasure, means that tensions exist between an individual's view of right and wrong and that of society. For example, promiscuity Vs chastity, exploitation Vs honour, consumerism Vs charity, Individualism Vs altruism. Therefore religious expression or conduct is tolerable based on people's tolerance/silence of the 'norm' despite its conflict with an individual's value or moral position. Therefore, the notion of tolerance in western society is a myth. The predominant societal thoughts, values and the law is what will always prevail.

What is Causing Moral Decline?

Throughout the discourse amongst politicians, what has been fundamentally left out is the discussion of the dominant ideas in society that hinder peoples morality and values. What has been missed out is the acknowledgement that society is a greater teacher than the individual. The separation of religion from state, means

that morals are sought by individuals from religion, or what is dominantly viewed as right or wrong by society. Perhaps what must be questioned are the very ideas of freedom and liberty and how this has contributed to moral decay in society. Surely, it is the values of materialism and the idea of freedom to own as much as one wishes that encouraged city bankers to invest in order to satisfy their greed - regardless of consequence. Such examples prove that the ideas of capitalism are the real cause behind moral decline. Despite this most obvious link between moral decay in society and the ideas and values of capitalism, Cameron believes that the way forward is 'Muscular Liberalism'.

MUSCULAR LIBERALISM

How best to integrate Muslims into secular society has been a continuing dilemma amongst politicians. Resolving tensions between values of secular society and that of Muslims etc. has led European countries to adopt a political stance on how best to integrate Muslims into these predominant secular thoughts and values. Those inclined towards the far right promote the idea of coercive assimilation. This means that Muslims are good citizens - not only by adhering to the law, but also by the adopting and supporting of ideas such as freedom, equality, separation of religion and life, democracy, and materialism. Such ideas contradict the very essence of Islam. This staunchly secularist mindset has resulted in politicians banning 'religious symbols' (including the hijab and niqaab) in public - such as in France. Britain has claimed to be a value-neutral and tolerant society. However Cameron has objections to the way the UK has handled the tensions between values. Cameron has learnt how 'not to' become a passively tolerant society from his mainland European counterparts: *"Frankly, we need a lot less of the passive tolerance of recent years and a much more active, muscular liberalism. A passively tolerant society says to its citizens, as long as you obey the law we will just leave you alone. It stands neutral between different values. But I believe a genuinely liberal country does much more; it believes in certain values and actively promotes them."* (Cameron: 2011)

Therefore, muscular liberalism will attempt to actively promote certain values and ideas in society; despite the contradictions



that may exist between a person's individual beliefs and values and what Capitalism wishes to promote. Such an outlook promotes coercive assimilation and further highlights the tensions between the individual morals and that of society.

Responsibility of Muslims in Britain
In the light of the belief of Cameron to actively promote certain values that secularism upholds - namely individual freedom and liberty, western forms of social justice, materialism and so on. Muslims must be clear in understanding their beliefs, values and view of morality that emanate from Islam. As Muslims in the west, we must maintain a distinct Islamic identity; ensuring that our morals, values and ideas remain intact. We must also expose the integrationist agenda to strip us of our Muslim identity to that of a British, secular identity - in agreement and in acceptance of western ideas and values. We must also remain steadfast to our roots as Muslims of being a part of the Muslim Ummah, whose pain and suffering globally becomes a concern for the Ummah as a whole.

Allah (swt) reminds the believer: *"Whoever follows My guidance shall neither go astray, nor fall into distress and misery. But whoever turns away from My reminder (neither believes in the Qur'an nor acts on its orders), verily, for him is a life of hardship, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection."* [TMQ Ta-Ha: 123-124].

Gold Standard: The Future for a Stable Global Currency

Hizb ut-Tahrir has released a new booklet setting out the arguments in favour of using gold and silver as money. The report refutes the key arguments against a return for gold and silver as currency in the Islamic world and wider. We present its executive summary here.

Executive Summary

Gold is again in vogue. In early August 2011 gold rose to over \$1,900 per ounce – and it would surprise few people if it rose still further. Not for the first time fears over inflation and political instability have led investors to seek shelter in gold. Silver, similarly, reached a 30-year high at almost \$50 an ounce. With Fiat currency (especially the US dollar) expected to lose value, gold and silver have proved their worth once again. Gold is in effect the world's reserve currency in times of crisis as it can be trusted to hold its value. This paper argues that gold is not just for times of crises but should be the monetary base of choice to ensure financial integrity, economic stability and sustainable growth.

While it is not surprising that Islam's viewpoint on money is the use of gold and silver with 100% reserve backing, this paper sets out, then refutes the 10 main arguments cited against the Gold Standard in light of recent and historic precedence. Some of the key points addressed in this report are as follows:

1. The charge that only the Fiat monetary approach, with its cheap credit

and endless currency creation, can mitigate the business cycle, is a disingenuous argument given that it is its cause.

2. At the heart of the criticism of the Gold Standard is the aversion and irrational fear of deflation. Flexible labour markets are a necessary condition to counter the negative effects of falling prices in product markets enabling businesses to remain competitive/profitable under deflationary conditions.

3. The evidence on inflation for the UK at least, is clearly at odds with the argument that the Gold Standard causes deflation. Between 1800-1914, UK prices were almost as likely to fall as to rise, when average annual inflation was close to zero.

4. The real problem is not that there is too little Gold but the fact there are too many dollars.

5. Whilst the production costs of paper may be regarded as negligible compared to the costs of extracting, mining and transporting gold, it's the total costs to society of Fiat money that are considerable.

6. The gold standard is not compatible with the fiat system and to be effective it requires a non-interest based economy.

7. Islam makes a 100% reserve currency obligatory not optional. This is based on various Quranic textual evidences.

8. Islam obliges a full gold silver system, whose discipline allows for balance of

payments adjustment without the intervention of central banks.

9. The benefits of the gold standard are manifestly profound: a system of stability without major cyclical effects; independent of government manipulation; devoid of inflationary fiduciary issue, currency debasement, international crisis and long-term balance of payments deficits.

10. Converse to Gresham's law, strong currencies will soon become the preferred media of exchange, enabling the gold standard to quickly resume its position in the world.

The only system of governance that unequivocally insists upon the Gold Standard as a benchmark is the Islamic economy as applied by the Islamic State (Khilafah). In Islam a dual metallic standard with gold and silver is applied. No fiat money will be issued by the state, and any paper currency must be 100% backed by gold and silver.

Gold and silver are both ideal as mediums of exchange: they have intrinsic value (including jewellery and industrial use) are widely available, cannot be dominated (monopolised) and there is a regular growing supply of them to meet the needs of growing economies. The financial crisis has exposed just how much fiat currency systems are at the mercy of the banking system, making phenomenal profits while exploiting wider society. Islam in contrast provides a non-interest environment in which there is less incentive to take money out of circulation.

"In order that it does not merely make a circuit amongst the wealthy"

[Translated Meaning Quran Al-Hashr 59: 7]

The full report [Gold Standard: The Future for a Stable Global Currency] is available for free download from: <http://www.hizb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Gold-Standard.pdf>

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Debt Crisis: Lessons learned



Looking at today's debt crisis afflicting the west and comparing it to the height of the Third World debt crisis in the mid-1990s it is possible to see some stark differences in the way the capitalist west exploited and brutally punished the poor in some of the poorest countries around the world.

The financial crisis of 2008 has exposed the western world's colossal debt and to many this has come as a big surprise. Debt has commonly been associated with the Third World or Developing countries. To find the western world steeped in debt for much of the post war period and pre-dating this suggests there is something fundamentally wrong with the capitalist model of growth and prosperity which has dominated the globe for the last 200 years.

