The War on Terror
Vs
The War on Slavery

الحرب على الإرهاب
في مواجهة
الحرب على الاستعباد

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Outrage might break out if the Americans are openly told that those who are described as terrorists think of themselves as warriors against slavery, and as such they are viewed by millions. Even that these open words might not find a way to be heard or read by the American public. The mass media in the US isn't anymore the fourth center of authority, the academicians have lost so much of their courage to handle political issues scientifically. Patriotic rhetoric that hides huge private interests is blinding so many eyes and silencing so many tongues.

On 13/6/2003, I sent my friend professor Patrick Peritore of the University of Missouri, Columbia an article entitled "Do the Americans Like to Listen?" on the hope of getting it published in a magazine or a newspaper; but he advised that time wasn't ripe. I thought that thoughts should be made public before it is too late, or say ripe, but was there any medium ready at that time to publish?

The following was written:

The American people were enthusiastic about the war on Iraq and gave President Bush the needed support. At the time, for an Arab to address the Americans was hopeless due to the high degree of public opinion manipulation and mobilization from the side of both the American administration and the mass media. It looked as if the American public was very much taken by rhetoric and national slogans. Reason wasn't the proper medium of communication.

Because I am a graduate of an American university, my indigenous people kept asking me about the level of awareness that the Americans have about the issues of Arabia including Iraq. The Americans, as I used to reiterate, are neither concerned about nor interested in international issues. The American foreign policy is so much influenced by huge economic interests and the Jewish lobbies that work on behalf of Israel. For the ordinary American, the war on Iraq was most probably an amusing computer game.

Now, time is ripe to bring out the following points:
The war in Iraq is far from over. Americans and Iraqis are killed or injured daily. The bloodshed is still going on, a thing that neither the Americans nor the Iraqis need. It was almost impossible to convey to the Americans at the time of hot patriotic speeches facts about how the people of my area think about America, but as time passes, more and more people in America will discover that they were misled, and will find that Arab and Islamic resistance in Iraq is mounting. The US does not enjoy a nice image in the area, and the people are fed up with what they understand as American continuous aggression. However, I don't think that the American people would like to experience something similar to Vietnam.
It is true that Saddam was a ferocious and ruthless dictator, but this is true for all Arab rulers except for Lebanon. If America is interested in the democratization of Arabia, the Arab people would love to see the American army toppling Arab regimes starting from Morocco on the Atlantic and ending in Kuwait on the Gulf. But the problem is that the Arab people have doubts if America is truly a democratic country. My people are very much educated on international issues and so many of them have concluded that the American administration together with the mass media are dishonest in providing objective and even

handed information. Besides, America has been there in Kuwait for almost thirteen years and no attempt has been made toward democratization. Kuwait is still under a tribal patriarchal regime. A journalist was arrested just few days ago because he mildly criticized the ruling family. The Arabs also question why Saddam not Mubarak or the king of morocco or Saudi Arabia.
In as far as weapons of mass destruction are concerned, there are around forty-five countries that own chemical weapons, and there are nine that own nuclear capabilities among of which is Israel which is defined by the Arabs as their main enemy. Why all of these countries have a right to own while Iraq doesn't? two countries have used weapons of mass destruction so far: the US and Iraq. If Iraq is irresponsible, then the US is irresponsible. The US showed also irresponsibility by tolerating the use of chemicals by Saddam against the Kurds and the Iranians. What makes the use of these arms ethically accepted at one time and unethical to own them at another? Nevertheless, where are these arms that were described to the American public as a threat to American security?

For an Arab, the war on Iraq was an Israeli need. It is true that America has an interest in the oil of Iraq and the region but everybody is sure that the Arabs are not going to drink the oil but to sell it. Israel thinks that the Arabs should be kept weak all the time so as to insure its military and economic supremacy. The US has become more or less like an Israeli puppet through Zionist and Jewish lobbies who have been penetrating the ideological and religious fabrics of the Americans. These lobbies are influential culturally and politically, and it is very hard for any American president to evade the pressure they pose. Israel thought that Saddam might be owning destructive weapons, and it wouldn't be a losing business if America is involved in a war. Israel has so much to gain including an increasing level of Arab hatred for the Americans, the destruction of Arab might and receiving American military and financial aid.

