

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Oxford Debate: Democracy in the Middle East

*Layers and layers of character veils; false pretences
A mask for everyday; just a means for their defences
Dialects of lies and false promises; manipulation
Reservation of rights through contradicting deprivation
Thieves in hero's robes are granted the upper-hand
By bigger thieves to control and command misguided fans
In the name of patterned sheets with same thread they embroider their speech
Cater for vulnerable hearts where hearts embrace what they hear
With open arms for patriot blinds are their to charm,
Cast spells woven in speech lead some astray they mean harm.*

The Clash of Civilisations between Islam and the West

- George Bush senior in 1992 made the following statement “A world once divided into to armed camps now recognises one sole and pre-eminent power, the United States of America”.
- The two armed camps that he was speaking about were the USA and its allies against its ideological adversary the Soviet Union and its allies.
- More significantly it was a clash between Capitalism its thoughts and systems that exhibited itself through the leader of the so called free world and communism its thoughts and systems that exhibited itself through Soviet power.
- And whilst communism has been sent to the dustbin of history today there remains a far greater ideological threat to the Capitalist world order namely Islam.

وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تَبْيِينًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً

وَبُشْرَىٰ لِّلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾

And We have sent down to you the Book (the Qur'an) as an exposition of everything, a guidance, a mercy, and glad tidings for those who have submitted themselves (to Allâh as Muslims). [TMQ: Al- Nahl:89]

- Both Islam and Capitalism poses a collection of concepts about life and hence they are civilisations or ideologies.
- Islam is both spiritual and divine because it emanates from the Islamic Aqeedah, the source of which is revelation and the other capitalism, man-made emanating from the doctrine of secularism which is the separation of religion from life its source being that which was agreed upon by man.
- Both have systems to implement their viewpoints about life

- Both have systems to defend their view points about life
- Both are expansionists and seek to propagate their view points about life
- Indeed the Islamic threat is a clear and present danger for the West, , and here I do not speak about so called terrorist groups or acts of terror, but I speak of the superiority of our civilisation, its intellectual strength, its global appeal that have made it the biggest contributor to human advancement and positive existence.
- Today Islam is the fastest growing religion
- It is the **religion of choice** of an estimated **1.5 billion of the worlds populous**
- Today despite all of the attempts by the western powers to subvert Islam and reduce it to nothing more than a system-less religion, the Islamic dawah that has ensued in the Muslim lands through the call for the Re establishment of the Khilafah **has re-established Islam in the minds of many as a complete way of life, an ideological creed with thoughts and systems that can govern life's affairs.**
- **That despite the political divide between Muslims the false borders superimposed by the west and their agents, the Muslim Ummah still sees her self as one, one Deen, one Ummah and yearning for one state.**
- This revival coupled with the geography of Muslim countries who by the Grace of Allah find themselves sitting on top of the worlds largest oil and natural gas resources (**Saudi Arabia and Iraq alone sit on 37% of the worlds oil supplies**) as well as minerals, gold, not to mention controlling the most strategic waterways has caused much concern for the western world.
- A concern that for so long has dominated Western foreign policy and influenced decision making in relation to the Muslim world prompting an intellectual, political, economic and military struggles between the West and Islam.

DEMOCRACY AND ISLAM

- And the export of so called democracy to the Muslim world is merely a manifestation of this intellectual struggle and a direct attempt to contain the threat of what the west dubs as Political Islam or the Islamists who in the view of many western analyst only exists today due to the social injustices, poverty and oppression in the Muslim world that provides the necessary elements or breeding ground for political Islam.
- It is a western export that we as Muslims have a huge problem with despite what we hear from those whom the West terms as moderates or modernists whom weekly and in some cases falsely argue that Islam is synonymous with democracy. For a couple of reasons:
 - 1) Its contradictions with Islamic beliefs
 - 2) Its failure from the reality and the motives of those who propagate it
- With regards to the first point, I am definitely against the notion of democracy and reject it out right and will tell you today that the majority of Muslims in the Muslim world reject democracy.
- But I'm also a strong advocate of formation of government by the consent of the people, by that I mean that the authority is in the hands of the people to choose their ruler as they see fit, for them

alone to decide whom it is they consider fit for the post and worthy of their trust and obedience in the matter of taking care of their affairs.