The current crisis has also exposed the duplicity and sheer injustice of the west in addressing the current debt crisis compared to how western nations and multilateral institutions such as the IMF and World Bank (WB) dealt with Third World debt.

Third World debt has had a punishing impact on poor developing countries - we've all seen the pictures of emaciated babies in the arms of frail mothers in Africa - which are the natural consequences of the heavy burden debt repayments imposed on poor countries.

African states went into a downward spiral of debt, extortionate interest repayments - which stunted economic growth - that then led to debt re-scheduling, higher interest payments and even greater debt exposure. Ironically this was the effect of the IMF/WB prescription to the Third World debt crises in the form of structural adjustment programmes which made the situation much worse rather than alleviating the problems.

It does not take an IMF or WB economist to see the flaw in the so-called Washington Consensus - which proscribed such harsh medicine to the Third World debt crisis - as countries lost much of their export revenues to debt interest payments and as a consequence already inadequate welfare

budgets were severely cut. These welfare public services in any case were little more than shacks for health clinics and schools.

The IMF/WB or the Paris Club of donors showed little sympathy or empathy and there was little debt forgiveness in the 1980s and 1990s with the main creditors arguing that allowing countries to default would open the flood gates to more defaults and that the Third World defaulting would be catastrophic for the world economy.

In contrast we've seen more debt offered to the debt stricken in Europe with trillions poured in to rescue governments and banks. Indeed, the Greek government has had its debt reduced by 50% and has effectively defaulted on its loans twice within a year.

Yet there is no moral equivalence between the situation of the African peoples who barely scrape an existence and most Europeans with basic amenities, consumer durables, and cars who are being forced to take pay cuts of 10%-20%. For the latter it's little more than a life style change, while for the former its survival itself.

Indeed, charities and developmental organisations have estimated that millions of people in the Third World have died not from droughts or floods but from the systemic failure of the IMF/WB programmes which led African governments to drastically cut back on already meagre basic amenities.

The Centre for Economic Policy Research conducted a survey of the Impacts of IMF Structural Adjustment in Africa: Growth, Social Spending, and Debt Relief [1] and produced the following findings:

- Developing countries worldwide



implementing Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) programs have experienced lower economic growth than those who have been outside of these programs. It will be years before these populations recover the per capita incomes that they had prior to structural adjustment.

- While African countries urgently need to increase spending on health care, education, and sanitation, IMF structural adjustment programs have forced these countries to reduce such spending. In African countries with ESAF programs, the average amount of per capita government spending on education actually declined between 1986 and 1996.

- Neither IMF-mandated macroeconomic policies nor debt relief under the IMF-sponsored HIPC (Heavily Indebted Poor Countries) Initiative have sufficiently reduced these countries' debt burdens. Poor countries continue to divert resources from expenditures on health care and education in order to service external debt.

In an insightful 1999 study [2] Milton Iyoha of the University of Benin, Nigeria revealed the nature, scope and severity of Sub-Saharan debt. Iyoha showed how the colossal growth in African debt sapped away vital export earnings and therefore retarded the continent's economic growth. With much of what the continent earned from selling raw materials (up to 20% of export revenues) returning back to the



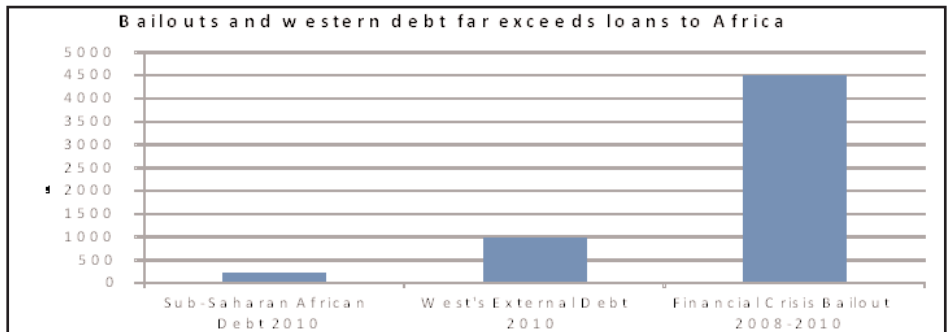
west in the form of debt interest repayments Africa's desperate people were made destitute. Meanwhile the western world took Africa's valuable natural resources for nothing, in effect.

Yet even though Sub-Saharan African external debt (debt that's owed to foreign banks and institutions) grew, 'thanks' to compound interest, from \$84bn in 1980 to \$223bn in 1995 (Iyoha, 1999), while the Western Hemisphere's external debt in 1995 was some three times as much at over \$620bn. [3]

Fifteen years on in 2010 the Western Hemisphere's external debt has grown to over \$1 trillion [4] with bailouts amounting to \$4.5 trillion while Sub-Saharan debt stands at a mere \$218bn (see chart). Indeed, western political leaders made decisions overnight to bail out their banks with hundreds of billions (and now trillions) of dollars but have watched for decades dragging their feet over debt forgiveness as hundreds of millions

European states like Greece, Ireland and Italy. The disposal of Greek, Irish and Italian national interests will now be controlled by privatisation policies decided in Berlin, London, Washington and Paris. Ultimately the Third World and Eurozone countries are victims of capitalism which is the big winner in both cases. Weaker states are exploited by economically more stronger and politically more powerful nations. Resources and wealth get ever more concentrated in the most powerful nations with ever greater numbers in the rich as well as the poor nations becoming victims of capitalism.

In such a climate, and with the demise of Communism, only Islam implemented in state and society can offer hope to weak nations. The Islamic Khalifah state will not exploit poor nations with interest based loans simply because all interest (riba) contracts are prohibited in Islam. This, at a stroke, will remove compound interest - the main contributor to the ever expanding debt burden on desperately



suffered under Third World debt. Another aspect of Third World debt of the 1970s and 1980s was the way in which western nations used it to prop up dictators and as a bulwark against the influence of the Soviet Union. Legally known as odious debt the west used loans as ideological and political weapons to maintain a hold on so-called newly independent states by literally financing a generation of political leaders and nurturing a political class that was at best African in name alone and was western for all intents and purposes.

poor nations. At the same time the Khalifah will not be driven solely by self-interest in its foreign relations and economic treaties like western capitalist states because its main objective is to present Islam as a solution for all humanity.

[1] <http://www.cepr.net/index.php/a-survey-of-the-impacts-of-imf-structural-adjustment-in-africa/>

[2] <http://www.aercafrica.org/DOCUMENTS/RP90.PDF>

[3] http://www.economywatch.com/economic-statistics/economic-indicators/Total_External_Debt_US_Dollars/1995/

[4] http://www.economywatch.com/economic-statistics/economic-indicators/Total_External_Debt_US_Dollars/2010/

Today's debt crisis by contrast aims to economically and commercially exploit weaker nations in Europe. Germany, Britain, the US and France, though hugely indebted themselves, have dictated the debt repayment terms and now essentially control the fiscal policy of weaker

Preventing ourselves from speaking out: How Muslims are in great danger of self-censorship



A few weeks ago I attended a gathering that discussed the latest manifestation of Prevent, the British government's counter-extremism strategy. The gathering brought together grass-roots activists, student representatives, youth workers, post-graduate students and lecturers, as well as members of Muslim groups.

