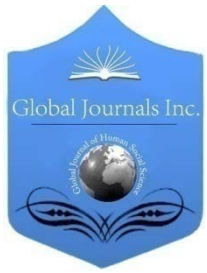
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The War on Terror and the American Foreign Policy in the Middle East and Abroad

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The War on Terror and the American Foreign Policy in the Middle East and Abroad

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Abstract- This paper analyzed the Jihadists mindset, perception and view on the conflict opposing the West and the Arab world. This paper perceived this war to be cultural, religious, ideological and economic between western countries and the Middle East. This perception although distorted is important for a deep understanding of the attitudes, motives and behaviors patters of the Jihadists. The understanding of the perception of the conflict between the West and the Middle East was important in the prospect of reducing acts of violence and terror and building peace between the West and the Middle East. The war on terror will not be won by military solution only. This paper points to the needs of shifting the American foreign policy to a more sustainable community building and development approach. The latter has the advantage of bringing another side of the West so that people in the Middle East and abroad can begin to see on the west not only the invader but as a true partner who is willing to help in development project such as housing, food, education, and healthcare.

I. Introduction

With the end of the cold war, America emerged as the only super power in the world. Russia was no more the equal super power and therefore not a threat to America. However, the 9/11 terrorist attack on the American soil has reminded the world that terrorism was on the rise and constituted the new threat of the 21st century, not Russia. Yet America was neither fully prepared to combat the new threat of the 21st century nor be the leading force against terrorism among the nations. America had to adjust to new challenges that it was not prepared to face. In order to combat terrorism and be a leading force on the war on terror around the world, it is important to understand the root causes of terrorism.

This paper will analyze the American foreign policy in the Middle East and around the world perceived as one of the root causes of the rise of terrorism in the world. This paper will also examine the jihadists' motives of getting into the holy war against America which symbolized the western civilization. This paper will also look at the American foreign policy in Africa and especially in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Five overarching questions will guide this paper: 1) What is terrorism?; 2) What are the root causes of terrorism?; 3)What is the jihadists' perception of the conflicts between the West and the Middle East?; 4) What is the American foreign policy in the Middle East and abroad?; and 5) What does America need to do to reduce acts of violence and terrorism? Finally, why is Washington's support to Israel perceived as roots cause of terrorism?

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a) Jihadists' world view of the conflict in the Middle East.

The jihadists view the world as if there is clash of civilization between Islam and the West which is first and foremost a war of culture, civilization and religion (Aaron, 2008). The jihadists hold the belief that Islam is under attack by the West and particularly the United States. The Jihadists' perception of the conflict, whether it is a distortion of the reality, justifies the motives of their acts of terrorism towards the western countries. The analysis of jihadist perception of the reality "reinforces totalitarian and conspiratorial mindset" (Aaron, 2008, p.115).

According to Aaron (2008), there is a perception that from the Jihadists' points of view that there is a clash of civilization between Islam and western countries mainly France, Britain and the United States. More importantly, the core of the Jihadists' ideology which constitutes both the perception and the propaganda of the jihadists is that Islam is under attack by the West in general and the United States in particular. Aaron (2008) argues that in many cases Muslims were attacked in many countries as a result of the jihadists' provocation. However the jihadists hold a different perception such as Islam is under attack and that perception or belief taps into deep feelings among Muslims that the West disrespects Islam. The jihadists perceive the war between Islam and the West as a religious-economic war between the Middle East and the US; they often make reference of the war in the time of the crusades; and the West is working on becoming more tolerant and working on changing this belief.

The invasion of Muslim culture by the West through various means and aspects has led jihadists and terrorists to believe that this is the work of evil and the imperialists. The imperialistic power of western countries, namely Europe and the United States, that invade the Muslim world militarily and try to transform it culturally and religiously.