- Confused?
- Allow me to elaborate what I have no problem with is the concept of the peoples right to choose their ruler be it through the bayah (the pledge of allegiance) or the ballot box. This is something that Islam obliges it is a condition for the post. And anyone who becomes a ruler without the people's consent is a usurper and must be removed. And I'm also a strong advocate of accountability of the ruler as a fundamental duty because Islam also obliges this.
- What is unacceptable in Islam and a clear violation of the most basic of its principles is that sovereignty belongs to the people, that man makes the law, that he is the legislator. No sincere Muslim on the face of this earth can accept this notion.
- And it is not only Muslims who hold this view despite what the academics and the orientalist think in the minds of the politicians it is quite clear. Jack Straw stated in a recent article in spectator magazine “ **democrats can never accept religious injunctions over temporal laws**”.
- Just like no sincere Muslim who believes that he was created by Allah swt, that his purpose is to worship Allah and follow his law in all spheres of life and that when he dies he will be accounted by Allah for how he lived his life can accept secularism can accept the notion that Allah SWT the Creator life has nothing to do with how people should live their lives or organise their societal affairs. And therefore I will say that no sincere Muslim can accept temporal laws over religious injunctions.
- This is the western export that can never ever be accepted in the Muslim world because this is the cultural imperialism that seeks to destroy Islam.
- And the funny thing is that in a so called world of freedom of expression belief and the rest of the hype Muslims who hold such view points are considered to be extremists and fundamentalist simply because we desire to live under the laws of Islam.
- Richard Nixon in his book ‘Victory without War’ he states "**The revolutionary Islamic ideology is a reaction against modernisation. Communism promises to rotate the hour of history forwards and Islamic fundamentalism returns it backwards...Communist and Islamic revolutionaries are ideological enemies adopting a common aim: Desire to achieve power by any necessary means with the aim of imposing a dominant dictatorship based upon their ideals which are unbearable.**"
- Further to this in his book 'The Favourable Opportunity' in reference to **fundamentalists** he states: "**They are determined to return the previous Islamic civilisation through reviving the past, and they aim to implement the Islamic *Shari'ah* and announce that Islam is a *deen* and State.**"
- Also today you can go to a French school or library and pick up the French cultural encyclopaedia and in it in reference to Muhammad (saw) it states: "**Anti-Christ, kidnapper of women, and the greatest enemy to the human intellect.**" So much for tolerance of the belief of others.

DEMOCRACY & CAPITALISM ARE FLAWED

- Which brings me to my second reason on the failure of democracy, how could any one speak in one breadth about tolerance, religious freedoms etc and at the same time ban teenage girls from their education on the premise that they wear an Islamic head scarf as is the case in France.
- The history of the West vis-à-vis respect for others and democracy and freedom is clear for all to see. Indeed the duplicity is unparalleled.

Jules Harmand one of the main architects of French imperialism said, *'It is necessary, then, to accept as a principle and point of departure the fact that there is a hierarchy of races and civilizations, and that we belong to the superior race and civilization...the basic legitimation of conquest over native peoples is the conviction of our superiority...'* [Edward Said, 'Culture & Imperialism' 1993, p17].

Such philosophical contradictions are characteristic of Western culture and further demonstrate the inability of the mind to determine a system of life which would truly elevate human behaviour.

- I ask those who which to export democracy to the Muslim world where were they in the 1980s when the FIS in Algeria in the first round of the elections won by a majority landslide when it was evident that the will of the people and their desire was for an Islamic state and the election where cancelled by the Army, where was western intervention then.
- Where was western intervention in Indonesia where dictators liked Suharto ruled with an iron fist for decades, instead he was welcomed with open arms by the West as his services for western globalisation and the strategic interests of the multinationals in the region are undoubtedly unsurpassed.
- Where was Western intervention in Uzbekistan where probably only once in the history of democracy where an opposition candidate – the only candidate I might add in the 2000 elections (Abdul Hafiz Jalolav) voted for his opponent Islam Karimov and then stated ***'Im standing for peace stability and our nations independence... and as paradoxical it may sound I voted for Islam Karimov.*** And truly only when you are aware of the oppression that has been conducted by Karimov's regime and the torture and persecution that he has subjected his people to can you understand such an action. The guy was simply trying to save his life. There has not been a single human rights organisation that did no write report after report on Karimov's regime some citing that he is even worst than Saddam, Yet Karimov today is an ally of the west on its war on terror and whilst Iraq can expect an invasion of its land after 12 years of cruel sanctions and continuous bombardment Karimov on the other hand receives 160 million US dollars and a 50 million dollar credit gurantee with the US Export and Import Bank no doubt for services rendered in the fight against Islam.
- As for Iraq where was western intervention when Saddam gassed the Kurds in Halabja and killed 130,000 of his own people. I tell you where, right behind him, the time he did this he was considered an ally of the west, in fact the biological weapons that he used to kill his own people were manufactured from stock supplied by the American Type Culture Collection Company of Rockville in the US under an export license issued by the United States Department of Commerce.
- And specifically regarding the impending war on Iraq, if the will of the people mattered then this war will not take place. But then again it is not about the will of the people is it? It is about the will of big oil, the defence contractors and the multinationals, its colonialism pure and simple.

