

Political Islam and Human Security

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Edited by

Fethi Mansouri and Shahram Akbarzadeh



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**Part I: Islamists and
Muslim Diaspora in
the West Post 9/11**

CHAPTER ONE

ISLAMISM AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN THE NEW WORLD ORDER

FETHI MANSOURI & SHAHRAM
AKBARZADEH

This book is concerned with political ideologies inspired by, and framed within, Islamic ideas and concepts. It focuses specifically on the violent manifestations of these ideologies and movements within their indigenous national locales, but also in light of their increasing adversarial encounters with the West. However, it would be a mistake to equate recent debates within the Muslim world with one set of ideological ideas, be they modernist, traditionalist or radical conservative. Indeed, Islamic exposés on modernity and reform have been dominant themes in Islamic scholarship since the first quarter of the nineteenth century¹.

However, in recent years and in particular following the terrorist attacks of September 11, international debates about Islam have been dominated by security concerns, threats of terrorism and rising levels of xenophobic attitudes towards Muslims as culturally ‘othered’ individuals, and societies. In this context, a number of key concepts increasingly shape public debate across the Muslim world and beyond. These concepts, many of which are ill-conceived and grossly misunderstood, pertain to ‘Islamism, terrorism and reform’². In an increasingly inter-connected world, Islam has become synonymous in the minds of many with political upheavals, security risks and indiscriminate violence. The current climate of security-driven politics reinforce the perception that Islam is destined to remain associated with these negative labels for some decades to come. This is, in fact, because the political instability associated with parts of the Islamic world is also reflected in a glaring lack of genuine political reforms in most Muslim states.

Yet, the situation has not always been this bleak. Since the mid 19th century Muslim thinkers and scholars have been trying to create an Islamic democratic society in which Islamic principals and modernisation can go hand in hand. There is, however, still a long way to go, as an unlikely ‘coalition’ of religious traditionalists *and* authoritarian secular leaders are resisting change.

The process of democratisation itself has long been resisted by ruling elites in the Muslim world, and, until recently, has not been encouraged by the West. Ironically, the ambitious US project of exporting liberal democracy to the Muslim world has provided many of the Islamist organizations - which tend to be the best organised and arguably with the largest support base- with a legitimate avenue via the ballot box to political power.

Undoubtedly, the salience of Islam in contemporary world politics has increased dramatically over the last decade, a development that has had major impact on domestic politics in the Muslim world, as well as Western states with significant Muslim populations. Political Islam - also referred to interchangeably as Islamic fundamentalism, radical Islamic, Islamism and Islamic revivalism- has in recent years caught the attention of policy makers, media commentators and academic researchers alike. Political Islam has become increasingly synonymous with instability, conflict and violence in both Muslim states, and some Western societies. This salience, though intensified in the last few years, is in fact the product of developments that go back more than 25 years when the Islamic revolution in Iran declared one of its key objectives the export of political Islam to other Muslim states in the region and beyond. Indeed, 'Islamism fuelled Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution and the current "Islamization" campaign in Pakistan and Sudan. It contributed to the turmoil in Lebanon and the exit of the Israeli army from that country in May 2000, chased the well-equipped Soviets from Afghanistan, was responsible for the assassination of Egypt's Anwar al-Sadat, and has been an essential factor in the continuing Arab-Israeli dispute'³. Against this background, little wonder that the events of September 11 have catapulted a new discursive paranoia about political Islam to almost unprecedented levels. The unfortunate legacy of this media focus is the emergence of new discourse on Islam and political Islam that tends to conflate the two, and in many cases confuse the many 'forms of Islamism [that] run the gamut from moderate and modernist to reactionary and revolutionary'⁴.

As a way of steering away from this methodological minefield, it is sufficient to note here at the outset of this book that there are significant differences between various religious groups and ideologies across the Muslim world, with regard to two key functions: (a) whether they pursue a political agenda, in which case they are commonly labelled 'Islamist' groups; or whether they are in pursuit of religious rather than political objectives and as such can be described as 'Islamic'. The plethora of ideologies and diverse tendencies characterises both streams. However, the chapters in this book are concerned with political 'Islam' and its many associated groups and ideologies. In an increasingly interdependent international political and economic order, it is critically important to understand the historical contexts and current social

cleavages that facilitate the emergence of Islamist political ideologies in their various manifestations.

This is because the current tension that dominates Western-Muslim encounters is predominantly political rather than theological. The common religious features between Islam and the other monotheistic religions extend to commitment to social justice, equality and the sanctity of life⁵. It is at the political level that the tension is most apparent, with a history of direct colonialism, indirect economic dominion and, more recently, a neo-colonial strategic hegemony that is perceived in the Muslim world as the main cause of the political disorder and economic stagnation that prevails across the region.

The emerging post-Cold War order has seen Islam gradually painted - in some quarters at least - as the new menace to Western societies and the source of immediate threat to its liberal democracies and secular cultures. This post 1991 order was shocked by the events of September 11 that brought the psychological devastation of terrorism and violence to the American backyard. September 11 invoked a considerable backlash against Muslims living in the Muslim world, but also against Muslim Diasporas in the West⁶. The nature and scale of the terrorist act itself sparked outrage, horror and intense shock throughout the world. Understandably, the Western world, and in particular the US, felt the impact of the tragedy profoundly, despite the fact that spasmodic terrorist acts had been initiated against US interests, as no attack of this magnitude had ever been orchestrated by terrorists on American soil.

What these tragic events revealed was that there was a lack of understanding by many policy makers and analysts in the West of why an event like this would occur in America. Political leaders quickly pointed the finger of blame at somebody or something that had an inherent dislike for what the US, and by extension the West, stood for. When Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda emerged as the principal culprit, the responses emanating from Western conservative circles tended to paint Islam - the ideological system- as equally culpable for the terrorist attacks.