There seemed to be a consensus in the room that Prevent was a problem. One comment made from the floor summarised the key problem with Prevent, and was met with broad agreement (including from a non-Muslim academic who has studied

the government's counter-extremism policies over the years, and who could in no way be said to have a bias against the UK police and security establishment). Prevent, it was said, was NOT about preventing violence and terrorism. It was an ideological agenda that aimed to 'westernise' Muslims because of a mistaken belief that the more Islamic you are, the more of a potential threat you pose. Similarly, the British government's policy (and that of many European governments and the United States) is that the more Islamic a Muslim country becomes, the more of a threat it poses to their interests; and hence the foreign policies of these

governments support regimes in the Muslim world that suppress any form of Islamic political expression.

There were other comments from both the panel and the floor that said that the aim of Prevent was to create docile Muslims; that the police were compromising their community policing strategies by also working on a strategy that was about changing peoples' beliefs and ideas; that police and local councils had hijacked youth and community projects for part of the Prevent agenda; that profiling, mapping and surveillance were most definitely taking place in Muslim communities; and that Muslims in local areas faced a difficult decision whether to engage or not.

There were disturbing anecdotes of police intimidation, not visible to the wider community and which consequently failed to draw criticism; as well as the cowering into silence of Muslim students because of the anecdotes about terror suspects being 'radicalised' at University.

LOOKING FOR A WAY FORWARD

The meeting did not have time to explore strategies of how to tackle this problematic situation, which shows no sign of going away. There was some talk of building alliances with civil society; and some informal discussion before and after the panel discussion about various legal options Muslims might try. One contributor, who had been targeted



repeatedly by local police in a most intimidating manner, made a passionate plea for Muslims to disengage with the Prevent strategy at all levels and take all (legal) measures - no matter how unpopular they seem to others and no matter how much criticism they draw - to stand up for their rights.

All of these suggestions had validity - but failed to address a central problem. If Prevent is about challenging peoples' ideas and beliefs - where are the voices speaking out defending and explaining those ideas and beliefs in a robust way. Where are the Imams and scholars who should be teaching Muslims the truth about their faith, at a time when others are bullying Muslims to abandon or reinterpret these same issues.

There is a very great danger that Muslims could find that, whilst retaining a legal right to express all those aspects of Islam that are currently labelled as 'extremism', they will remain silent simply for fear of being labelled 'extremists'; or for fear of being marginalised by the state.

'EXTREMIST' IDEAS OR 'EXTREMIST' POLICY?

There have been various definitions used for 'extremism' over the years. Part of the reason that terms like 'extremism' and 'terrorism' remain ill-defined is so that politicians can implement their plans according to their own political agenda. A Muslim who travelled from the UK to Libya to take up arms against Gaddafi's regime would be lauded as a freedom fighter, fighting against an oppressive regime in a struggle Britain supports. A Muslim who travelled from the UK to

Palestine, Kashmir, Afghanistan or Iraq, to take up arms to fight against occupying or oppressive military forces would be labelled a terrorist and face charges of anything from acts preparatory to terrorism, to actual intent to commit terrorism. And if any friend or family member were to know that someone was even considering travelling, they too would be committing an offence under anti-terrorism legislation, unless they shared (even vague speculative) information with the authorities.

But the central thesis in Prevent is that it's certain ideas that create an ideological framework in which 'terrorism' can flourish and propagates grievances that are used as justifications. So, it is argued the state has to intervene to change peoples' ideas.

The main agencies of the state commissioned to do this are the police and local authorities - with universities, schools and health workers all being expected to flag up possible 'extremists' who may need

includes detailed questioning about the religious and political views of the individual.

All of this it's the policies of the British state (echoed across Europe) that are extreme, rather than the beliefs.

'BATTERED PERSON SYNDROME'

Abused people often adopts a guilt complex believing the abuse was their own fault; or become conditioned by their abuser not to say or do the things that provoke the abuser's anger - no matter how mundane or reasonable those things might be.

I fear this is the current psychological state of some sections of the Muslim community. The need to qualify ourselves before we speak - to say that we condemn 'terrorism' at best look demeaning - and at worst look as if it is we who have to compensate for a guilt complex.

One contributor at the meeting asked why, at the emotional funeral of the three young

It is all very well fighting for rights in the face of an oppressive state or bullying media - but what are you fighting for, if you silence yourselves in the very manner that advocates of the Prevent policy want you to?

'deradicalising'.

Coupled to this, other commentators have noticed, that politicians have sent a clear signal to the media, schools, police etc that 'extremist ideas' are dangerous and need to be watched out for.

So, a hostile climate exists across the whole of Europe towards Muslims who publicly express their Islamic beliefs. This can range from the wearing of hijab or niqab to arguing for Shari'ah law and a Caliphate as the system of government in Muslim countries currently governed by tyrannical dictatorships or corrupt democracies. Other issues, such as gender segregation, holding fundamental beliefs that contradict the dominant neoliberal opinions in the world, and political stances on Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan - can all qualify as 'extremist' ideas.

The execution of Prevent on the ground - during stop and search operations, arrests, and at airports, ports and rail terminals

Muslim men killed in Birmingham during the 2011 riots, a speech had to be made denouncing terrorism?

During media interviews, seminars, conferences - and now it seems at births, weddings and funerals Muslims have to say something distancing themselves from 9/11, 7/7 and other such acts. Even a recent conference that was leafleted and advertised to the Muslim community as being one celebrating the life of the blessed Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was spun to the media as being a gathering that was an 'anti-extremism' rally.

Silencing ourselves & becoming apologists It would be a useful exercise to consider what proportion of press releases issued in the past 12 months from Muslim organisations have been 'defensive' - i.e. saying things that seem primarily aimed to counter impressions of 'extremism'. Even when addressing the crimes of the

Norwegian mass murderer Anders Behring Breivik, some Muslims felt compelled to raise the fact that they were opposed to violence and terrorism, not realising that you can sound like you are protesting your own innocence a little too hard sometimes. Contrast these apologetic messages with the proportion of robust responses to ideological attacks on our faith - or indeed anyone's religious beliefs.

How many times have we let insults about women's dress, or Islamic rules, or the entire Shari'ah continue, without actually explaining, challenging or provoking thought in the minds of the accusers about their own values system?

When we do address such issues, how many times is it from the viewpoint of 'rights' or freedom of expression - without championing dignity for the Islamic rule, as well as the one who sought to practice it? Surely, speaking out and standing up for Islamic principles is part of the faith and character of Muslims. Even if someone saw themselves as an equal citizen with some self-worth, they wouldn't worry about what anyone else felt about their political beliefs, as the only real expectation of most citizens is to obey the law.

It is all very well fighting for rights in the face of an oppressive state or bullying media - but what are you fighting for, if you silence yourselves in the very manner that advocates of the Prevent policy want you to?

To only ever speak behind the shield of well-meaning socialist activists, or borrow their political language may seem appealing to some, particularly as it allows the Muslim community some opportunity to speak. But this not only means compromising on a lowest common denominator form of message, it neuters our own community of any courage or resources to undertake independent expression when we face issues that others with different political or social views disagree with. Moreover, as has been seen in some of the more aggressive anti-fascist or anti-capitalist demonstrations in Britain, as well as in mainstream politics, we have increasingly seen less concern given to which political tactics are actually legitimised by the Shari'ah and which are not permitted.