As an Arab who studied and lived in the US, I know it is very hard in America for the sound of reason to overshadow the sound of power. I don't mean to be offending but to say what I believe is the truth It is still extremely important to realize that power without brains is more disastrous than brains without power, and those who think with their muscles finally drag themselves and their people into chaos and frustration. The American President has been jeopardizing the interests of the US by accelerating and escalating the feelings of enmity toward the US in the area which in turn will produce actions against the Americans and their interests everywhere. Thus, the Americans and the Arabs will be losers; and all the talk about terrorism remains ideological rather than humanitarian.

Neither the Arab regimes nor Israel will do America any good. Israel is a very demanding spoiled kid with endless needs and demands, and the Arab regimes stain those who side with them. Siding with the Arab people is certainly the best investment the American administration can do for the Americans in the land of the Arabs.

Terrorism Vs Slavery

On a similar token, the war on what is described as terrorism isn't more sagacious. Bull horns might be effective, but also they might be self damaging, a thing that the American administration hates to conceive. Excessive pride is as disastrous as cowardice, and single mindedness leaves one almost blind. The US thought that terrorism will be eliminated once the muscle show starts, but almost everybody now is becoming more convinced that American actions are terrorism nourishing. Instead of sending Bin Laden to oblivion, American policies have turned him into a heroic international symbol whose picture starts to appear on the chests of those who think of themselves as revolutionaries or opponents of US domination.

American description of Bin Laden and his followers as lovers of darkness and the enemies of democracy is the least insightful. It doesn't require so much intellect to hate your enemy and to equate him with the ugliest possible descriptions; a thing that saves so much time and effort in mobilizing and manipulating an uneducated public. Demagogues don't need to be scientific or logical but emotions stimulators.

Although I realize how weird and offending it might appear, I must be truthful and say that Osama Bin Laden doesn't invest his time thinking of democracy. It is true that he is a fundamentalist, but he doesn't adore backwardness. As far as I know from the different pits of information that I accumulated over the years, he is a simple religious man who thinks that the past glory of the Arabs should be restored under the banner of Islam. He is a profound believer to the extent of rejecting all earthly philosophies as contradictory to the heavenly ordained teachings of Islam. Abandoning the joyous earthly life that his millions could provide indicates his religious devotion. Instead of spending luxurious lusty nights in Monte Carlo or Las Vegas, he chose to live the troubling nights of fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan.

Osama Bin Laden might be suffering from certain psychological problems, but one cannot diminish a man with his patience, persistence and determination into a lunatic. One might disagree with him, and be at odds with him, but that shouldn't end in downgrading scientific approaches toward understanding the man. This is particularly true for the Americans who extended assistance during the fight against the Soviets. Knowing the bitter truth is much more fruitful than self-deception.

Bin Laden strongly believes that the Arabs and the Moslems are enslaved by the West, particularly the US. Whether this is true or not isn't the issue, but the issue is that Bin Laden is one of those millions of Arabs who strongly feel and believe that the Arabs are enslaved. It is widely believed that the Western countries particularly the US and Britain have enslaved the Arabs for a very long time. The colonization process started as early as 1832 when the French invaded Algeria. Other European countries started jumping over different Arab regions. Britain had the largest share.

The British and the French fragmented the Arab land into so many small and insignificant political entities. Syria and the Land of Two Rivers were divided into six entities, the Nile Valley into two, North Africa into five, and the Arabian Peninsula into seven (six after the unification of Yemen). Britain together with other Western countries have created Israel at the expense of the Palestinians. And now, it is thought that the US is planning to fragment the fragments. Iraq might become three entities, Saudia Arabia several and Sudan three.

The United States has replaced the traditional colonial states in its enslavement of the Arabs. Dictatorships embodied in mostly tribal regimes have been posted by Western powers and still guarded by the US. Regardless of the US says in the media, there is a wide spread belief in the Arab street that America supports the dictators, and if it wasn't for the American guardianship, these dictators could have been toppled a long time ago. It is very hard for the Arab street to believe that the US is a democracy advocate.

So many Arabs believe that the US has been robbing the wealth of the Arabs particularly that of the Gulf States. They view this wealth as a source of evil because it led to several unhappy conclusions: Arab leaders, motivated by their lust have been wasting this wealth in a very dishonorable manner; the western countries have strengthened the grip on the Arab Land and don't allow for real political independence; Arab parasitic consumption behavior has been enforced at the expense of policies of investment and proper allocation of income. It is assumed that Arab leaders will be removed and the wealth liberated if Western countries are uprooted from Arabia.