9/11 followed a series of terrorist activities over a number of decades in which Islam had been portrayed as a threat to the 'free world'. This event cemented some Western leaders', and the Western mass media positioning of Islam as a homogeneous entity that incites primordial anti-Western violence: 'Perhaps more clearly than through any event in the past, Islam was seen as providing a rationale for mass murder and terrorism, emphasised by bin Laden's rhetoric.'⁷

Certain sections within the (conservative) Western media and other sources of anti-Islamic discourse pointed to bin Laden's anti-Western statements and the expressions of joy at the events on the streets of Palestine as 'evidence' that Islam was a bloodthirsty, primitive religion that promoted terrorist

activities.⁸ Moreover, the element of surprise caused instant insecurity and paranoia throughout the Western world, which previously had been complacent about its perceived isolation from widespread violent conflicts. Compounded by the fact that some of the 9/11 terrorists had previously operated in the US through migration networks, hysterical and panicked sections of the public in Western nations – prompted by some sections of the media and conservative governments – looked at their fellow citizens, and also at asylum seekers - whether Arab, Muslim or both - as followers of a violent, conflictual religion, potential terrorists and untrustworthy individuals.⁹

The discursive construction of Islam and Muslims

The public and political discourse emanating from a number of Western countries - in particular the USA- in relation to regional conflicts gave rise to a problematic and at times populist association of Islam with ‘extremism, intolerance and violence.’¹⁰ Such events include the Iranian revolution of 1979, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Gulf War of 1990-91, and terrorist activities undertaken around the world, committed in the name of Islam, for example in the Middle East, the Philippines and Indonesia.¹¹ As such, any perceived causal relationship between Islam and Arabs on the one hand, and political violence and oppression on the other, has not been constructed solely as a result of the events of September 11. Indeed,

Anti-Arab racism in the West has a long genealogy. One of the most important aspects of its formation is that it is intricately related to the genealogy of anti-Muslim sentiments. In both the academic orientalist tradition analysed by Edward Said, and the dominant popular Western racist imaginary the boundaries between being an Arab and being a Muslim is greatly blurred.¹²

Certainly such a negative and essentialist discourse has been heightened in the aftermath of the recent terrorists attacks, though it must be emphasized that it is by no means a new addition to the continuum of Western discourse on Islam and the Arabs. In fact, ‘malicious generalizations about Islam have become the last acceptable form of denigration of foreign culture in the West.’¹³ The ‘clash of civilizations’ thesis epitomized by Samuel P. Huntington, portrays Islam as a ‘single, coherent entity’, which is forever and inevitably on a path towards violent conflict with ‘the West’.¹⁴ Huntington writes:

So long as Islam remains Islam (which it will) and the West remains the West (which is more dubious), this fundamental conflict between two great civilizations and ways of life will continue to define their relations to the future even as it has defined them for the past fourteen centuries.¹⁵

Such sweeping and hostile generalizations deny Islam its diversity in terms of character, practices and beliefs, and present Muslims as having intrinsic natures that are best discussed pejoratively.¹⁶ This has had dangerous consequences for inciting hatred and distrust towards Muslims:

The deliberately created associations between Islam and fundamentalism ensure that the average reader comes to see Islam and fundamentalism as essentially the same thing. Given the tendency to reduce Islam to a handful of rules, stereotypes, and generalizations about the faith, its founder, and all of its people, then the reinforcement of every negative fact associated with Islam – its violence, primitiveness, atavism, threatening qualities – is perpetuated.¹⁷

Well before 9/11, the Western imaginary constructed an Islamic totality that was associated with violence, oppression and terror. The social and psychological impacts of recent events on Islam and Muslims, therefore, must be understood as a product of a long history of misunderstanding and antagonism towards Islam in many sections of Western society.

Scope and Themes of this Book

The book considers the policies toward Islam and Muslims adopted by major international players, particularly in the context of regional and civil conflicts. In addressing these issues, the book explores a set of pressing challenges in the wake of September 11 and subsequent terrorist attacks. Acts of violence by extremist groups and the war on terror have added fresh uncertainties to an already complex global order and heightened a widely felt sense of insecurity in the West and the Muslim world alike. Just as terrorist activities and counter-terrorism are locked in a mutually reinforcing symbiosis, the sense of insecurity felt by Muslims and non-Muslims is mutually dependent and has the potential to escalate. This general assessment holds true for Muslims living in Muslim-majority states as for those living in the West.

This book is structured around three main sections dealing with pertaining to (i) Islamists and Muslim Diaspora in the West post 9/11; (ii) Islamists and political violence in Indonesia; and (iii) political Islam in the Middle East and Central Asia.

Islamists and Muslim Diaspora in the West post 9/11

The new world order that has been discussed in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 has provided the platform for a new global agenda. As Brasted argues in chapter two, this new global agenda has implications for Western states especially the USA but more critically it has serious implications

for Islam, Muslims and the Middle East. Against the background of the dramatic collapse of the communist rival the USA declared a new agenda for a “new world order” based on a system of international relations governed by “the rule of law, not the law of the jungle”¹⁸. This rather optimistic reading of the world system post communism was to be shocked by a number of conflicts and terrorist acts that called Fukuyama’s end of history hypothesis into question¹⁹. As Brasted contends ‘neither “fundamentalist” Islam’s attack on the World Trade Centre in 2001 nor the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 were sufficient to persuade Fukuyama that “democracy and free markets” could be “derailed” as the “dominant organising principles” of the 21st century.’²⁰ Yet the ongoing instability in Afghanistan and the political mess and security conundrum in Iraq provide mounting evidence that hard power alone cannot bring about pre-conceived political outcomes in societies where cultural specificities and religious affiliations still play a major role in shaping individual value orientations as well as collective modes of social organisation.

Walker in chapter three introduces the notion of survivalist anxiety as a belief or fear that one’s own society might be swept aside by hostile outsiders. Within the context of the ‘war against terror’ this anxiety has taken on the character of a struggle for survival with militant Islam in the role of the outsider. As Walker argues, for much of Australia’s European history, an Islamic threat was at most latent, whereas an ‘Asian’ threat was more likely to be regarded as manifest. Most would now accept that these positions have been reversed. Historically, from the late nineteenth century, resurgent ‘Asia’ was considered more of a threat to ‘empty’ Australia than was the case with Islam and its adherents. While Islam was often viewed negatively as a backward religion given to fanaticism, Islam and its Muslim adherents appeared to have fallen into such a state of decay that no organised threat from them seemed possible. Contrary to the hysterical paranoia that followed September 11, Islam and the Muslim world at the time of Federation (1901) seemed incapable of sustaining a new challenge to the West. But irrespective of the identity and location of the enemy, survivalist narratives invariably serve several purposes as they invite an examination of one’s own society, its strengths, limitations and propensity to decline.