THE RESULT

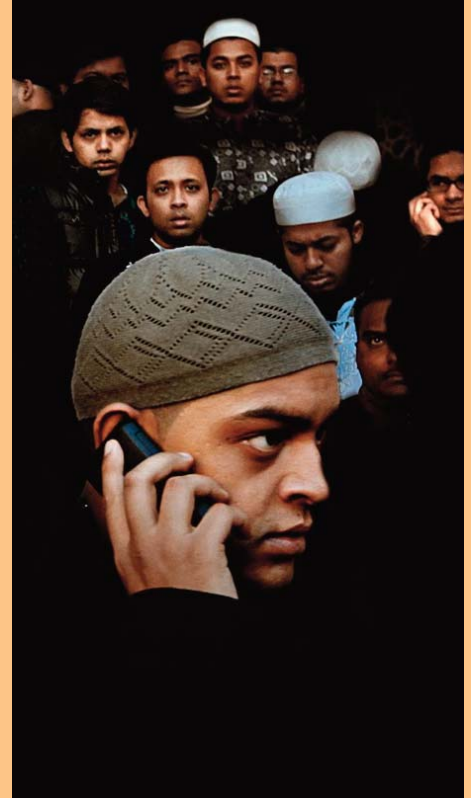
The result of this timid mindset would be a group of Muslims who would only engage politically if they had cover from other groups in society; who would continue to apologise for things they haven't done; who accept every norm of geopolitics, even if it is not correct from an Islamic viewpoint (like the division of Muslim land into ever smaller countries, or the legitimisation of the Israeli occupation of Palestine in a two-'state' model) or actually harmful to their interest; who would be too scared of being labelled 'extremists' to speak out or say the right thing on Islamic issues; who silenced themselves over atrocities committed in Muslim countries because of western foreign policy; who cared so much about what western governments thought of them that they lived their lives in constant hope of attaining their favour, and consequently allowed themselves to be trampled upon; and who would break fast with the representatives of governments who break their brothers' bones.

I make no apology for saying: May Allah save us from that!

This is not merely a betrayal of the legacy and sacrifice of the Prophets (peace be upon them all), their companions, and generations of martyrs who suffered at the hands of oppressors. It is a failure to learn from others who strove for recognition of their status in the past.

Something positive to offer Muslims are, for the most part, a very average bunch of human beings - except for one thing - and that is our beliefs and values.

It is our Islam that dignifies us, yet this is the very thing we are being expected to stop expressing: in France, in any sort of public manifestation (including prayer) and in Britain in a more focused, political way. But many of us can see that the societies we live in are far from perfect. If we silence ourselves from speaking about Islamic values, the Shari'ah, Khilafah - or if we fear to be critical of the systems, values or policies of the states where we live - we are not merely letting ourselves down, we are letting those around us down by not holding a mirror to society.



We have, in Islam, a way of life that gives the much needed answers - not only for Muslim countries - but an example for the whole of humanity. We have answers to the economic and social problems that trouble western countries today; and an antidote to the rampant materialism and consumerism that dominates the world.

How do we share this most precious gift if we silence ourselves?

A SINCERE REMINDER

My thoughts are not meant as an attack on anyone. None of us is perfect; and anyone who has engaged in political or social activity will have made mistakes along the way.

But in the context of the policies directed at Muslims in Britain and Europe today, it is vital people understand the greater danger is the one we face from ourselves - by silencing ourselves, avoiding controversial issues and failing to uphold the very beliefs that give us life.

The Illegitimacy of the Current Rulers

The Ummah (Islamic nation) around the world is rising and seeking to reclaim the authority from rulers of the Middle East. In country after country we are seeing the people lose their fear of the regimes that have been suppressing, repressing, torturing and imprisoning them and standing in the way of their political aspirations. Some of these rulers have fallen, and others are living precariously; and the momentum is for change.

FATAAWA LEGITIMISING RULERS

Although the Ummah is seeking to change its rulers certain Ulama have given fataawa legitimising the rule and authority of the rulers of their respective countries. One prominent example is the fatwa of the 'Council of Senior Scholars' in Saudi Arabia which gave the fatwa that even protests and demonstrations are not permitted as Saudi Arabia is a legitimate Islamic state, below is some key sections of the fatwa:

'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 God (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves..." [TMQ Āli-'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, had 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).'

Source: <http://islamopediaonline.org/fatwa/fatwa-council-senior-scholars-kingdom-saudi-arabia-warning-against-mass-demonstrations>

Another pertinent example in light of recent events is the response of certain Ulama in relation to the uprisings in Syria. It has been argued that to protest is a cause of fitna and civil war leading to bloodshed and therefore Muslims should not oppose the regime but work with the regime to bring about reforms. Sayyid Ramadan Buti for example described the situation in Syria in light of the following hadith: he describes events in Syria under the label of 'al-haraj'. This is a term found in a Hadith narrated Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet said, "Time will pass rapidly, good deeds will decrease, miserliness will be thrown (in the hearts of the people) afflictions will appear and there will be much 'Al-Harj.'" They said, "O God's Apostle! What is 'Al-Harj?'" He said, **"Killing! Killing!"** He described the situation as one of fitna and civil war and those demonstrating were rebelling against the legitimate rulers of Syria. He has criticized those demonstrating of being ignorant of salah while praising the Ba'thi 'Alawi rulers of the Syrian regime.

VIEW OF CLASSICAL SCHOLARS ABOUT REBELLING AGAINST RULERS

The scholars have differed on whether it is

permitted to rebel against rulers who are oppressive (zalim) or transgressors (fasiq). Many have said that it is not permitted to rebel against a fasiq or zalim based on a number of ahadith, here are two examples: it is narrated that the Prophet (saw) said: **"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] **"You have to listen to and obey the Ameer, even if he hit your back and took your property, listen and obey."** [Muslim] As-Shawkani said: **"Those who viewed the obligation of rebelling against the oppressive rulers, challenging them with the sword and struggling against them with fighting, have used as evidence some general imports from the Book and the Sunnah, concerning the obligation of enjoining the ma'roof and forbidding the munkar. There is no doubt that the ahadith we mentioned in Al-Musannaf in this subject are absolutely more specific than those general imports; besides these ahadith are mutawatir in meaning as understood by those who have knowledge in the Sunnah."**

Many of those who said one cannot rebel due to the rulers zulm or fisq qualified it by saying it is allowed as long as widespread bloodshed can be prevented. Here are a few quotes:

Imam al-Ijee: 'The Ummah has the right to remove the ruler for a reason that obliges it and if it leads to civil war then the least of the two evils should be followed.' Al-Mawaqif p.100

Ibn 'Abideen: 'If a just ruler is appointed and then he becomes oppressive and a fasiq then he should not be removed but

he deserves to be removed if it does not entail civil war.'

Al-Shawkani: '.....the scholars in general take the view that oppressive rulers should be removed if possible without civil war or oppression or it is obligatory to be patient.' Nayl al-Awtar vol 7, p108

However, this does not mean their absolute obedience to the rulers. The ahadith quoted above are talking of not rebelling against the rulers due to their misappropriation of the people's rights and 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. Also this does not refer to the rulers who are making kufr buwaah (explicit kufr) by abandoning the Shari'ah and substituting it with secular laws, which clearly and unequivocally contradict the definite rules of Islam. Nor does this include those states whose basis is not Islam but secularism or socialism etc. Therefore, to use these ahadith which oblige Muslims to obey oppressive rulers as long as they implement Islam, for rulers today who rule by what Allah has not revealed is a clear misapplication of the texts. Although the writer of this article does not take the view that rebellion is the way for change in our countries, this does not mean current rulers are legitimate and nor does it mean we should not account the rulers by any permitted style at our disposal and ask the people of power to remove them and appoint just rulers in their place.

WHAT IS A LEGITIMATE AUTHORITY IN SHARI'AH?

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]

This noble verse in Surah al-Nisa comes after verse 58, which focused on the rulers when they were enjoined to rule by justice



- which is nothing other than what Allah (SWT) has revealed (i.e. the Qur'an and the Sunnah). In this verse, the focus is on the Muslims under the authority of the rulers, and their responsibility. In this respect the message of this ayah is addressed to the Ummah at large and we can learn from it the following matters:

The 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 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.