The jihadists' core belief is grounded in affirmations such as the United States has an "agenda of pushing social, cultural and religious transformation and fragmenting elements of Arab and Muslim identity"

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(Aaron, 2008, p.117). The Western imperialism is viewed as a threat for Islam and the Arab world and as an agenda of destroying Islam unity, identity and civilization. This core belief implies that the jihadists have a negative world view of the West who they believe have identified them as Islamic fundamentalist. Moreover, they believe that the West uses different tools and strategies to destroy Islam. These tools include the UN, the multinational corporations, the international relief agency and satellite media channels. Jihadists believe that Muslims suffer aggression, iniquity and injustice imposed on them by the Zionist-crusades alliance and their collaborators; to the extent that the Muslim blood became the cheapest and their wealth as loot in the hands of their enemies (Aaron, 2008).

II. The American Policies in the Middle East

There is a perception that one of the root causes of terrorism lies in the American foreign policies in the Middle East. Gareau (2010) argues that Washington's bad policies and its support given to state terrorists such as Iraq under Saddam Hussein in the 80s, to the Shah of Iran, and to Israel who has terrorized Palestinians for half a century, are the root causes of terrorism in the Middle East. He also stresses that American enemy has evolved over time from communist-leftist movements and supporters to resurgent Islam. This shift took place after the collapse of the Soviet Union and later the 9/11 attack. Usually America considers as enemies those who sympathized with its enemies around the world whether communism or Islamic, the leftist side and movement, those who have different perspectives and ideologies and those who challenge the social order in place (Gareau 2010). This justifies Washington's support to the secular bent of the Shah, to Saddam Hussein, Israel and other dictatorships around the world that share the same perspectives and ideologies and protect American interests whether dictators, terrorists, human rights violators, or not.

Washington's complicity in the State of Israel's terrorism is one of the fundamental reasons for the frustration of the Middle East and its engagement to commit acts of terrorism and why it views Washington as the enemy. Gareau (2010) argues that Israel's pursuit of developing a nuclear weapon and its refusal to sign the Non Proliferation treaty promoted by the Eisenhower administration at one hand and the diplomatic, military and economic support of Washington to Israel within or outside the United Nations have made the USA an accomplice of Israel and causes the Arab world, particularly jihadists and Islamists extremists, to conduct acts of terror and violence towards American interests around the world.

Throughout the history, there have been times when Washington has marginalized the UN in dealing with Israel or when fighting the Persian Gulf War against Iraq; in addition to the US policies of supporting state terrorism in order to protect its interests around the world. Gareau (2010) also cites the example of USA support of the Iraqi regime under Saddam Hussein in the 80s as well as the Israel state towards Palestinians. For instance, the Iraq regime under Saddam Hussein was supported by the United State in order to combat the new Iran regime which it had supported previously. Saddam had inflicted terror in his own country upon taking power. Torture was an instrumental part of his terror. In Saddam Hussein hands terror became a routine instrument of state policy intended to promote a climate of suspicion and to undermine the formation of groups; Amnesty International has listed thirty types of torture used in the country. Under Saddam Hussein, beatings, burning, administration of electric shocks and mutilation were reported (Gareau, 2010, p.175).

Washington's bad policies in the Middle East region are aimed to escalate violence and terrorism in the Islam world. For Gareau (2010) the main reason that Islam jihadists hate the United States is because of its support to Israel. In addition, Washington's attacks on Iraq and Afghanistan and other Muslim countries in the world is part of the grievance. He also thinks that the only way to reduce the Islamists hatred towards Americans and with its terrorism is to stop providing diplomatic, economic and military support to Israel. Washington needs to stop being the chief accomplice of Israel State Terrorism; doing so will reduce hatred and with it terrorism. Washington needs to stop filling the role of providing limitless and endless support to Israel which ranges from diplomatic, economic and military support to protecting even its nuclear arsenal and weapons of mass destruction.