This negative depiction of Islam and Muslims and their association with a discourse of external threat, has persisted over time. The lack of appreciation of the local specificities of Muslim societies and the heterogenous nature of Islamic cultures is leading many in the West to conflate Islam with Islamist politics and by extension terrorism as Marshallsay argues in chapter four, this state of confused affairs is the by-product of many factors not least the selective interpretation of the Quran and other sources of Islamic law (Sharia) by Islamists. Marshallsay shows part of the reason why ‘Islam the religion has

been closely linked with acts of terrorism by particular militant Islamic groups' is that 'major concepts in traditional Islamic doctrines and history...have been utilized as the justification and rationale for the activities of militant Muslim activists'. This selective literal interpretation of the scripture resulted in transforming 'Islam's norms and values about good governance, social justice and the requirements to defend Islam, into a call for arms'.

Dealing with the increasingly complex issue of financing terrorist activities and organisations, McCulloch in chapter five discusses the financing of terrorism and the measures that have been enacted in the post 9/11 context to combat it. Situated within an Australian context, McCulloch argues that combating of financing of terrorism measures, consistent with other counter-terrorist measures, are aimed at intervening in terrorist activity before it occurs. She examines the implications of this pre-emptive framework for the criminal justice system, communities and individuals and argues that the measures are likely to have a significant impact on civil liberties. Additionally, because the pre-emptive framework inevitably employs race and religion as proxies for risk, these impacts will fall particularly heavily on those communities that are constructed as 'suspect communities' in the 'war on terror'. McCulloch goes on to show that the combating of financing of terrorism measures in particular and the 'war on terror' more generally, produce conditions favorable to the progress of neo-liberal globalization but are counter productive in producing conditions favorable to security.

The Australian experience with counter terrorism measures and its media coverage is further explored by Lentini in chapter six which examines the press coverage of two Australian 'rogue reverts' David Hicks and Jack Roche—the former accused of being an Islamist terrorist,²¹ the latter convicted as one. Lentini questions whether the media have generated moral panics around these two converts to Islam represented as being marginal and disempowered individuals within society, whom the elites construct as 'folk devils'. Elite groups tend to use moral panics to initiate social change or resist changes to the status quo.²² The core argument in Lentini's chapter is that ultimately human security can be adversely affected by how the media report and represent groups and events. Such representations can have a substantial impact on notions of human security. This is because unlike national security which concentrates on protecting the nation state, 'human security protects individuals from harm, ranging from threats including economic insecurity, disease and "threats to human dignity."' ²³ Lentini argues that as such media representations are inherently important to human security.

Baxter, in chapter seven, focuses on al-Muhajiroun in Britain as an émigré Islamist group well anchored within the ideology of Islamism whilst clearly situated within the melting pot of multicultural British society. Baxter

discusses the groups' so-called "covenant of security" and its links to scriptural Islamic theology. Through this exploration of contemporary socio-political experiences and the utilization or manipulation of Islamic doctrine Baxter shed light on the experience of one marginal organization committed to following the Islamist perspective from within the West. As Baxter argues, al-Muhajiroun's attempt to navigate the challenges in propagating an Islamist perspective while residing in a Western nation-state. Al-Muhajiroun's "covenant of security" constitutes the organization's clearest attempt to engage with the inherent difficulties in this objective. While al-Muhajiroun revealed its "covenant of security" in response to sustained media and political pressure, the concept was loosely linked to Islamic theological and historical experiences. Similar to the experience of other Islamist organizations, al-Muhajiroun emphasised and interpreted Islamic theology and tradition to legitimize its position.

Islamists and political violence in Indonesia

Within the context of the Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, or GAM), Kingsbury in chapter eight addresses the wider issues raised by political Islam in relation to civil society, state and democracy. Kingsbury focuses in particular on perceptions of Islam that are held by key representative members of GAM most of whom GAM happen to be devout Sunni Muslims, a situation that lead observers to classify GAM as Islamic organization. Kingsbury discusses the Helsinki peace process which ended GAM's conflict with Indonesia and suggests that during the negotiations, GAM was able to reinvent itself as a political party with Islamic and democratic values underpinning its platform. This is further evidenced in Aceh's forthcoming local elections (for the governorship and other administrative posts) which demonstrate that the democratic orientations of GAM are not just procedural but substantive as they are taking root within the organization itself.

Similarly, Barton in chapter nine attempts to locate and describe Turkey's Gulen movement in an historical and national context comparing it with the mass-based Indonesian organizations of Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama. Barton addresses the big question of whether Islamic thought and Islamic social movements can be truly modern. Implied in this question is the narrower issue of whether Islam and liberal democracy are compatible. The diversity of Islamist political movements and the globalised nature of political Islam means that the cases discussed above in Kingsbury and Barton are by no means an indication that the trend among Islamist political activism is predominantly liberal and democratic.

Political Islam in the Middle East and Central Asia

The last few years have witnessed a dramatic rise in Islamist political activities across the Middle East and Central Asia. This rise has been encapsulated by the electoral success of Islamist parties in the Palestinian Occupied Territories and Turkey as well as the wave of political transformations across a number of Central Asian republics. While many of these resurgent Islamist groups might have genuine reformist agendas, the situation is by no means unequivocal that most recent manifestations of political Islam are driven by pro-democratic pulses.

In fact, as Sankari shows in chapter ten the *Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami* (Islamic Liberation party) has been consistently radical in its goals and agenda, calling for the transformation of the political status quo across the region. The party's main political goals are to restructure polities, societies, and economies in various Muslim countries in conformity with its Islamist political vision that envisions Islam as a unique and comprehensive way of life, with a global mission encapsulating a coherent ideology, law and creed. Sankari argues that while *Hizb ut-Tahrir* is a radical antidemocratic party, there is no solid or incontrovertible evidence that the party has or is currently engaging in or planning violent activities.²⁴ This is precisely the dilemma of Western governments who promote democratic reforms in the Middle East and across the Muslim world but who do not necessarily rejoice when such political process yield an Islamist government that is essentially conservative in its social and political outlook.