Consider for example the following hadith: It has been reported that 'Ali (ra) said, "The Messenger of Allah sent a troop under the command of a man from Al-Ansar. When they left, he became angry with them for some reason, and said to them, 'Has not the Messenger of Allah commanded you to obey me?' They said, 'Yes.' He said, 'Collect some wood,' and then he started a fire with the wood, saying, 'I command you to enter the fire.' The people almost entered the fire, but a young man among them said, 'You ran away from the Fire to Allah's Messenger. Therefore, do not rush until you go back to Allah's Messenger, and if he commands you to enter it, then enter it.'



When they went back to Allah's Messenger, they told him what had happened, and the Messenger said, 'Had you entered it, you would never have departed from it. Obedience is only in righteousness.' (Reported by Bukhari volume 9, book 91, number 363). Here the Messenger (saw) stated that obedience is only in the 'ma'ruf' (good) and not in the 'munkar' (evil). So the one in authority cannot command anything but ma'ruf, and people cannot obey anything but ma'ruf. What is ma'ruf is what Islam has defined as good, and munkar is what Islam has defined as evil. It is not left to the discretion of man to decide these matters.

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. It is ludicrous after saying that there is no obedience in the disobedience to the Creator, that there can be obedience in the disobedience to the Messenger (saw) as the ayah obliges obedience to Allah and His Messenger. 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 that 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, and 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." Just as the young man in the above hadith disputed with his amir when he commanded them to enter the fire, and referred the matter to the Messenger; we are also obliged to refer to the Islamic reference point i.e. the Qur'an and Sunnah when there is a dispute. 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. We are not asked by the ahadith to give 'our backs and property' for no reason, i.e. if a ruler oppresses people, but rules by Islam, we are still obliged to obey such rulers, and not obey them in a sin; while at the same time accounting and advising them to stop their injustice.

This is in relation to the requirement of the basis of the state to be Islam by referring only to the Kitaab and Sunnah. As for the rules implemented, these also need to be scrutinized, as it is not enough for a state to declare in its constitution that it refers only to the Qur'an and Sunnah. It is a requirement for a state to be legitimate that it refers to the Qur'an and Sunnah for all its rules, for example Bukhari narrates on the authority of Junada b. abi Umayyah who said: We went to 'Ubadah b. as-Samit when he was sick and we said: May Allah (swt) guide you. Inform us of a Hadith from the Messenger of Allah (saw) so Allah may benefit you from it. He said, the Messenger of Allah (saw) 'called upon us and we gave him the Bay'ah, and he said, of that which he had taken from us, that we should give him the pledge to listen and obey, in what we like and dislike, in our hardship and ease, and that we should not dispute the authority of its people unless we saw open Kufr (kufir buwah) upon which we had a proof (burhan) from Allah.'

This Hadith states that Muslims should not oppose the rulers unless they see an explicit kufir. The explicit kufir is the rule by what Allah has not revealed. The Hadith

states in the nakira (indefinite form), this means any act of kufr and this includes ruling by non-Islamic rules. However, the only condition to this is that it must be definite and explicit and not a matter that is open to dispute in Shari'ah. So based on this Hadith if the rules and laws in a state explicitly contradict the Shari'ah, this can also indicate that the basis of that state is not Islamic and hence that state would not be legitimate.

SAUDI ARABIA AND THE SYRIAN REGIME

However, when we apply the above discussion and 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:

1. Saudi is not only a member of this nationalistic organisation, but it is one of the founders. Article 8 of the Arab League Constitution states, "Every participating member of the League must respect the established ruling system of the other participating states in the League, it should consider it as a right of these states and obligate it self not to do any action that is aimed at changing their systems."
2. It is well known that Saudi is a member of the UN. According to article 92 of the UN constitution, the International court of Justice (ICJ) is the main judicial branch of the UN. The ICJ performs its duties based on a system that is part of the UN constitution and must be respected and approved by every member state. Article 94 states "Every member of the UN is to submit to the ICJ in any case in which he is a part."
3. The Arab Monetary Fund, based in Abu Dhabi, is a huge Riba institution that was established by an agreement on 4/7/76 in Morocco. Saudi is the biggest shareholder in it; it receives, as every one else in the Fund, Riba of an average of 3.2% on its shares.
4. Saudi and the IMF (International Monetary Fund)
It is worth mentioning that Saudi has the 6th largest share and power of rate. It had 3.5% of the total shares that enabled it to occupy a permanent seat in the executive board. The IMF gives international loans based on interest, they also restructure

economies based on capitalist non-Islamic principles.

5. The ruling system of Saudi is a monarchy and not Khilafah.
6. The system of the Saudi Arab citizenship decided by the ministers Council resolution #4 on 25th January 1974 and approved by the king in his speech in High Council #8/5/8604 on 22nd February 1974 to put it in effect.
7. The law of reviving the dead land used to be according to Islam, where if a person works a piece of land that becomes his. This was the case until an edict was issued declaring the nullification of this Islamic law starting from 1987 onwards.
8. The Saudi royal family claims ownership over the natural resources including the Oil fields. Islam prohibits the private ownership of natural resources such as oil.
In addition to the laws instituted by Saudi Arabia the royal family have also undertaken political policies that contradict Islam including:
 - Backing of the sanctions in Iraq after the first gulf war
 - Allowing American and western troops to enter Saudi to attack the Muslims of Iraq
 - Giving clear skies to Israeli airplanes to attack Iran. 'The Times June 12, 2010 Saudi Arabia gives Israel clear skies to attack Iranian nuclear sites'
 - Saudi sends troops into Bahrain to help support the monarchy and crush the opposition
 - Saudi giving asylum to tyrants including former Tunisian president Ben Ali who banned the hijab amongst other non Islamic rules he implemented. They also gave asylum to Nawaz Sharif, Idi Amin and recently helped treat Abdullah Saleh president of Yemen who ordered the shooting of unarmed peaceful protestors.

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.

If we now look to the case of Syria and look to its constitution then the issue is even clearer, we find that the constitution defines Syria as a secular socialist state where recognition of Islam is only as the majority religion. This means from its very basis the Syrian regime is illegitimate without even requiring us to look to the rules it implements. The Syrian regime never claimed to be Islamic and yet we have scholars justifying their rule and criticizing those who have come out opposing these illegitimate regimes.

CONCLUSION

We have seen from the above discussion the legitimacy of a ruler is determined by the basis of the state in question. If the basis of the state is Islam and solely Islam then it is an Islamic state, if the basis is other than Islam or a mixture of Islam and non-Islam then that is not an Islamic state and the rulers in that state are not legitimate. Whether the basis of a state is Islamic or not can be determined in two ways:

- a) Study of its constitution where the basis of the state is stated. If it is socialist, secularist, capitalist, etc then it is not an Islamic state. It must state that its laws and rules all derive from the Qur'an and Sunnah.
- b) Scrutiny of the laws and rules it implements. If the laws and rules implemented contradict the Shari'ah in an explicit manner and after it being drawn to the attention of the rulers the rulers persist in implementing such rules, then that is indicative of the incorrect basis of that state and such a state cannot be Islamic or legitimate.

If we apply the above principles we find that not a single country exists in the Muslim lands that can be classed as legitimate as they all either make non Islam its basis and/or implement rules that explicitly contradict the Shari'ah. Given this reality it then becomes the obligation of Muslims to seek the Islamic method to remove such rulers and appoint a just Muslim ruler who will rule by the Kitaab and Sunnah.

