

## **CHAPTER II**

### **AMERICA "WAR ON TERROR"**

Attack on World Trade Center building and The US Department of Defense, The Pentagon, in September 11, 2001 shocked the global world. These two buildings that were considered to be the symbol of dignity of the Americans collapsed. Many International Relations academicians assessed the moment as a standing point determined the modern world history just as the end of the Cold War era in 1989. It created a new period in international arena. The relation among states began to change by the increasing of military budget within states in the world. After the attack, the United State of America declared its new campaign called "War on Terror" as a reaction to such accident.

#### **A. The Concept Of Terrorism: Between Rebellion-Oriented Terrorists And Freedom Fighters**

Since the term "terrorism" becomes a global phenomenon with ambiguity identifications. Even though there is no universally accepted definition of "terrorism", debates among academicians, politicians and experts are always rise when it come to define such term. One of the reasons of difficulty in defining "terrorism" is that "terrorism" is more of moral problem.

The term of "terror" is an old phenomenon in history, which has roots in

1. "Terror" during the French Revolution. The practice of threatening

injuring or killing people for political, religious or other ideological reasons have already stuck with the struggle to gain power. Terrorism became a major public issue in the 1980s. The Reagan administration took office announcing its dedication to stamping out what the president called "the evil scourge of terrorism," a plague spread by "depraved opponents of civilization itself" in "a return to barbarism in the modern age".

US sources also provide more succinct definitions of "terrorism." A US Army manual on countering terrorism defines it as "the calculated use of violence or threat of violence to attain goals that are political, religious or ideological in nature. This is done through intimidation, coercion, or instilling fear." Still simpler is the characterization in a Pentagon-commissioned study by noted terrorologist Robert Kupperman, which speaks of the threat or use of force "to achieve political objectives without the full-scale commitment of resources".<sup>7</sup> Today, this point of view can be literally referring to al-Qaeda and Islamic movements who seek to establish an Islamic Caliphate through military means as the ultimate objective.

Yet, on the other side the term terrorism has been characterized as unacceptably vague. Governments in Iran, Lebanon, Venezuela and Muslims in Islamic World consistently use the term "terrorism" to describe actions taken by the United States and its allies. The use of state terrorism by the US and the inherent hypocrisy of the term have been commented upon by Americans as well,

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<sup>7</sup> US Army Operational Concept for Terrorism Counteraction (TRADOC Pamphlet No. 525-37, 1984); Robert Kupperman Associates, *Low Intensity Conflict*, July 30, 1983. Both cited in Michael Klare and Peter Kornbluh (eds), *Low Intensity Warfare* (Pantheon, 1988), pp. 69, 147.

including three star general William Odom, formerly President Reagan's NSA Director, who wrote:

“As many critics have pointed out, terrorism is not an enemy. It is a tactic. Because the United States itself has a long record of supporting terrorists and using terrorist tactics the slogans of today's war on terrorism merely makes the United States look hypocritical to the rest of the world. A prudent American president would end the present policy of “sustained hysteria” over potential terrorist attacks. Treat terrorism as a serious but not a strategic problem, encourage Americans to regain their confidence, and refuse to let al-Qaeda keep us in a state of fright”.<sup>8</sup>

There is a great debate among politicians in differentiating between “terrorist” and “freedom fighter”.<sup>9</sup> Freedom Fighting is another term for those engaged in a struggle to achieve political freedom for them or obtain freedom for others. Generally speaking, freedom fighters are seen as people who are using physical force in order to cause a change in the political and or social order. This is done in response to oppression or perceived oppression by an internal or external body. Notable example includes Irish Republican Army (IRA) which were considered freedom fighters by supporters. This debate creates subjective point of views on particular “terror” attacks. Since the good and bad are defined

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<sup>8</sup> William Odom. *American Hegemony: How to Use It, How to Lose It*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005

by a certain political agenda in the eyes of someone. Consider al-Qaeda, as a commonly accepted international terrorist organization is still controversial. In recent century phenomenon of Islamic global resistance like al-Qaeda is unprecedented. A multiethnic Muslim organization that has goal to liberate Muslim lands like Palestine and Afghanistan and establish an ultimate Islamic Caliphate could be considered to be the symbol of Muslim's "freedom fighter".

The phrase "War on Terror" was popularized by President George W. Bush and his administration in the aftermath of 9/11. It has been widely criticized ever since then. Many argued that "terror", after all, is a tactic.<sup>10</sup> Others claimed (rightly or wrongly) that many US allies - or even the United States itself - also engaged in terror, or state terrorism. "Terrorists," then, was what the US government called those whom it dislikes, but not those whom it does like - even if (the argument runs) they engage in similar activities.