A good case in point is the 1991 elections in Algeria when the Islamist party *Front Islamique du Salut*, (FIS) was set to win the legislative elections only for the government to abandon the vote with the West's blessing. MacQueen in chapter eleven goes a step further to show that there is a renewed intensification in relations between Algiers and Washington due to the newfound common security interests. Before the events of September 11, the US approach consisted of tacit support of the military-backed Algerian government's confrontation with the Islamists. This reluctance to openly support the military-backed regime in Algeria was a reflection of a number of factors most notably the implication of elements of the regime in the violence that engulfed Algeria since 1991, the stalling democratic process and the ailing Algerian economy. However, in the wake of September 11 this tacit support has been transformed to a more open backing for Algeria and the broader North Africa region as America widens its so-called "war on terror". By doing so, the Algerian government has effectively linked its international legitimacy to the new direction in American foreign policy. This new alliance has enabled states such as Algeria to resist pressure for political reform while increasing the reach of its oppressive security apparatus.

Nourzhanov in chapter twelve discusses the factors behind the dramatic leadership changes in the former Soviet Union (FSU) and the impact such ‘revolutions’ might have on human security, particularly in liminal societies caught between tradition and post-Soviet modernity. Taking the Muslim republics of Central Asia as case studies, these questions pertaining to political reform acquire an extra dimension represented by the increasingly visibility of political Islam. The core discourse of these political movements emphasize the message of equality, welfare, and social justice which resonate strongly in an atmosphere of ubiquitous authoritarianism and impoverishment across the region. This undemocratic situation allowed Islamists in Central Asia to move from the margins to the core of the political process. As Nourzhanov ponders, the question will remain whether groups such as *Hizb ut-Tahrir* and the Islamic Movement of Turkistan become less radical should the incumbent authoritarian presidents lose their grip on power. The transformation to a more democratic political system may well take the edge off Islamic militancy by opening new channels of non-confrontational engagement between state and society which could in turn weaken the populist base of the Islamist appeal. The risk, however, is that Islamist leaders would ‘use the uncertainty of a transition period to escalate their demands and shore up their positions, especially if leadership change does not lead to a rapid and dramatic improvement of governance’.

The association of Islamists ideologies with political violence and terrorism is perhaps best illustrated through the coverage of Palestinian struggle against occupation since the Al-Aqsa Intifada started in 2000. This coverage, unfortunately, tends to underestimate the multifaceted nature of political violence and the many strategic as well as political objectives it may serve for different groups. As Cheong shows in chapter thirteen, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) use of suicide attacks against Israel has served instrumental rather than religious objectives. In Cheong’s view, apart from its immediate goal of resisting Israeli occupation, the PIJ’s attacks have been used to demonstrate the movement’s operational capabilities, and its capacity to affect change in the political process. The religious considerations in this context play a secondary role to these strategic and political imperatives. Violence, therefore, is pursued not only as a resistance mechanism but also as a means to distinguish the PIJ from secular rivals. The religious language within suicide bombings are dressed serve to emphasise the movement’s Islamic credentials, which in turn assist in the recruitment process.

Conclusion

As the various contributions to this volume show, the relationship between Islam the religion, and Islamism the political ideology cannot be reduced to whatever discursive pronouncements certain individuals might articulate. Indeed, it has been argued²⁵ that the problem of the current impasse is not the theological content of Islam, ‘but the way believers refer to this corpus to adapt and explain their behaviours in a context where religion has lost its social authority’.

The current debate about Islamist movements and their conservative agendas seems to perpetuate the historical mistake of overgeneralisation and reductionism in dealing with Islam and the Muslim world. During the eighties and early nineties the ideologies and political activism of Islamist parties that emerged in Algeria, Turkey, Egypt and Palestine and other Muslim countries have tended to be framed within confrontational political agendas. In some cases, there was even an insistence by these groups on an Islamic view (worldview some might argue) that placed priority on the application of Islamic law (*sharia*) across the Muslim nation (*ummah*)²⁶. This conceptual framework that dominated Islamist political discourses for decades has recently been replaced with a more tempered stance where participation in the mainstream political process is high on the agenda. Ironically, the recent successes of Islamist parties in Lebanon, Palestine, Turkey and parts of Southeast Asia and Central Asia have provided additional evidence that fundamentalist Islamism has given way to a more pragmatic form of political ideology able and ready to engage in Realpolitik.

The current debate within Islamic groups is largely driven by a contest over how existing ideological parameters can be negotiated to connect Islam and Muslims to the increasingly globalised world system. The great majority of groups within both conservative and liberal Islamism emphasise the need for engaging with existing political frameworks that have dominated post-colonial Islamic states for decades. It is only for radicalised conservative groups such as Afghanistan’s Taliban that the possibility of *jihadi* militancy against local governments and their international backers becomes a likely threat.

Ultimately, one of the objectives of this book is to engage with a complementary, if at times conflicting, set of ideas and concepts about political Islam and its various protagonists. The chapters included in this volume reveal a truly heterogeneous system of political thought and action, one that renders lazy attempts at generalisations all the more derisory. It is unfortunate that most recent encounters between Islam and the West have tended to be limited to the confines of a small number of groups and movements that adhere to anti-modernist strands within the broader Islamic system of political and social ideas. While a discussion on the root causes of ideology construction is beyond the

scope of this book, it is hoped that a more nuanced understanding of the specific local contexts within which certain ideologies and movements emerge will ultimately provide a sound empirical platform for more measured rhetoric.

¹ Maaddel, M and K. Talattof (2002), 'Contemporary debates in Islam', in Moaddel, M and K. Talattof (eds), *Modernist and Fundamentalist Debates in Islam – A Reader*, Palgrave MacMillan: England, p1..

² International Crisis Group (ICG), 'Islamism in North Africa: the Legacies of History'. Middle East and North Africa Briefing, 2004, Cairo/Brussels.

³ Husain, M.Z. (2003), 'Global Islamic Politics'. Longman: New York, p.vii.

⁴ Ibid, p.vii.

⁵ See A. Saikal, (2003), 'Islam and the West: Challenges and Opportunities' in V. Hooker and A. Saikal (eds), *Islamic Perspectives on the New Millennium*. Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore.

⁶ See, for example, Chomsky's two short books *September 11*. USA/Australia: Allen & Unwin, 2001 and *Power and Terror: Post-9/11 Talks and Interviews*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003 for more discussion on this.

⁷ A. Saeed (2003), '*Islam in Australia*'. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, p.186.

⁸ G. Hage, (2002) 'Postscript: Arab-Australian belonging,' *Australians Today: Citizenship and Belonging*, edited by G Hage, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, p.243.

⁹ Hage, Ibid, p.243

¹⁰ Saeed, *Islam in Australia*, 184.