Gareau (2010) has also stressed that if Washington wants to be serious about reducing nuclear weapon in the Middle East region than it should convince Israel to destroy their weapons of mass destruction and sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty and carry out its provision. Based on the past experience during the cold war other countries have developed their nuclear weapons in order to protect themselves against the threat of other countries in the region that have developed similar weapons. Gareau (2010) forms a comparison between Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons and what happened after the news broke that Germany has a nuclear weapon. Likewise the Middle East is afraid of Israel's nuclear weapon and to protect itself, it is developing their own mass destruction weapon. Clearly Israel's mass destruction weapons in the Middle East region have been an incentive for other countries, such as Iran and Syria, to develop their own nuclear arm in order to protect them.

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III. American Policies Beyond the Middle East

There are pros and cons of the viewed perceptions of American foreign policy around the world. Commonly American foreign policy is perceived as imperialist and militarily stronger, dominating and exploiting weaker countries. The pros believe the American foreign policies promote stability around the world; whereas the cons argue that the rise of terrorism, extremism and radical Islamism in the Middle East should be attributed to the American bad policies. In other ways, with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and following the 9/11, American policies around the world, and particularly in the Middle East, have brought furry among not only the Jihadists and right wing Islamists but also many African countries such as the Congo.

Gareau's book (2010) provides a second look at American foreign policies that the elites in Washington have put in place but that the average Americans are not aware of. Americans have the right to know what its elected officials are doing on their behalf. Often times, in order to preserve its interests around the world, America goes against the democratic principles that this country was embedded on.

Since 9/11 the USA has engaged more than any nation on earth to combat terrorism domestically and overseas as well. As a free and democratic land, the USA has always defended and promoted democracy and human rights. Nevertheless, Gareau's (2010) analysis shows how Washington policies are contrary to democracy and human rights. The author has also demonstrated that American policies are driven by its interests and that these interests may be contrary to the principles of democracy and human rights. That why often times Washington has supported dictatorship regimes.

The US through his policies has shown strong support to the so called "State terrorists" and dictators around the world. Gareau (2010) provides examples from South and Central America, Asia to Africa where Washington has shown strong supports to State terrorists and dictatorship regimes. Unfortunately the ordinary American people are unaware of the policies carried out on their behalf. He argues that Americans deserve to know what the elected officials do on their behalf. They deserve to know the truth. In fact government actions of supporting State terrorists and dictators may likely be disapproved of by the American public that is why this government's actions are concealed. He posits that if given a chance the public may disapprove what is done on its behalf. The government of the USA needs to be held accountable for its policies around the world that make America be hated, considered evil and number one enemies not only of the Islam world but other countries as well. Gareau (2010) concludes that the main reason for hatred towards America and terrorism acts in the world and the Middle East are the bad policies that America is willing to implement. He believes that one way of stopping that is to decrease American support to Israel and encourage Israel to sign de Non-Proliferation treaties.

Equality, freedom of speech and human rights are the values upon which America was built. However, Washington foreign policies do not always reflect those values. American policies are driven by its interests and sometimes his actions are contrary to the values and principles upon which it was founded. Many cases of support to dictatorship regimes in Africa have led the African people to lose faith and trust in America. Horrible things have happened in countries like Congo and Angola because of The United States' foreign policies. For instance the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, the first legally elected prime minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), who was assassinated 54 years ago, on 17 January, 1961. This heinous crime was a culmination of two inter-related assassination plots by the American and Belgian governments, which used Congolese accomplices and a Belgian execution squad to carry out the deed (Nzongala-Ntalaja, 2011). According to Ludo De Witt, this assassination carried out by the United States was the "most important assassination of the 20th century" (para. 2). The assassination's historical importance lies in a multitude of factors; the most pertinent being the global context in which it took place, its impact on Congolese politics since then and Lumumba's overall legacy as a nationalist leader.