And it is about the decadent ideology of capitalism that enslaves the masses to feed the few. Over 1.5 million people have perished as a result of Western foreign policy and now more people are expected to die so that America can secure control of Iraq's oil reserves and fatten the pockets of corporate America from a US administration that is so closely linked to big oil that you would have to be deaf dumb and blind not to see the motives.

- **Myles Copeland former CIA operative and political advisor to Jamal Abd Al Nasser states in his book Game of Nations:**

“... when our government decides what to do about other countries it is limited only by considerations of effectiveness. If it works we can do it. When moral considerations loom up, the question is not “can we do it?” but “can we get away with it?”

- Tony Blair's foreign policy adviser Robert Cooper said,

‘The challenge to the postmodern world is to get used to the idea of double standards. Among ourselves, we operate on the basis of laws and open cooperative security. But when dealing with more old-fashioned kinds of states outside the postmodern continent of Europe, we need to revert to the rougher methods of an earlier era - force, preemptive attack, deception, whatever is necessary to deal with those who still live in the nineteenth century world of every state for itself. Among ourselves, we keep the law but when we are operating in the jungle, we must also use the laws of the jungle...What is needed then is a new kind of imperialism, one acceptable to a world of human rights and cosmopolitan values. We can already discern its outline: an imperialism which, like all imperialism, aims to bring order and organisation but which rests today on the voluntary principle...’ [Robert Cooper, ‘The New Liberal Imperialism’, 2002].

- Therefore from all that has been presented to you today you will excuse us if we seem to be sceptical regarding western motives in the Muslim world and if we refuse to swallow the pill of apathy. The burnt child does dread the fire and for us capitalism, its basis secularism and its defunct principles of democracy and freedoms, for us is a towering inferno and we have been getting burnt for way too long.
- I think those sincere about humanity's salvation its is time for them to begin to account and question the intellectual basis of society. The danger with capitalism is that it is based on the whims and desires of men and its case the fancy of the few who act upon benefit and are driven by greed.
- Winston Churchill in reference to capitalism stated: **The inherent vice of capitalism is the unequal sharing of blessings; the inherent virtue of socialism is the equal sharing of miseries.**
- The sad reality is that the blessings of the few, has been at the price of the misery of most peoples on this earth
- In 1998, the then Vice President Al Gore threatened South Africa, a country that has **three million HIV positive persons, not to mention, water, sanitation and poverty problems, with trade sanctions if the government didn't cancel plans to use much cheaper generic AIDS drugs, which would cut into US companies' sales.** When Gore, who had connections to the drug industry was accounted for the proposed sanctions he simply stated **"I love this country. I love the First Amendment."**
- Is it any surprise that the world is in such a state when those charged with governing abuse their power in such a way?

- Is it any surprise that in 1991 Lawrence Summers the chief economist of the World Bank and institution supposedly created to assist developing countries wrote in an internal memo:

"I think the economic logic behind dumping a load of toxic waste in the lowest-wage country is impeccable and we should face up to that."

- In the same year of 1991 a book entitled Global responsibility stated the following stats:

FACT

- **Every hour 1500 children die of hunger related causes** (whilst the West disposes of food mountains, (butter, milk, meat, wheat), to maintain the balance between supply and demand for economic benefits.)
- **Every week during the 1980s more people were detained, tortured, assassinated, made refuge, or in other ways violated by acts of repressive regimes than at any other time in history;** (regimes that are supported by Western Governments when it suits their interest and discarded and fought when it doesn't.)
- Every month the West's economic systems adds over **7.5 billion dollars to the catastrophically unbearable debt burden of more than 1.5 trillion dollars now resting on the shoulders of Third World Nations** (through organisations such as the IMF and World bank due to their structural adjustment policies and interest based loans.)
- Eleven years has passed since then and according to current trends things can only get worst under Capitalism.