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ray Jureidini and Ghassan Hage (2002), 'The Australian Arabic Council: anti-racist activism.' In *Arab-Australians Today: Citizenship and Belonging*, edited by G. Hage, 173-191. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, p.173.

¹³ Edward W. Said (1997), *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World*. London: Vintage Books, p.xii.

¹⁴ Said, *Covering Islam*, in particular see xvi.

¹⁵ Samuel P. Huntington (2002), *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*. London: Simon & Schuster, p. 212.

¹⁶ Said, *Covering Islam*, see in particular xi – xxii.

¹⁷ Said, *Covering Islam*, xvi.

¹⁸ George H.W.Bush, "Address before Joint Session of Congress", September. 11, 1990, "Address to the Nation on the Invasion of Iraq", January 16, 1991, and "Address to Joint Session of Congress on End of Gulf War", March 6, 1991. Accessed from Miller Center of Public Affairs Archive [hereafter MCPAA]: <http://www.millercenter.virginia.edu/snippets/digilibary/prezspeeches/ghbush/index.html>

¹⁹ Francis Fukuyama "The End of History?" Summer (1989): 3-18; and *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992).

²⁰ Fukuyama, "we remain at the end of history", *The Independent*, October 11, 2001.

²¹ Islam is the faith revealed to the Prophet Muhammad in the 7th Century CE. Islamism refers to implementing '...Islam in a comprehensive manner with particular emphasis on actualizing its ideals in the socio-political sphere.' Farid Esack, *Qur'an, Liberation,*

Pluralism, p. xi. Not all forms of Islamism are violent. It encompasses 'activists' who seek socio-political change through the ballot box and civil society, 'militants' who advocate non-violent overthrow of existing political systems, as well as 'terrorists' who employ political violence against innocent civilians and non-combatants in order to achieve Islamist objectives David Wright-Neville, 'Dangerous Dynamics: Activists, Militants, and Terrorists in Southeast Asia'.

²² On these matters see Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers*; Goode and Ben-Yahuda, *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance*; Thompson, *Moral Panics*.

²³ Human Security Centre, *The Human Security Report 2005: War and Peace in the 21st Century*, p. viii.

²⁴ M. as-Sa 'aadi, "Al-'Unfu as-Siyyasi fil-Harakat al-Islamiyyeh al-Mu'asirah," *Al-Fikr al-Islami*, 16, 1 (1987): pp. 29-30

²⁵ O. Roy (2002), 'Globalised Islam: the search for a new ummah'. Hurst & Company: London, pix.

²⁶ *Ibid*, p.1

CHAPTER TWO

A NEW WORLD DISORDER IN THE MAKING? AN HISTORICAL ASSESSMENT

HOWARD BRASTED

If seven days is said to be a long time in politics, fifteen years must constitute an eternity in international relations. This is a period beginning in 1991 with President George H.W. Bush [Bush Sr.] confidently and repeatedly proclaiming that a “New World Order” of peace and security lay in prospect, and arriving at the beginning of 2006 when the spectre of war and insecurity under President George W. Bush [Bush Jr.] looks more likely to materialise as an integral part of a New World Disorder instead. This paper attempts to provide not only a historical commentary of the turn of events of the last fifteen years, but also an explanation for them. Today, with the United States looking vulnerable rather than invincible and Islamist terrorism threatening to become ubiquitous, a world order of harmonious international relations based on any single universalist prescription of norms, rules and values—American or otherwise—looks decidedly distant.

I

Let’s go back in time, for a moment, to 1991—my starting point—when the exact opposite looked to be the case. For 1991 was the year when many of the forces that had led to disharmony in the 20th century had either ended in spectacular and sudden fashion, or appeared to be coming to an end. A US-led and UN-backed coalition—which included Muslim nations—had just won Gulf War I in a matter of weeks, in the process liberating Kuwait, reinforcing the sovereignty of Saudi Arabia and defeating Iraq, which had replaced Libya as the major rogue Muslim state in the Middle East. A few months later the Soviet Union, the main protagonist of the West since 1945, collapsed and with it the communist system leaving the United States the only global power on the world stage. The end was in sight for the days of apartheid,

too, and a segregated order based on race when Nelson Mandela entered into negotiations with F.W. de Klerk to form a multi-racial democracy in South Africa. With respect to the intractable Israeli-Palestinian conflict a road map for peace in the Middle East—Road Map I—was plotted at Madrid in late October 1991, which countenanced a Palestinian State on the West Bank and in Gaza, co-existing with an Israel demarcated by its pre-1967 borders.

It was against this background of dramatic changes that President George H.W. Bush proclaimed that a “new world order” might be built and that the United States would accept the challenge of this “rare, transforming moment of world history” to build it. This was a notion he repeated so often that it became the catch phrase of his presidency. First conjured up in speeches before a joint session of Congress on 11 September 1990 and the was against Iraq on 29 January 1991, the new world order he visualised laid stress upon an idealised prescription of great power co-operation, a “credible United Nations” able to use its collective peacekeeping and policing role against aggressor states, and a system of international relations governed by “the rule of law, not the law of the jungle”.¹

However, in the aftermath of Iraq’s defeat, Bush started to hint at a less co-operative and less collective world order. The collapse of the Soviet Union, which passed sole leadership of this project to the US as the “only remaining superpower”,² had something to do with this. But the evolving realisation that the US had the resources and the strength not only to “shape the future” for the common good, but also to pursue its own interests at the same time, played its part as well. If the commitment to act “in concert” with the UN remained, the United States, as the only power “capable of assembling the forces of peace”, reserved the right to “act alone” if necessary.³ Since an “era of perpetual peace” was not guaranteed, American “leadership” to keep the forces of disorder in check was “indispensable”; “there was no one else”.⁴ Ultimately this was to be a world order of “democracy, free enterprise and the rule of law” that could only be underpinned by the military, moral and material authority of the US.⁵ Neither Islam as a religious system of belief and practice, nor any Muslim country, was accorded any part in determining this Order’s foundations.