The assassination of Patrice Emery Lumbumba has haunted the imagination of young Congolese of all generations. We were told to never ask questions, and discussions were never allowed in schools. We never knew how this leader was assassinated and who ordered the murder. We would never know what direction the country would have taken if our leader had not been murdered by the American government. Today it is clear, and there is a lot of evidence, that shows that America ordered the murderer of the Congolese leader. Kettle (2000) wrote in the Guardian: "Forty years after the murder of the Congolese independence leader Patrice Lumumba, evidence has emerged in Washington that President Dwight Eisenhower directly ordered the CIA to 'eliminate' him" (para 1). He stressed that the evidence comes from a previously unpublished 1975 interview with the minute-taker at an August 1960 White House meeting of Eisenhower and his national security advisers on the Congo crisis. It turns out that Robert Johnson was the minute taker who, in his own words, said in the interview that he vividly recalled the president turning to Allen Dulles, director of the CIA, and saying "in the full hearing of all those in attendance, and saying something to the effect that Lumumba should be

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eliminated" (para. 3). Mr. Johnson recalled: "There was stunned silence for about 15 seconds and the meeting continued" (Kettle 2000, para. 4).Lumumba, the first prime minister of Congo after its independence from Belgium in June 1960, was forced from office as the country's civil war deepened and was captured by rivals. He was killed on January 17, 1961, becoming one of the key martyrs of the African independence struggle. Unfortunately no direct quotations were ever recorded at the national Security Council meetings, and Mr. Johnson only revealed the exchanges in 1975, when he was privately interviewed by staff of the Senate intelligence committees' post-Watergate inquiry into US covert action (Kettle, 2000). In order to alleviate the US responsibility in the murder of the Congolese leader, the committee concluded that the US was not involved in the murder, though it confirmed that the CIA had conspired to kill Lumumba, possibly on Eisenhower's orders. On the other hand, recent Belgian parliamentary inquiries into the murder implicated Belgium but failed to produce a direct US link. Nevertheless, the transcript of Mr. Johnson's interview has only come to light because it was included in material sent to the US national archives in connection with the assassination of President John F Kennedy (Kettle, 2000).

The effects of the US's disastrous policies go beyond the Middle East. Needless to say that in countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo many others in Africa pay the price of these bad policies which has been equally disastrous to what is taking place in the Middle East. Congo, though a rich country in natural resources, is counted as one of the poorest country on earth. For 32 years, mostly throughout the cold war, America, France, and Belgium put in place and supported a dictatorship in this country ignoring all the principles America stands for and upon which it was founded. After the dictator Mobutu's coup d'état which he carried out with the help of the American, he overthrew Lumumba the Prime Minister who was accused of being communism by the Western countries , he stayed in power for 34 years violating human rights, preventing the population's basic freedom of speech, religion, and democracy. Despite these mass violations of human rights the administration of Bush, Sr. showed its overwhelming support to the dictator Mobutu. Many who fought for democracy in the Congo where eliminated because of the strong support of the USA to the dictatorship.

> "Elevated to power with Western help, Mr. Mobutu in 26 years has amassed billions, including castles, palaces and luxurious estates in Europe. Meantime, the people of Zaire are poorer today than when the former Belgian Congo became independent in 1960 (New York Times, 1991, para. 2).

People in the Congo are impoverished, human rights are violated, free election is absent and there is no right to freely express. The administration of Bush, Sr. and many others supported Mobutu, who in their watch hung opposition leaders and violated human rights and committed different kind of abuses and left the country in extreme poverty and corruption.

Zaire's tragedy is America's embarrassment. Six successive Administrations have closed their eyes to Mr. Mobutu's kleptocracy and down played his brutality. Zaire has been viewed as "an element of stability" (New York Times, 1991, para. 4) in Africa, a vital bulwark against Communism. But with the end of the cold war, Mr. Mobutu lost his last shred of legitimacy (New York Times, 1991).

In the neighboring country of Angola, during the cold war Washington armed a rebellion to fight against a so called communist regime for twenty five years. Hundreds of thousands of people have been killed and human rights have been violated instead of making peace among the factions. Washington should change his policies in Africa and let it be driven by democratic principles rather than interests. Needless to say Mr. Mobutu was a cold war asset. He made himself useful to Washington by aiding a rebellion against a new Marxist regime in Angola. By the 1970's, Zaire was the biggest recipient of U.S. aid in sub-Saharan Africa (New York Times, 1991).