The decline of the moral authority, combined with the reliance on legal justice, utilitarian values, and contractual relations, are rapidly making the United States a social wasteland with dysfunctional politics, dysfunctional religion, dysfunctional industries, and dysfunctional homes. The end product is not autonomous individuals, but dysfunctional individuals. *The World & I: A Publication of the Washington Post, September 1994*

I would argue that the whole collapse of the family, the collapse of the inner city, the collapse of the school systems, the emergence of the drug culture, the rise of violent crime, a whole range of things, are a function of a crisis in our civilization, ...because there was no space in the public square to talk directly and candidly about our civilization... And most of the things we're trying to describe ... are in fact civilizational collapses. It's the failure to have the right answer first thing in the morning when they wake up in terms of how [people] should live their life! *Excerpts from Speech given by Newt Gingrich at the National Press Club: July 5, 1995*

"There is no longer a sense of sanctuary anywhere, millions of Americans are afraid to walk the streets or to use their parks"

"To our international shame, Washington DC has the highest rate [of crime] of any capital city in the World."

"Our criminal justice system has abysmally failed to deliver what should be the first freedom, freedom from fear" *Excerpts from Beyond Peace by Richard Nixon former President of the US*

Islam the Last Hope for Mankind

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- Today we as **Muslim stand at the crossroad**, with but two options available for us. Either to remain in this grieving and sad state of affairs that we find ourselves in today under the tentacles of Capitalism and Western Imperialism or to revive and rekindle the light of Islam by establishing it as an ideological alternative to Capitalist exploitation and hegemony and as the only and true last hope for mankind.
 - Today we live in a world, where there is little value given to human life in pursuit of economic and political gains be it the bombing of innocent civilians or the crippling of nations through external debt and interest based loans.
 - Indeed today **there is much hardship and oppression in the world that reflects the absence of justice, just men, and just systems**. Much anguish and suffering that reflects the flawed politics, flawed governments, **flawed values and flawed principles that shape the political landscapes of the earth** and regulate the affairs of man.
 - Islam and Capitalism can never co-exist just as oil and water do not mix. To accept capitalism is to accept the falsehood of its basis, therefore how can an ideology that does not separate religion from politics coexist in harmony with an ideology that separates religion from state.
 - And unlike the individualism of capitalism that breeds greed and decay Islam instils in its followers a sense of responsibility towards themselves and humanity. It is not Islam that conquered lands, enslaved their people, usurped and plundered wealth that rather is the track record of Western Civilisation.
 - The Islamic conquests were to carry the Islamic call never to amass wealth, for no other ideology instils in its carriers such a sense of accountability for one's actions, responsibility towards humanity and a spirit of sacrifice for the greater good that pleases Allah, as does Islam.
 - It is these distinguishing features that prompted western historians and philosophers to observe the following:

George Bernard Shaw in 'The Genuine Islam,' Vol. 1, No. 8, 1936.

"If any religion had the chance of ruling over England, nay Europe within the next hundred years, it could be Islam."

"I have always held the religion of Muhammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. I have studied him - the wonderful man and in my opinion far from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the Savior of Humanity."

"I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness"

Bertrand Russell in 'History of Western Philosophy,' London, 1948, p. 419.

"Our use of phrase 'The Dark ages' to cover the period from 699 to 1,000 marks our undue concentration on Western Europe... "From India to Spain, the brilliant civilization of Islam flourished. What was lost to Christendom at this time was not lost to civilization, but quite the contrary... "To us it seems that West-European civilization is civilization, but this is a narrow view."

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا
وَقَالَ إِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

“And who is better in speech than one who calls to Allah, does good deeds and says that ‘I am of those who bow down in submission’? ” [TMQ Al-Fussilat:33]

- Rabi Ibn Amir was once asked by the Super power of his time Rustum the Ruler of persia “**What brought you out of the dessert you Nomad of Arabia?**”

Rabi` said: “Allah has sent us, and He brought us here in order to lead whom He wills from the worship of man to the worship of the Creator of man; from the narrowness and oppression of this world to the space and abundance of the hereafter; and from the injustice of other ways of life to the justice of Islam. He has sent us with His religion to His creation, to call them to Him.”

فقالوا له ما جاء بكم فقال

الله ابتعثنا لنخرج من شاء من عبادة العباد إلى عبادة الله ومن ضيق الدنيا إلى سعتها ومن جور الأديان إلى عدل
(الإسلام)

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