Summing up this “flow of events” in a 1989 article and more systematically in his 1992 best selling book, *The End of History and the Last Man*,⁶ Francis Fukuyama confidently predicted a new order of things as well. What he meant by this title was not literally that Armageddon was just round the corner, or that the march of history had been halted. But the long struggle over time for the ultimate, political system to evolve had been won by the West, and won decisively. “Western liberal democracy” had emerged as “the final form of human government”, and was destined to become the universal model of governance. The communist system had not made the grade and Islam, as a

political system, not only would never have any appeal for the secular West, but it was also only ever likely to appeal to “fundamentalist” Muslims. Neither “fundamentalist” Islam’s attack on the World Trade Centre in 2001 nor the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 were sufficient to persuade Fukuyama that “democracy and free markets” could be “derailed” as the “dominant organising principles” of the 21st century.⁷ It has been the sobering inability of the US to effect a peace that has given Fukuyama pause for “second thoughts”⁸ about the evolution of a single global system.⁹

The most notable voice raised in opposition to this prognosis belonged to S.P. Huntington who in 1993, in the journal *Foreign Affairs*, and in 1996, in *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, speculated about the coming of a new kind of war based on cultural rather than ideological and economic divisions. Dividing the world into eight large cultural groups or civilisations (African, Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic, Japanese, Orthodox, Sinic, and Western and Latin American) he conjured up the vision of a civilisational “clash” on a massive scale. In the worst case, a doomsday scenario, the materialist, secular West on the one hand and a militant, Islamic Muslim coalition on the other would come to blows for the soul and structure of the world along the “fault lines” of conflict¹⁰, particularly in the Middle East, and the Indian subcontinent bounded by India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh.¹¹ At the time the non-Muslim scholarly world derided Huntington’s “Clash of Civilisations?” thesis as mischievous invention and “balderdash”, partly it would seem, in retrospect, out of fear that an academically incorrect idea—that culture had the propensity to fracture international relations—might acquire substance simply by articulating it.¹²

I have to confess that at the time I inclined to the view that Huntington had gone too far as well in his apocalyptic vision of a different kind of world. But US-led policing expeditions in Muslim Somalia (1993), Bosnia (1993-95), and Kosovo (1999), and a spate of Islamist terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York (1993) and other American establishments overseas did not augur well. Then came September 11 2001 when Al Qaeda, whose existence had barely registered with the general public until that moment, dealt the American world order an horrendous and symbolic blow and declared that radical or political Islam would strive to bring it down, rather than willingly belong to it.

President George W. Bush’s response to 9/11 was to declare that a New World Order was needed more than ever, and he pledged “to translate this moment of influence into decades of peace, prosperity and liberty”, using “every tool” in America’s “arsenal” to achieve this. In a series of speeches beginning on 20 September 2001 and culminating on 17 September 2002 in the distillation of the National Security Strategy, Bush reconfirmed the commitment of the United States to build a world order that would “help to make the world not just safer

but better”.¹³ His tool-box included in addition to the lever of “unparalleled military strength”, such instruments as addressing the “legitimate grievances” of particular regions¹⁴, “diminishing the underlying conditions that spawn terrorism”,¹⁵ and conditionally undertaking to support an “independent”, “free”, “viable” and “credible” Palestine. There was even a challenge to Israel to play a part by taking the “concrete steps” of withdrawing to positions held prior to 28 September 2000 and putting a stop to further settlements in the West Bank.¹⁶

But the centrepiece of this “global agenda”, as Noam Chomsky has put it,¹⁷ was the “threat or use of military force”, a force strong enough to “dissuade potential adversaries” from attempting to equal or surpass the power of the United States.¹⁸ The constraining influence of the rule of law and the partnership of the United Nations that had figured prominently in George Bush Snr’s vision of the future were gone. In their place there were the right of the United States to undertake a preventative war, with or without the support of the international community, and the right to act pre-emptively in self-defence to counter any threat to its national security.¹⁹ International support was deemed necessary to defeat international terrorism, but would be provided by “allies and friends”—“coalitions of the willing”—rather than by the United Nations. Despite the unilateral aspects of this “grand design”, or Pax Americana, and a “distinctly American internationalism” that reflected the “union” of American “values” and American “interests”, the new world order of 2002 was still expected to supply the “basic principles of a global consensus”.²⁰ This consensus would be facilitated by nations that combated terror being helped, and nations compromised by terror being brought to account. It is little wonder perhaps that the National Security Strategy of George Bush Jnr has been summed up by at least one prominent critic as threatening to “leave the world more dangerous and divided, and the United States less secure” than ever before.²¹

While it is too early to say that a new world order seems unlikely to be delivered by the US under the leadership of George W. Bush, the signs are not promising. In the wake of 9/11 the foundations on which Bush Snr.’s new world order were to be built have begun under pressure to buckle. Militarily invincible in conventional warfare the US and other Western powers seem vulnerable to unconventional and irregular warfare. The fight or “war against terrorism”, as it is more commonly called, which George Bush Jnr. launched in 2001 after the twin towers of the World Trade Centre were destroyed, has failed to dislodge terrorists from Afghanistan and Iraq, and left these countries in ruins. Despite the confirmation of Hamid Karzai as President of Afghanistan through the process of elections, the old ethnic warlords remain effectively in control of the regions beyond Kabul, and the Taliban seem poised to make some sort of return. In Iraq Saddam Hussein’s army was defeated in a matter of weeks, but the “coalition of the willing’s” occupation has failed to put down mounting

insurrection and reduce the incidence of suicide bombings that inflict daily carnage in the streets of Baghdad and other Iraqi cities. Should the democratic process in Iraq survive without an American military presence, the prospect of Islamic leaders, like Moktada Al Sadr and Ayatollah Sistani, determining who comes to power seems more likely than a still unified secular, democratic state arising out of the deepening anarchy. What Iraq has taken two years to expose, that America's global power could be "reduced to impotence",²² hurricane Katrina proceeded to confirm in a week.