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US Occupations to Continue in the Muslim World



Since the summer of 2011 various US officials have made statements about the drawdown of US forces in Afghanistan and Iraq (now reportedly completed in December 2011). These wars which have now lasted longer than WW2 and are considered by many an analyst to have set in motion the end of the American century.

With an escalation in suicide attacks in Afghanistan, an uncooperative Pakistan (according to US officials) and with Iran firmly in control of Iraq, one would consider the withdrawal of US forces as something contrary to protecting US interests. After incurring astronomical costs in maintaining the US war machine in the Muslim world are we finally witnessing the end of the US in the region? Has it been defeated? In both Iraq and Afghanistan the US has

achieved its short to medium terms aims, but not without many problems en route. The current events are a reorientation of US resources in order to secure its longer term strategic interests in the region.

IRAQ

The US had its eyes on Iraq and its coveted oil fields going back to George Bush senior. 9/11 finally presented the Neocon government with its justification to launch a full scale invasion and implement regime change. A strategy of using military force to enforce 'democracy' on the region ensued and after a month of fighting the US occupied the country and withdrew half its troops. It was after this the Shi'ah in the South of Iraq launched their insurgency, whilst the Sunnis around Baghdad made the US occupation a living nightmare. Within a

few months of the invasion, the US very quickly became marred in an insurgency that today has greatly affected US prowess around the world.

By 2005 the US was well and truly drowning in Iraq and comparisons were being made with Vietnam. It became clear to all that the US had massively underestimated the enemy and whilst it had rapidly removed Iraq's conventional forces the unconventional elements in Iraq had brought the US army to a stalemate. A position from which the US was never going to win the war, but it was a war it was not prepared to lose either.

It was at this juncture the US began discussing selective engagement with Iran. Whilst the Baker-Hamilton report to congress in 2006 contained such a proposition, engagement with Iran had

already begun, in order to contain the Shi'ia insurgency.

The US turned to countries surrounding Iraq to save its self from bleeding to death. Iran's proxy the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI) a group created in Tehran in 1982 gathered the major Shi'ah factions to partake in Iraq's government, bringing to an end the insurgency in the South. Syria played an active role in infiltrating the Sunni resistance against the US in Iraq and passed on valuable intelligence to the US led coalition. Syria's influence over the Sunni resistance fighters that operated in Iraq was emphasised by the Baker-Hamilton report.

Similarly Turkey played a central role in ensuring the US constructed architecture came together. Turkey had a policy of maintaining contact with all groups in Iraq. Moqtada Al-Sadr held many in Ankara focused on the political process in 2009, the deadlock after the March 2010 elections saw Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, the leader of ISCI and Iyad Alawi travel to Turkey in order to gain its support in forming the new government. Similarly the Semi-autonomous Northern Iraq has seen over \$5 billion in investment from Turkey.

In this way the US was able to stem the insurgency, construct a political system, which the various factions have now entered and through which they will fight for their interests. This allowed the US to withdraw its troops in stages as the insurgency was stemmed.

The US has achieved its strategic interests in controlling the flow of Iraqi oil. This is through the nature of the agreements to extract oil in the country. Usually governments and oil companies agree to so-called "Production Sharing Agreements (PSA)." Under a PSA, a government gives the oil company the rights to a certain share of the proven crude oil reserves, in return for pumping up (extracting) crude oil. Governments usually grant oil companies a share of the crude oil in the range of 30 - 70%. However the

contracts in the case of the Iraqi crude oil are 'Service Contracts (ST):' Under the ST an oil company is only contracted by the government to perform the service of pumping up the crude oil. For each barrel it pumps up, the oil company is then awarded a remuneration fee. But ownership of the crude oil remains in the hands of the government. In this way Iraqi oil remained within the control of the US sponsored Iraqi government that is dependent on the US. The US controls Iraq's converted oil fields by ensuring no other nation gained access to the oil.

With the day-to-day politics firmly in the hand of proxies of Syria, Iran and Turkey, this allows the US to consolidate its position in the region. Combat troops are now no longer needed in Iraq and a smaller more specialised force can protect US interests. This is why the US drawdown in Iraq saw thousands of troops renamed as transition troops rather than combat troops in 2010.

The reduced level of troops is possible in tandem with the expanded diplomatic mission because the US has been largely successful in its intentions in Iraq, setting in place the intended political, military, and economic elements for Iraq to remain firmly within American sphere of control. As the New York Times reported in September, the debate over specific numbers and figures is unimportant. "The administration has already drawn up plans for an extensive expansion of the American Embassy and its operations, bolstered by thousands of paramilitary security contractors."

The US plans to maintain as it does in many other countries, large embassies staffed by civilians and military personnel overseeing the training and equipping of Iraq's security forces for an indefinite period. The State Department is expected to have up to 17,000 employees and contractors for this ongoing "diplomatic presence", which has been described as necessary to provide "situational awareness

around the country, manage political crises in potential hotspots such as Kirkuk, and provide a platform for delivering economic, development and security assistance". Providing housing, workspace, medical facilities, and security for a legion of civilian workers requires exorbitant funds, expansive land use, and construction which is not yet finalised in all areas as well as security contractors to protect them.

AFGHANISTAN

America had its eyes on Afghanistan well before the events of 9/11. When troops were deployed to Afghanistan the Bush administration maintained a very small military footprint and this is what set him apart from the Obama administration that escalated the US military footprint. Both administrations planned to use Pakistan to win the war in Afghanistan in order to maintain America's long term presence in Afghanistan in order to:

1. Prevent Russian and Chinese domination of Eurasia
2. Prevent the emergence of the Khilafah State
3. Control the hydrocarbon resources of the Caspian Sea and the Middle East
4. Control the security and the transit of hydrocarbons from the Caspian Sea and the Middle East

Obama's strategy, which called for a massive escalation was in reality just another in a number of nominally different strategies announced throughout the decade of war. All of them had roughly the same theme, more troops and more attacks, and had the same results, an ever worsening security situation.

Through using Pakistan as well as Iran in its solution for Afghanistan the US under Obama executed plans for a long term strategic presence, from large combat force to small focussed special operations force. US bases will also remain within the country which the US has secured. The US is in the process

of expanding the Bagram, Kandahar and Mazar-E-Sharif military bases in Afghanistan with an allocation of over \$300 million. The expansion of US military bases in Afghanistan is running counter to the commitment to begin withdrawing troops from Afghanistan by the end of 2011.

A large CIA and Joint Special Operations forces (JSOC) presence will

Several current and former American officials say the United States has tried this bomb-them-to-the-bargaining-table approach before. In the 1990s, it helped drive Serbian leaders to peace talks in Dayton, Ohio, but it has resulted in little so far with the Afghan Taliban. Mullah Umar confirmed in his Eid al fitr message that negotiations are taking place.

...the Obama administration is planning a massive troop surge into Kuwait and the surrounding region, as well as a major naval build-up in international waters in the area. The US most certainly has no plans to abandon its strategic interests in Eurasia.

remain in the country for the foreseeable future. Lt. Gen. John Mulholland, a former colonel with US special operations forces told the New York Times in August "We're moving toward an increased special operations role," together with US intelligence, "whether it's counterterrorism-centric, or counterterrorism blended with counterinsurgency."

The problem the US has faced in Afghanistan unlike in Iraq is that it has been unable to placate the Taliban into its political system and has thus relied on the corrupt and inept Hamid Karzai.

Bombing Afghanistan to the stone age has failed. Whilst a combination of bombing and negotiations is also not working. The debate between negotiations and military strikes continues to divide the US government.