#### **B. Assessing America's Strategy For Winning The "War On Terror"**

The declaration of a global war on terror in aftermath 9/11 attacks constituted the single most ambitious reordering of America's foreign policy objectives since the end of the Second World War. In a meeting session following the attacks, George W. Bush said that every state, in every region, has to make a decision. Either you are with us, or you are with terrorist.<sup>11</sup> This ultimatum deepened America's relations with states that had a strong interest in destroying

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<sup>10</sup> William E. Odom. *American Hegemony: How to Use It, How to Lose It*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005

<sup>11</sup> George W. Bush, 'Address to a joint session of Congress and the American people', 20 Sept. 2001

al-Qaeda, and strained those with states that had mixed records in combating terrorism, such as Saudi Arabia. The United States has three goals in regard to politicized Islam. First, it wants to prevent the spread of the so-called extremism and violence. Second, in doing so, it needs to avoid the impression that the United States is “opposed to Islam.” And third, in the longer run, it must find ways to help address the deeper economic, social, and political causes feeding Islamic radicalism and to encourage a move toward development and democratization.<sup>12</sup>

It is true that despite Bush’s early missteps, the events of 9/11 restored unprecedented global support for America in its fight against *al Qaeda*. However, once the president announced the “axis of evil” thesis in his 2002 State of the Union address that support began to decline. In response to 9/11, NATO invoked Article 5 of the treaty for the first time in the history of the alliance, and declared that *al Qaeda*’s attack on the United States was also an attack on all other members. Like good allies, NATO members all signed up to fight *al Qaeda*, but they were shocked to discover that the president was actually declaring war on Iraq, Iran, and North Korea –and doing so without prior consultation with America’s allies. The net effect of Bush’s “axis of evil” formulation was to stretch his so called “Global War on Terrorism” in ways that could justify invasions of countries anywhere. This, in turn, promised a foreign policy agenda that most NATO members understandably refused to accept.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Cheryl Bernard. *Civil Democratic Islam: Partners, Resources, and Strategies* Santa Monica, Arlington, Pittsburgh: RAND Corporation, 2003.

<sup>13</sup> ... ..

Another analysis argued that paradox of terrorism nowadays has become a new security agenda. Energy crisis is a real threat for the global future; it should be secure through a new project the so call "war on terror". It is publicly known that US intervention on Iraq in 1991 and 2003 as well as to Afghanistan in 2001 has a hidden agenda, securing oil energy resources. US's intervention in gulf war in 1990 by forming multinational front could be the evidence of the US effort to secure oil resources in Kuwait which was the main energy producer to Western countries. Provability showed that US invasion to Afghanistan known as "Operation Enduring Freedom" formally was done to carry out US "war on terror" strategy. However, behind this operation US also had an agenda to control oil pipeline from Caspian Sea.

US Energy security policy in its long-term has been implemented since World War II. The US attempts to defend its domination in international system by maintaining the status quo over energy security regimes. Since post World War II, the US has used its power to construct and defend the global economic order under its domination and used military power to reach its goals. The US has an effort to secure the global oil supply, especially intervention toward oil-rich countries and the role of the military to achieve its goals. Energy security has become a priority under the Bush and Obama administrations. It is related to economic requirement and U.S. responsibility over global energy consumption. Energy security is very important in the era of global market, because of the

of energy security, the U.S. has a dominant position in international systems and it makes US rivals admit its power.<sup>14</sup>

In this subtitle of the second chapter, the writer would try to analyze and assess the US strategy in “war on terror” in both Bush and Obama’s administration.

### **B.1 Bush Era**

Absent the 9/11 attacks and the George W. Bush administration’s reaction to them, the War on Terror may not have come into existence in the way that it has. There certainly would have been Islamic *radicalism* as well as clashes between it and Western governments. Indeed, Osama bin Laden is accused responsible for a number of attacks on US government personnel and others during the Clinton administration, including the bombings of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 and the attack on the USS *Cole* in the Yemeni port of Aden in 2000. The Clinton administration, though, did not react by organizing an invasion to Afghanistan, Yemen or anywhere else.

The 9/11 attacks, of course, were shocking the American and US government as well as international community. As respond to such incident President Bush issued his ultimatum to the Taliban to turn Bin Laden over to the United States in order to avoid a US invasion, followed through by launching an invasion a few weeks later after the Taliban refused to comply, and successfully drove the Taliban regime from power by the end of 2001.

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With the war in Afghanistan seemingly won, the Bush administration turned its attention toward Saddam Hussein and Iraq later that year. In addition to the necessity of halting Hussein's purported weapons of mass destruction program, Bush administration officials claimed that there was a direct connection between Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden. Destroying Saddam Hussein's regime, then, was seen as a vital element in defeating Bin Laden and winning the War on Terror. It later came to light, of course, that such speculation were far from the truth. Saddam's regime was well-known to be the enemy of Islamic movements in Iraq, many saw that Saddam's regime is one of the most tyrannical rulers in Muslim world with an ideology of Baathism which mean were extremely contradict with any Islamic movements such al-Qaeda.