Like its military supremacy, the US's moral leadership has been tarnished too, and may never be fully recovered. In the way it has treated its prisoners in Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib and is rumoured to have authorised covert torture in Afghanistan, Eastern Europe, Egypt and elsewhere, the US stands accused, even within its own judicial ranks, of tearing up the Geneva Convention as it relates to the treatment of prisoners of war and the protection of civilians in time of war.²³ On 15 February 2006 the United Nations Human Rights Commission found the US guilty of infringing a number of treaties protecting human rights, and violating Articles 1, 3, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16 and 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In a damning 54-page report the Commission concluded that Guantanamo Bay detainees had been subjected to what amounted not only to indefinite arbitrary detention but also to various forms of "inhuman" and "degrading treatment". It recommended that the detainees be tried promptly or freed, that Guantanamo Prison be closed down "without further delay", and that those responsible for the way it has operated be "brought to justice".²⁴ While the UNHRC report has no legal status, the Bush Administration's traditional response to such challenge, that fighting terrorism places it above the normal constraints of democratic principles and "customary" international law, sets a standard more in tune with the states it seeks to isolate than lead. As Tony Blair has conceded Guantanamo Bay is an "anomaly" that "sooner or later has to be dealt with".²⁵

The United States has also under cover of the "war against terrorism" been accused of tearing up the old post World War II rules of international engagement and international relations. By ignoring the UN and initiating the war against Iraq on grounds which even President Bush now concedes were baseless, the US took the law into its own hands in Gulf War II on the basis foreshadowed in the National Security Strategy of the right of defensive pre-emptive attack. Almost immediately this doctrine was cited by India in its nuclear confrontation with Pakistan,²⁶ and has been used constantly to justify the military tactics Israel is employing against Palestinians. Even Australia's Prime Minister, John Howard, has given voice to the notion of a pre-emptive strike with respect to the Asia-Pacific.

In the space of 15 years George Bush Snr.'s vision of a new world order of "liberal democracy" and "international peace" seems to be giving way to almost the opposite, a nightmarish scenario of "might is right" and "international insecurity". We face the real prospect of a new world disorder in which terrorism becomes systemic and the world, as a consequence, becomes a much less safe and secure place. Perhaps the biggest danger in the post 2001 engagement with radical Islam is that what might be called "civilisational" theory continues to be neither fully understood nor treated as seriously as it should be in the Western corridors of power. Tony Blair's rhetorical comment in the wake of the London bombings on 7 July 2005 that they were not part of "a clash of civilisations, for civilised people do not act in this way" bears testimony of that; for it essentially parodies the core idea of the Huntington thesis.

In a book published before George W Bush was elected to the Presidency and undertook to track down "tyrants" and "terrorists" in the wake of 9/11, Bassim Tibi provides persuasive confirmation that, from a Muslim perspective, a new world disorder looms large.²⁷ *The Challenge of Fundamentalism* puts the case that "fundamentalist" Islam is actively engaged in an attempt not only to undermine the Western world order, but critically to replace it with an Islamic world order based on Islamic "rule" and "tenets".²⁸ This was a clash between "two universalisms—one secular, one divine—each claiming global validity".²⁹ While this message belonged to a "terrifying minority of Islamic fundamentalists", which was drawing up the "fault lines" of conflict between them, it was nonetheless becoming the "major collective choice in the world of Islam".³⁰

Where I tend to part company from Tibi is with his contention that should a new world disorder eventuate it will be due primarily to the mission of radical Islam rather than the machinations of right-wing America. The role he reserves for Bush Snr's vision of a "new world order" and presumably Bush Jnr's grand design of the National Security Strategy is a secondary one of reactivating an exclusivist, primordial Islamic universalism and its potential for conflict.³¹ This reading makes insufficient allowance for the instrumental impact of the United States' promotion of Western civilisation and the pillars—such as economic liberalisation, liberal democracy and the secular state—it wishes to see installed globally. Precisely how America goes about pursuing world peace and attempting to bring about a stable international order in the face of Islamist resistance is arguably critical to the outcome. The history of America's heavy handedness throughout the Muslim world—and Israel's in Palestine—may have helped to rekindle fundamentalist philosophies, but the continuation of such methods runs the risk not only of creating the next generation of Muslim terrorists, but also converting the majority of moderate Muslims to their cause.

II

A central thesis of this paper is that if the signs are not good for the future conduct of international relations on a consensual basis, it is because the “new world order” of George W. Bush, like that of his father, takes absolutely no account of the causative factors of Islamic resistance to it. Indeed, there seems to be a general unwillingness to do so. The line taken by Richard Perle, who chaired the Defence Advisory Policy Board from 2001–03 and was a member of the “Project for the New American Century” [PNAC], the mouthpiece of Neo-conservative ideology in American politics, is that seeking to explain Islamist terrorism is tantamount to excusing it. “The roots of Muslim rage”, he writes, “are to be found in Islam itself” and tell “us much more about those who hate than the one that is hated”.³² The PNAC’s September 2000 blueprint for retaining the “American Peace”—“Rebuilding America’s Defenses”—gives no thought to the consequences of its recommendation that US forces, as the world’s “constabulary”, have to be suitably equipped to put down disorder and push forward the frontiers of “America’s principles and interests”.³³ In its decidedly “unipolar 21st century” view it does not permit the US the luxury of counting the “costs” associated with the exercise of “global leadership”.³⁴

A striking feature of the framework of explanation adopted by politicians, sections of the press, and colouring public thinking, is its failure to put Muslim terrorism into a context that can be apprehended and therefore addressed. The tendency has been to categorise terrorists as “opponents of freedom”, their leaders as fanatics suffering various degrees of derangement and depravity, and Islam as a religion that is receptive to calls for “holy war” and unable to “come to grips with globalisation and western culture”.³⁵ Unfortunately this does not so much explain the reasons for 9/11, the growing insurgency in Iraq, and indiscriminate bomb attacks in the Madrid and London rail underground systems, as explain them away. In this rhetorical reading the temptation is to look no further. In so far as the Senate Intelligence Committee apportioned any home grown responsibility for the war on Iraq, for instance, the finger is pointed not at their political leaders who decided on war, but at the intelligence agencies who briefed them. Faulty intelligence, not faulty political leadership, is held to some account. Both the Butler Inquiry in Britain and the Flood Inquiry in Australia adopted much the same line, although Butler came close to concluding that the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, had called for war against Iraq on the basis of intelligence that had made no such case.³⁶

To date the US response has been purely a military one, of confronting terrorists on the battlefields of first Afghanistan and then Iraq, of killing them, capturing them and ultimately, it may be presumed, trying them for crimes against humanity. But, as history has demonstrated rather well, the method of

destroying terrorism by eliminating terrorists has never worked. Osama Bin Laden is just the latest in a long line of terrorist leaders who feature on the “Most Wanted” posters of the US and who have had bounties on their heads. Ultimately few are ever caught. The hunt for Abu Nidal, world enemy no. 1 in the 1980s, is a case in point. Eluding capture he died a few years ago in Beirut without fanfare. Apart from Osama Bin Laden and Al-Zarqawi (figure 1), terrorists are not easily identified. They have no distinguishing features and do not stand out like the grotesque villain depicted in figure 2 as an archetypical high jacker in a cartoon from *The Australian*.³⁷