There continues to be indifference in the Afghan strategy between the military-intelligence and the Obama administration. The military and the CIA have argued strongly against negotiating with the Taliban. In June 2010, CIA director Leon Panetta declared publicly: "We have seen no evidence that they are truly interested in reconciliation where they would surrender their arms, where they would denounce al-Qaeda, where they would really try to become part of that society."

The Obama administration's December 2010 strategy review produced a potential alternative to that military-CIA approach. An intelligence assessment circulated just as the 50-page classified review of progress in Afghanistan and Pakistan was being completed, concluded that Pakistan was not likely to agree to carry out a major military operation against the Haqqani group, regardless of US pressures. It also suggested that, without such a change in Pakistan's policy, the US military strategy in Afghanistan couldn't succeed. That strengthened the hand of those who had been sceptical about the military's approach to the problem. The result, according to sources familiar with the document, was that the strategy review suggested the need for a "political approach" to the insurgency in general and the Haqqani network in particular.

Hilary Clinton confirmed that in her visit to Pakistan in October 2011 she used her meeting to reassure the Pakistanis that they would play a central role in such reconciliation talks. "We're at the point where Pakistanis have told us they're going to squeeze the Haqqani network," a senior administration official said. "They're satisfied they've got a way forward on reconciliation. They've got a role to play." That first exploratory meeting was

held secretly in the United Arab Emirates between a midlevel American diplomat and Ibrahim Haqqani, a brother of the tribal network's patriarch. Lt. Gen. Ahmed Shuja Pasha, the head of the ISI, brokered the meeting.

It appears the US is looking to divide the insurgency by negotiating bilaterally with the Haqqani network and Mullah Umar's Taliban. This process does not require a large military footprint which allows Obama to make good on his election pledge of withdrawing American troops from both theatres. Whether the US can placate the Taliban remains to be seen.

CONCLUSIONS

The US is not about to abandon its strategic interests but changing the manner in which it plans to achieve them as during its decade of war various challenges and obstacles presented themselves that led to a change of strategies and how US interests would be protected. The US quickly abandoned its aim of setting up a democracy in Afghanistan as the Taliban launched its insurgency to having a client state with an acceptable dictator.

The withdrawal of US troops is primarily for Obama's re-election hopes as the US caucuses are now starting (January 2012), with the Presidential election in December 2012. The US with the help of its regional surrogates who have protected US interests in return for crumbs, have allowed the US to not be embarrassed or bleed itself to death. The US is confident that it can achieve its interests with a smaller more specialised force alongside thousands of contractors. The New York Times reported in October 2011 that the Obama administration is planning a massive troop surge into Kuwait and the surrounding region, as well as a major naval build-up in international waters in the area. The US most certainly has no plans to abandon its strategic interests in Eurasia.

Reflections on the Islamic World 2011: Waiting for the 5th Wave of the Islamic World, the Revival of Khilafah



WESTERN COLONIALISM IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD

The year 2011 has passed. In general, there are not many fundamental changes that have occurred in the Islamic world. The Islamic countries are still the objects of the imperialist countries of capitalism. Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan are still occupied. American military bases spread across the Islamic world especially in the Middle East, a reflection of the American occupation agreed upon by puppet governments.

Although the U.S. has withdrawn its troops from Iraq in early December, the US continues to strengthen its position in Middle Eastern countries. The Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff told members of Congress that the U.S. must strengthen its military presence in Kuwait to counter the growing Iranian influence

in Iraq and in the Gulf region. The U.S., which has 29,000 troops in Kuwait, 7,000 in Bahrain and Qatar, 3,000 in the UAE, and 258 military personnel in Saudi Arabia, wants Kuwait to accommodate its troops withdrawn from Iraq, which is estimated at 24,000 troops.

While the U.S. Defense Secretary, Leon Panetta said on the 13th of October to the members of congress that 10,000 U.S. troops would be withdrawn from Afghanistan before the end of this year as planned, 23,000 troops sent by Barack Obama to Afghanistan will remain to occupy the region until the summer of 2012.

In the field of economy, the rich Muslim countries become the objects of exploitation of the multinational companies of the imperialist world from

Morocco to Marauke (Indonesia), while most people of the Islamic world are still living in poverty.

The U.S. are also still using the repressive client regimes who become the puppets to suppress the struggle for Sharia and the Khilafah, as continues in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan.

Uznews.net published a report entitled: "Torture of prisoners indicted for religious crimes continues, new reports say" [1] telling that the Human rights activists reported new cases, such as tortures, and new forgery charges in Uzbekistan prisons in order to jail people for religious reasons and those whose sentences are close to being served. The leader of the Initiative Group of Independent human rights campaigners in Uzbekistan (IGNPU), Surat Ikramov, has raised the case of two brothers, indicted for their membership of the banned Hizb ut-Tahrir movement.

On 22nd of September 2011, the Kazakhstan regime passed a law that bans performing prayers at the governmental institutions and departments [2]. This includes the prohibition of spreading of Islamic propagation in any places that belong to the government. Under the law, all mosques and places of prayer in all government premises should be closed.

In Bangladesh, as reported by www.islamtoday.net on January 18th, 2011 citing The Guardian, revealed the involvement of British intelligence in the torture centers in Bangladesh, which was adopted by the then Labour Party government. According to a report made by Jacqui Smith, the former UK Home Secretary, that she was very concerned about the use of torture in Bangladesh by British intelligence agencies. Besides the political opponents of the ruling party, the victims of torture in Bangladesh are the Islamic Hizb ut-Tahrir activists who work for the establishment of Islamic Sharia.

THE FATE OF MUSLIM MINORITIES

Meanwhile, the fate of Muslim minorities in the areas mostly controlled by non-Muslims is very sad. Massacre,



discrimination, harassment are among the recurrent cases experienced by the Muslims in Russia, in Pattani in Thailand (under the Buddhist regime), in India, Kashmir, and Sri Lanka (under the Hindu regime), in Moro (Phillipines), in Xianjiang (under communist China).

According to www.islamtoday.net dated August 12th, 2011 based on a report by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, it was revealed that Muslims are harassed in 117 countries, including in the European countries which ban face veils (niqab) and calls for prayer. China is the most imposing country in the restriction on religious freedom and the implementation of religious rituals, followed by France which ranks third for the banning of the face veil (niqab).

Muslims in Uighur are prevented from performing pilgrimage. "We cannot get a passport," said Mehmet Ali (not his real name), told the newspaper *The Hindutimes.com*, on October, 31st. Mehmet said to perform pilgrimage, the Muslims in Uighurs have to pay 70,000 yuans. It is not the cost of the pilgrimage that becomes the problem, but the difficulty to get a passport. The Chinese government deliberately complicates the process.

Almokhtsar.com, (23/11/2011) reported the destruction of a mosque in the district of Mullaitivu, in the Northern

Province of Sri Lanka by Hindu extremists, which then built a center for meditation and yoga. In fact, the Muslims have lived in this area since 1965, and there were 165 Muslim families at the time.

THE FATE OF MUSLIMS IN THE WESTERN COUNTRIES

The same fate has been experienced by the Muslims in the countries that claim to uphold democratic and human rights values. Islamophobia which is mixed with Xenophobia has increased in Europe. The support for ultranationalist groups has grown. The hatred and violence against Muslims start from vandalizing mosques, insulting Prophet Muhammad (SAW), performing criminal actions due to the difference of religion and race, until the the state's officials take action such as banning the use of Muslim clothing (niqab), and construction of new Mosques. All is done in the name of the state security and the obligation of the state's to maintain secularism.