To what extent have the Bush's War on Terror policies been successful? Bush's War on Terror, of course, did not just have one goal, but several. One of the goals that Bush announced was that he wanted to prevent another attack on the American homeland such as occurred on 9/11. At this, he succeeded: there was no similar attack on US soil either during the remainder of his presidency or afterward. This does not mean, of course, that it couldn't happen again. And al-Qaeda (or its sympathizers) has launched deadly attacks in many countries allied to the United States, including Britain, Spain and others. Still, the fear that arose at the time of 9/11 that it might be just the beginning of a series of attacks inside the United States was not borne out.

Another goal that Bush announced was that US forces would capture or



administrations in several respects. Whereas Bush had pursued a unilateralist foreign policy, Obama was determined to pursue a multilateral one. It was Bush's unilateralism, especially regarding the use of force that had alienated America's allies and the Muslim world. Indeed, there were many who claimed that American foreign policy under Bush was more of a threat to the security of others than was al-Qaeda. The United States clearly did not benefit from such an image. Obama, then, insisted on pursuing a multilateral policy in conjunction with America's allies and partners. This would at least improve America's relations with them.

Under Obama America no longer water boards detainees, but that stopped on Mr. Bush's watch. Obama promised to close Guantanamo, but so did Bush – and it is still in operation. Obama has withdrawn combat troops from Iraq, but sent more to Afghanistan and used drones to kill far more suspected terrorists in Pakistan. He said in Cairo that the plight of the Palestinians was intolerable, but the Palestinians are still stateless. To Muslim eyes, the formerly exotic Obama has metamorphosed in office into just another American president, doing the things American presidents do to defend America's interests.

The distinction strategy between Obama and Bush is only on how the “war on terror” appears. If Bush's “preemptive strike” strategy was aggressive one, oppositely Obama tries to appear kinder and softer to rebuild the America's image in international arena. Even though the fight is still on its way in Iraq and Afghanistan and Obama send more troops to Afghanistan. The US Obama's speech in Egypt was considered to be the new goal of US policy toward the

Islamic world. Although he seemed have more positive attitude toward the Islamic world, but American policy under Obama as cruel as with the Bush administration. Not like Bush who spit words of hate, Obama used the term 'soft power' and an attractive personal appearance to cover his goals.

### C. The Media And The War On Terror

Media has a very important role in effecting the mass's viewpoint. Media can be categorized as an independent movement. Journalists can be more influential than any government official in setting the political agenda. Reporters recognize this when they congratulate themselves for performing their "watchdog" function, forcing issues into the public discussion when politicians or officeholders would prefer otherwise.

Relating to the "war on terror", According to the US news and World report:

"After repeated missteps since the 9/11 attacks, the U.S. government has embarked on a campaign of political warfare unmatched since the height of the Cold War. From military psychological-operations teams and CIA covert operatives to openly funded media and think tanks, Washington is plowing tens of millions of dollars into a campaign to influence not only Muslim societies but also Islam itself."<sup>15</sup>

Since the 911, US foreign policy in most of Muslim countries made the

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<sup>15</sup> David E. Kaplan Hearts, Minds and Dollars. US News & World Report  
"The War on Terror: A New Approach" Archived on March 21st 2010

US loosing the sympathy from Islamic world and Arabic world. According to Edward Djerjian the ex US ambassador to Syria and Israel on his report entitled "Changing Minds, Winning Peace," said that "If America does not describe itself to the Muslim world; the extremist shall do it". This report is based on the poling proved that most of Muslims in 26 Islamic and Arabic world looked at the US as an occupation forces and the spirit of anti-US was increasing. And then the article carries on to say that:

"In at least two dozen countries, Washington has quietly funded Islamic radio and TV shows, course work in Muslim schools, Muslim think tanks, political workshops or other programs that promote moderate Islam. Federal aid is going to restore Mosques, publish Quran and even build Islamic schools."<sup>16</sup>

In another report by Rand, a sixteen hundred employee nonprofit organization that provides analysis to the US Department of Defense. So it is connected to the Pentagon and somehow Rand Cooperation has taken in liking, lately, on this issue of "Battle of minds and hearts" and they have written more than one publication on this topic. In the report entitled "Civil Democratic Islam", one of the US strategies to win the battle of idea against "terrorism" is encouraging journalists to investigate issues of corruption, hypocrisy, and immorality in fundamentalist and terrorist circles.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*

This is an undoubtedly fact that Israel lobbies are very strong in the government of the United States and become the biggest lobby in US government. There are some Israel lobbies like AIPAC, ZOA and many others non-governmental corporation which have big influences in formulating the US policies in Muslim world. Jewish is very dominant in United States Industry, such as entertainment, business, news channel, radio network and any other media that

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