Washington needs to reconsider its foreign policy and align itself with the people who struggle and want a better life; like the kind of life the average people in America want to enjoy. There should be freedom of speech, respect of human rights, and help to build a society of opportunity for all. It is only in this way that they can build trust and restore the trust that has been lost.

With this regard, the Arab spring has forced the USA to side with the people of the Middle East in their pursuit of democracy and freedom. For instance, in Egypt, we have seen Washington provide support to Mubarak, the dictator. Moreover after decades of Washington support to the Mubarak regime which was basically violating human rights, killing and torturing opposition and suppressing freedom of speech, the regime has received billions of the American tax payers' money. The USA was forced to give up with their great friend and ally in the region and side with the people of Egypt because perhaps Washington interests have shifted. America should change its policies in the Middle East by increased development aid such as education, economy, and cooperation of different kinds. America should stop is support to Israel and demand that Israel play by the same rules as other nations in the Middle East. I am convinced that the path to winning the war on terror passes through the two states solution between Israel and Palestine.

With respect to its foreign policy in Africa and particularly to the Congo, America has a chance to make it right. The USA has a chance to rewrite history in

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the Congo-Zaire. One of the way is to side with ordinary people of the Congo-Zaire who want their Democracy to be strengthened, their constitution to be respected; but the current dictatorial regime is not showing any sign of respecting the constitution but to the contrary is willing to incorporate an entity into power unconstitutionally. Will Barack Obama make a difference and avoid the mistakes made by six American administrations; administrations that led to the assassination of Patrice Emery Lumumba and Laurent Desire Kabila and installed Joseph Kabila in power? American foreign policies strengthen the dictatorship of Mobutu which led to the impoverishment of the Congolese people which continue to haunt the imagination of the Congolese people.

Terrorism is the global threat of the 21st century. America more than ever is committed to combat terrorism domestically and abroad. However, some of the foreign policies that Washington has put in place around the world are bad. It does not reduce terrorism but rather it escalates it. According to Gareau (2010), American policies in the Middle East are the root causes of terrorism.

Among these roots causes of terrorism in the Middle East and the world, Gareau (2010) has cited the American support of "State terrorism" and particularly Israel, historical diplomatic, economic and military support. In order to diminish terrorism he has suggested that Washington change its policy in the Middle East and around the world. One of the ways of doing that is to stop its support to Israel and to convince Israel to sign a Non-proliferation treaty.

In addition my analysis has not only examined American policies in the Middle East but also the consequences of such policies around the world and precisely in Africa where America has not behaved according to the principles of the founding fathers. America has shown reckless behavior in defending human rights violators and dictators in order to secure its interests. And often times the average person is never made aware of the atrocities that the Washington elite commit on the behalf of the people who have elected them.

I have also expanded my analysis of American policies in Africa and have compared them to what is taking place in the Middle East; American foreign policies to Africa, to some, have been equally as bad as in the Middle East. In other words, Washington has supported dictators around the world and particularly in Africa. The principles upon which America was built are not respected when it comes to foreign policies. Policies are driven by interests and not values and principles.

With a growing of hatred, acts of violence and terrorism, American policies are tested more than ever and need to be readapted in order to align with the new realties and geopolitics of the current world. It is true that the new challenges that face America are terrorism and Iran nuclear ambitions. America needs to change its policies if it wants to continue to be the leader of the world and to win the war on terrorism. Iranian nuclear ambitions, the war in Syria, the Arab spring, the conflict Israeli-Palestine, bring into question Washington leadership in the Middle East and around the world. America needs to change its foreign policies if it wants to reduce terrorism in the Middle East and lead the world in years to come. Those policies should be grounded in the values and principles upon which America was created.