According to the FBI, the crimes and the misdemeanors against Muslims have increased by 50% from 2009 until 2010. Islamtoday.net (15/11/2011) reported that the total number of acts of violence against the Muslims have increased from 107 cases in 2009 to 160 cases in 2010.

U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) provides assistance to the District of New York Police Department (NYPD) to spy on American citizens, [3] especially the Muslims. Since September 11 attack, with the help of CIA, NYPD has sent undercover officers into the minority environment as part of the human mapping programs, AP news agency reported on Wednesday (24/8).

French satirical magazine, *Charlie Hebdo*, named Prophet Muhammad as "chief editor" [4] for its latest edition to mark the victory of the Islamist party Ennahda in Tunisia. The magazine will be renamed to *Sharia Hebdo*. "To celebrate the victory of the Islamist party Ennahda in Tunisia, *Charlie Hebdo*, named Muhammad as its chief editor for the upcoming issue," the magazine said in a statement.

Interestingly, despite the massive and

systematic stigma against the teachings of Islam and Muslims, the number of native Europeans and Americans who converted to Islam keeps increasing. It happens especially amongst the educated middle and upper class European women. Based on the research of a British institute "Faith Matters", the number of the British citizens who've embraced Islam has reached 100,000 people, with 5,000 new converts to Islam every year.

This fact is in sharp contrast to the attacks on the Islamic teachings with respect to women. The teachings of Islam from Allah (SWT) is in accordance with human nature, and satisfies the rational thoughts of man because it is built on the principle of tauheed (oneness of Allah), which is capable of defeating the negative stereotypes which attempt to keep the community away from Islam. Although practiced only partially in society, the comprehensive Islamic Sharia - like the doctrine of love in the family, integrity to maintain the honour of women and family, respect of the elderly, to clothes that keep Muslim women from being exploited cruelly by capitalism, has attracted many people to embrace Islam.

THE CHANGE OF DIRECTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

A great difference stems from the developments in the Middle East: the collapse of the repressive regimes. Starting with the fall of Zainal Abidin bin Ali in Tunisia, the resignation of Mubarak in Egypt, until the violent end of Gaddafi's repressive regime in Libya. Currently, some areas in the Middle East remain in a period of upheaval such as Yemen and Syria. Countries that have been 'under control' of their rulers, certainly be carried away such as Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and others.

The people's movement with full courage is able to subvert the regimes. While the movement is at the crossroads, the U.S. and its allies want to change the direction of the movement. They intend to change it to democratisation. The U.S. shamelessly claims to be the hero that drives change in the Middle East, even though it is the violent entity that has been supporting the repressive regimes of the region. Then, they change the direction claiming

to side with the people, after knowing that they can no longer take advantage of their puppet regimes.

However, the West knows that the change in the Middle East cannot be separated from the Islamic factor that has become the culture and the emotion of the Muslims there. Regardless of their wrapping the ideas of capitalism with Islam. So, they come with the terms of *ad daulah al Madaniah* (civil state / civil society), *al-Islam al mu'tadil* (moderate Islam) which is a poisonous term. Dangerous because the core of its idea is the acceptance of the system of secularism, democracy, and pluralism which are contrary to Islam. What they mean by moderate Islam is Islam that accommodates the Western thought such as democracy, human rights and pluralism and those who accept the policy of the Western colonialism in the name of openness and inclusivity.

The question is whether the West will be able to succeed with this strategy? Will they bring a meaningful change for the Middle Eastern societies? The answer is very clear. The West will fail again. In addition, the offer of their Western ideas wrapped with Islam will also fail. It is because those ideas preserve the Western colonialism which is the core problem in the Middle East and Islamic lands while preserving the ideology of capitalism and foreign intervention.

Unfortunately, the parties in the elections - which are the Islamic parties - are trapped by Western pressure to uphold Western ideas such as democracy, liberalism and pluralism. The party that won in Tunisia, *Nahdha*, promised that it will not change the principle of secularism that has become the state principle of Tunisia. As quoted from the site <http://english.alarabiya.net> (5 / 11), an *Nahda* Party that will rule Tunisia after the collapse of Zainal Abidin bin Ali will focus on democracy, human rights and a free market economy in the plans to change the constitution. The party will not use religion as a reference in the constitutional draft that will be prepared to assure that Tunisia remains a secular state.

Some Islamic-based parties are making a secret agreements with the Western countries, which is an act of political suicide. From the point of view of Sharia law, this is also unlawful to cooperate with the *muhariban fi'lan* countries (countries which are openly fighting the muslim countries) which have killed millions of Muslims and plunder the natural wealth of the Islamic world. Once again, without Sharia and *Khilifah*, this will surely fail.

Only by implementing Islamic Sharia in its totality which is a proof of faith and devotion to Allah, will the victory be achieved. This is confirmed by Allah (SWT) in *surah A'raf* [96] of the Quran, in which Allah says: "If the people of the towns had but believed and feared Allah, we should indeed have opened out to them (All kinds of) blessings from heaven and earth; but They rejected (the Truth), and we brought them to Book for their misdeeds."

WAITING FOR THE 5TH WAVE

Insha Allah, the ummah will enter the final wave of the journey for the return of Islam after the collapse of the *Khilafah* in 1924. The 1st Wave was the era when the colonial countries directly occupied the Islamic world.

They sent troops to the Islamic lands; however, they realized that this would lead to failure. The Muslims would easily move, because the enemies are clearly in their sight namely the foreign troops. This would fail besides it was also relatively expensive.

The 2nd Wave came when the Western colonialist gave 'quasi' independence to the Islamic lands. Their independence was quasi because they did not really grant them full independence. Though the majority of colonial troops were withdrawn from Islamic lands, the occupation continued through the hands of the puppet rulers. They also ensured what is applicable is the Western system, not Islamic law.

Then, Muslims entered the 3rd Wave. At that time, the western-backed puppet rulers repressively acted against their own people, because they preferred to

serve their imperialist masters. To gain support from the Western countries, they let the natural resources in the Islamic lands be plundered and exploited while their people live in poverty. On the other hand, every effort in the struggle for Sharia was crushed repressively because this would threaten the interests of colonialism.

They arrest, torture, and kill those who struggle for Sharia. These types of rulers come one after another in the Islamic lands either in the form of kings, presidents or prime ministers. Among them were Suharto in Indonesia, Saddam Hussein in Iraq, Hosni Mubarak in Egypt, Zainal Abidin bin Ali in Tunisia, and Gaddafi in Libya.

Then, came the Muslim ummah in the 4th Wave, where the West gave democracy wrapped in Islamic terms. They are trying to mislead the Muslims. However, this effort will also surely fail. The condition of failure is reinforced by the weakening of the major countries of the capitalist world such as the United States and Europe. The crisis in the Western countries will make them unable to fully support the new puppet rulers whom they rely on.

Insha Allah, the Muslims will enter the 5th Wave soon, in which the ummah can no longer be deceived. They realize that any system which is originated from the Western colonial ideology will not provide the goodness, whether it is wrapped by Islamic terms or by other misleading words or not. The ummah will in turn firmly reject democracy, pluralism, liberalism, and other misleading ideas.

At that time, the ummah will just trust in Islam with its Sharia and *Khilafah*. There is no other choice for the ummah except supporting the establishment of Sharia and *Khilafah*. Then the ummah will give their trust entirely to a group of *da'wah* carriers which seriously work for the implementation of Sharia and *Khilafah*. They no longer believe in the wicked scholars who become the accomplices of colonialism. It is at that time the establishment of *Khilafah* is in sight. Insha Allah! (Eramuslim.com, 12/21/2011).



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