Supporting Israel is another major issue that concerns the Arabs. The ordinary Arab is always struck with the heavy burden of the humiliating defeats that Israel has been inflicting upon him/her. The US is viewed together with the Arab regimes as partners. There is an explicit alliance between the US, Israel and Arab dictators.

No different from the ordinary Arab individual, Bin Laden thinks that the Arabs are enslaved by the West. Considering this conclusion, as I believe, is inevitable for understanding Bin Laden phenomenon. Bin Laden isn't really one individual, but he is millions, and if it wasn't Bin Laden, it could have been somebody else. The names might differ but the approach is the same. There are millions who believe that Bin Laden is doing the right thing, and they are ready to sacrifice themselves if they have the chance. Again, I assert that the message these millions would like to extend to the US is "get off our backs."

The problem with US politicians is that they listen to Arab leaders and westernized intellectuals. This is a clumsy and stupid approach to understand the Arabs. Arab leaders are burglars who deceive their own people, and could never be an honest source of information; while westernized intellectuals are detached from the grassroots. The US was told that her soldiers are going to enjoy the rose parades that will be furnished for them in Iraq, but apparently the reception wasn't up to the illusions.

Violence

How to decide who is more violent, the US or Al-Qaeda? If one looks on primitive methods, Al-Qaeda is more violent; but the US is superior in terms of sophistication. If the number of killings is the parameter, the US is more violent. Looking into war expenditures, the US allocates billions. Targeting civilians as a prime war-field, Bin Laden is more violent.

It isn't a difficult task to purify thy-self, but understanding this self requires more than self-evaluation. Apparently, American intellectuals have been caught in the middle of the mob, and find it risky to speak up openly. Although scientific analysis coming out of the US could be read here and there, but reluctance in making clear cut conclusions is still prevalent. Evading the truth might be the safest method at times of patriotic enthusiasm, but at times of relaxation it might appear to be treason. If the American administration is motivated by partisan or private interests, American intellectuals should be the trustees.

Cursing the enemy isn't enough in freeing the world from violence. One should think that the enemy might be just reacting. The American approach has been escalating violence rather than quelling it, and the Americans are the most to suffer because they are the prime target. Violence is expected to remain a costly vicious circle unless brains are held with soft hands.

The Absolute Truth

The international community is facing the dilemma of absolutism. If Bin Laden thinks that the whole world should be purified according to his beliefs, the US is no less. The heavenly truth of Bin Laden is faced with the earthly one of the US. Through history, the whole world suffered so much from the atrocities of the absolutists, and the US needs not to exclude herself. Every absolutist thought that he/she is the savior and ended to be the destroyer.

If Bin Laden's thought is dangerous to the international community, the American thought is no less, and could be more dangerous. At least, Bin Laden isn't working toward the Islamization of the world, but the US is moving forcefully toward its Americanization.

The Mass Media

The stronger always has an edge in the mass media, in propagating his/her views and diffusing them. The stronger owns, but the weaker doesn't or owns less. The stronger has the means of influence while the weaker is always bewildered. Financial, economic and military powers rally supporters, but poverty and military weakness are less attractive. The mistakes and the wrong-doings of the stronger are almost forgiven, but those of the weaker are inflated.

The United States has the might to be heard and, at so many times, obeyed while her enemies who are described as terrorists are cursed by so many states, and rarely praised by anybody. A quick look on the statistics of killings committed in the wars of the US give a solid conclusion that the so called terrorists are far lagging behind. Even in the recent wars such as the one on Iraq, the US has proved to be more of a skillful killer. The US has the power to mobilize the mass media, hide her acts of genocide and mass killings, and to distort the image of its adversaries.

As there are people and nations who receive the American interpretation of things as truthful, there are hundreds of millions who mistrust America. Although the mass media are very influential in shaping the public opinion, there are growing numbers in the international community who doubt the neutrality of these media. And in this turbulent world, states and leaders who seek a better understanding of events should free themselves from the confinement of the media and go directly to the grass roots. The media aren't anymore a trusted authority, and ordinary people are the best to express their pains and strains.