IV. Jihadists Strategy and Methods

The Jihadists use history and geopolitics in the Middle East as a tool of propaganda and attraction in recruiting more and more people in their organization. They also use occurrences from the past, the history as a toll of propaganda to justify the reasons why there should be a war against the West; the latter's occupation throughout the history as a justification of why they should be retaliation. Jihadists think that the Muslim identity should be preserved and protected against the threat of the West; the Arab character should be reshaped. Islam can find strengths in the past history of how the prophet, how the Orientals fought the infidels and converted the infidels into to the Muslim faith. Finally Jihadists use the war in Iraq and Afghanistan as a tool of propaganda and way to attract and recruit many people around the world to their cause.

V. Jihadists View on Colonialism, Globalization, the United Nations and Democracy

The Jihadists believed that there is a culture of colonialism in the world led by western countries such as Britain, French and the USA. This culture has been carried out in the Middle East and has contributed to the division of the Ottoman Turks that were promised independence which was never achieved. Whether during in the 19th century, World War I and II and in the aftermath of the World War II, the independence promised by the colonialists has never been earned; the colonialism never really left. Even today, the old colonialism has been replaced by the "veiled" colonialism. In other ways, new forms of colonialism, "veiled colonialism" has taken form. These are indirect forms of colonialism. Western countries and America in particular tend to colonize the Muslim world through veiled or new forms of colonization such as globalization and democracy.

The Jihadists see globalization as a tool of the Zionist/American hegemony. Globalization whether economic, political, or educational, is used as a tool of the American hegemony in the world. Regarding nationalism, Jihadists believe that the concept of the nation-state was imported to the Middle East by the

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western colonialists; they evolve out of feudal structures such as monarchies. The nation states were based on arbitrary boundaries; Arab boundaries were created with the ideas of cities linking Damascus to Cairo.

The Jihadists mistrust the UN as much as they do the western countries. Moreover, the experience of the UN with the establishment of Israel, the refugee assistance organizations for the Palestinians, the peacekeepers and the observer/monitors who have sought to stabilize the region have led the Jihadists to mistrust this international organization.

VI. Critique on the Jihadist World View of the Conflict

According to Aaron (2008) there is a difference between Islam and the Jihadists whose worldview and perception of the conflict is not always shared by the entire Muslim community. There is also a distinction to be made between Muslim jihadists and terrorists, and Muslims in general. The distinction is important in order to get a better sense of the current global political picture seen not only by jihadists and terrorists, but also those in developing countries who oppose the current imbalance of superpowers "caused by the fall of the Soviet Union." Their analysis and understanding of the western world is biased but somehow tackle deep issues that need to be addressed if at least the world wants to avoid the clash of civilizations between the West and the Muslim world but also the third world. The Jihadist world view has been shaped by history, memory and experience of colonization and creation of the Israeli state leaving Palestinians without their own state. The British, French and Americans are seen as enemies of Islam; they are seen as promoters of colonialism and as countries that are willing by any means including democracy, globalization and development to destroy Muslim civilization. In their minds Jihadists considered western countries, especially the USA as an enemy; as evil.

I understand somehow the frustration of many Muslims, the Jihadists in particular, as to where this world view may come from but I personally disagree with the tactics of violence and suicide bombing they use to cause harm and create fear among innocent people. Any acts of violence need to be condemned and I believe each side should understand what is at stake: not every Muslim is Jihadists or terrorist. Jihadists only cite the holy texts as means of justification of their acts of terrorism and interpret it in their own ways in order to influence and recruit others to enhance their agenda. Many scholars are seeing the Arab Spring as a chance to slow and reduce terrorism and Jihadists. Many Muslims around the world have been inspired by the Arab spring and more are aspiring to universal rights and human rights such as the rights to life, freedom and religion. These rights are moral and natural; they are universally moral. They are the basis and the essence of human rights.