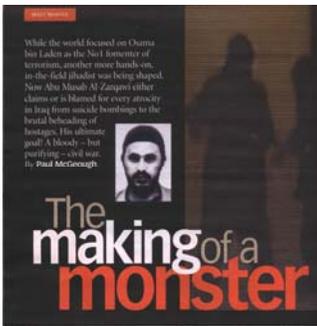
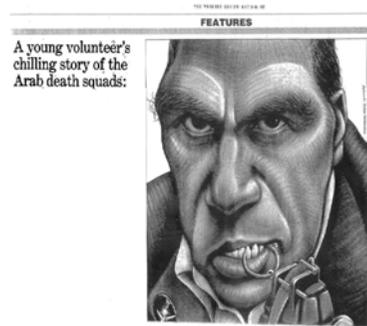
Fig. 1³⁸

Fig. 2

Colin Powell’s “identikit” stick figure makes the more telling point that ridding the world of terrorists is no easy undertaking (figure 3).³⁹ If Osama Bin Laden is taken out, can the so-called “free world” breath freely again or will Muslim terrorism, like soviet communism before it, suddenly and spontaneously collapse? This may be doubted (figure 4) and the 9/11 Commission Report seriously doubts it.⁴⁰



Fig. 3

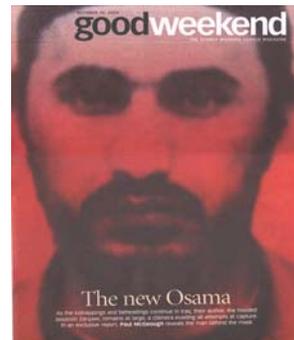


Fig. 4

The Bush Administration's persistent refrain that it had based its invasion of Iraq on credible intelligence analysis has been rendered progressively discordant and weak by a series of public reports by: the US Senate Intelligence Committee on 7 July 2004, the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks (the so-called 9/11 Commission) on 22 July 2004, and Charles Duelfer, the US Chief Weapons Inspector, on 30 September 2004.⁴¹ These *post mortem* reports collectively demonstrate that intelligence estimates about Iraq's military capability and intentions were "either overstated" or "not supported"⁴² by what the Director of the CIA George Tenet had claimed was "slam-dunk" evidence.⁴³ While they reveal a great deal about what policy makers were thinking and why particular policy was determined, they were mostly written within the framework of suggesting ways to streamline intelligence and shore up perceived deficiencies in American counter-terrorism.⁴⁴

The 9/11 Commission Report dwelled on these matters too, but also looked beyond them. Putting aside a very recent, somewhat conspiratorial, critique that the 9/11 Commission set out to "bury the truth" about September 11,⁴⁵ its Report comes as close as any official report could in the circumstances to unearthing some of its more deep seated origins. Within the body of its Report the 9/11 Commission attempted, in a very measured and un-rhetorical way, to put a context to Islamic terrorism, to identify the impulses informing it, and to venture a range of strategies beyond that of military action.⁴⁶ No strategy, it suggested, could be effective unless the "threat" it was designed to neutralise was clearly defined and its underlying causes were openly recognised. While recognising that Osama bin Laden could draw on a "long tradition of extreme intolerance" from a stream of Islam stretching from Ibn Taimiyya (1263-1328) to Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966), the 9/11 Commission Report did not shy away from implicating American foreign policy and conceding that Muslim resentment of America and the West ran "deep". It acknowledged that Bin Laden's message—that America was the "font of all evil", the "head of the snake" that must be "converted or destroyed"—effectively tapped into a reservoir of contemporary sentiment and historical memory, and that the grievances he articulated were "widely felt throughout the Muslim world".⁴⁷

Significantly, in suggesting how to combat "Islamist terrorism", the 9/11 Commission Report called not only for a restructuring of America's intelligence agencies, but also for a new emphasis to be placed on "all elements of national power". While military action was deemed to be an appropriate response in the first phase of toppling the Taliban and Al Qaeda, ultimately Americans had to engage in a "struggle of ideas" to "stop the next generation of terrorists" with weapons that were much more philosophically, politically and economically targeted. In what can only be interpreted as an indictment of the world order the

US had been promoting to this juncture, the 9/11 Commission Report made the telling point that the US government ought clearly to define what this order meant:

We should offer an example of moral leadership in the world, committed to treat people humanely, abide by the rule of law, and be generous and caring to our neighbours.⁴⁸

The inference that these aspects had been honoured in the breach was unmistakable. Also considered “consequential” by the Commission, were “rightly or wrongly” the foreign policy “choices” the US had made and had still to make with respect to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and US actions in Iraq.⁴⁹ While stating that the world may have become a safer place since 9/11, it concluded that it was not “safe”.⁵⁰

With the notable exception of the 9/11 Commission what is clearly missing in much of the commissioned *post mortem* commentary on the destruction of the World Trade Centre and analyses of the current Iraq imbroglio is an historical dimension, and historical dimension that radical Islam readily draws upon. As the 9/11 Report suggests a very different story and a different spin on history emerge in the Muslim narrative. Throughout the Middle East in particular the US tends to be seen by Muslims not as the “beacon of freedom” in the world, but rather as their main oppressor and the leading cause of the numerous ills besetting their countries, from poverty to despotic and corrupt regimes. Ayatollah Khomeini’s description of the US as the “great Satan” has if anything firmed in recent times. A recurrent theme running through sections of the literature is that many Middle Eastern countries consider that the US has waged war on them, and that they have been in a state of virtual war with it over many years. Iraq is the most obvious victim of course. But Libya, Iran, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Sudan, Somalia and Palestine have all at various times experienced a mixture of covert and overt US intervention, and suffered significant civilian casualties as a consequence. American troops—thousands of them—are stationed in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Egypt, and have set up significant military establishments there. American aircraft carriers are never far from the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Indian Ocean, and constantly patrol these waters. In short, the US tends to be seen as a belligerent, and not a benevolent, power in the region.

Invariably, as far as Muslims are concerned, the 9/11 Commission reminds us, Israel always comes into the frame somewhere, as does Palestine. No doubt terrorism has many roots but one of them arguably concerns Israel’s creation at the expense of Palestinians and the unresolved nature of the crisis this has caused. Significantly the US underwriting of Israel and its guarantee of Israel’s survival appears in Osama Bin Laden’s infamous *fatwa* of 23 February