The Arab Spring has demonstrated that the only way to combat terrorism is to help the Arab country to be more democratic; help them have access to development by the economic assistance through education program. The US approach to combat terrorism in Afghanistan and in the world has changed. There has been a shift from utilizing militaristic solution alone to utilizing more economic and development approaches. In order to win the war in terror, the UN has been providing assistance to government and civilians through offering of economic assistance and improving the educational system; along with food assistance these methods will pay off in the long run. People will begin to see in America – I mean ordinary people will not only see these colonialists as people who have invaded their countries but also as people who care about them and want them to live a better life. These kinds of action could contrast with what the jihadists are preaching out there to ordinary people in order to recruit them. I will suggest that there should be less military presence in the Middle East and an increase of economic assistance in order to achieve a sustainable development in that part of the world. If this happens, we may start seeing a decrease in terms of acts of violence or terror in Afghanistan, Yemen, Iraq, and Pakistan. Of course one may challenge my reasoning and argue that the religious component is very important in shaping the view of jihadists and terrorists and is part of their cultural identity.

Opponents of my argumentation may posit that despite a sustainable economy and development, the jihadist's perception and world view of the western countries may not change, but may certainly start a dialogue and a discussion between the West and the Middle East especially the young generation of Muslims in this globalization era. This argument may be true but at least what I suggest may contribute to the lessening of violence and acts of terror as well as the recruitment of new jihadists. People, especially the youth, will be more interested in having better jobs and securing their future by having a better education.

VII. Conclusion

Living for twelve years in America has changed my perception of the American people. What the citizens of this country want is not necessarily translated to the policies that are put in place by the elites in Washington. My own experience of living in the Congo and my view of the American people have changed dramatically as I come to understand that the average American is mostly unaware of the decisions made on their behalf on many issues and policies but foremost on foreign policy. The decisions to go to war or to invade a country or to support dictators around the world which are driven by

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the American interests around the world are not well known by its people. The American people need to become more aware; they should be consulted with; and they should have more direct say on issues of foreign policy. Decisions should not be made only through representatives who sometimes have their own agenda. There is a need to find a way to involve ordinary people to the decisions that congress and the administration make on their behalf and close the gap that exists.

This paper analyzed the Jihadists mindset, perceptions and views on the conflict opposing the West and the Arab world. This paper perceived this war to be cultural, religious, ideological and economical between western countries and the Middle East. This perception, although distorted, is important for a deep understanding of the attitudes, motives and behavior patterns of the Jihadists. The understanding of the perception of the conflict between the West and the Middle East was important in the prospect of reducing acts of violence and terror and building peace between the West and the Middle East. The war on terror will not be won by military solution alone. This paper points to the needs of shifting the American foreign policy to a more sustainable community building and development approach. This approach taken in Afghanistan and Iraq has the advantage of illuminating another side of the West where people can start to see the other party not only as an invader but as a true partner who is willing to help in development projects such as housing, food, education, and healthcare.

With the rise of the Arab spring in the Muslim world, the young generation and ordinary Muslims are aspiring more and more in democracy, liberty and freedom. This may be an opportunity to weaken terrorism and Jihadists movement in the Middle East by helping these countries in their quest for human rights, democracy and liberty. One could be Jihadists and not be terrorists. However terrorists define themselves as Jihadists. Clearly, Jihadists tap into the feelings and the emotions of the Muslims; popular feelings such as all Arabs and all Muslims are one nation. They use religion as a propaganda tool to enhance their ideology of Jihadist, and they use terrorism to inflict pain and create emotional, psychological and physical pain to those they call infidels. They view the United Nations as a western instrument of Muslim world colonization. Moreover democracy and liberty are tools to control countries and impose its hegemony; and the most effective tool is the World Trade.

This paper also analyzed the US foreign policy in the Middle East, Africa and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This paper concluded that many of the tensions and negative attitudes of foreign countries towards the USA are due to its bad policies in those countries. The USA needs to shift its foreign policies to become more interest centered and country building based. The war on terror, if any, will not be won by military solution only. It needs to be a country-building based solution that needs to be combined with military solutions in order to win the war on terror. This integration of solutions may reduce hatred, resentment and negative feelings towards the Americans. The current administration has the chance to learn from the past mistakes and rewrite history.

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