Afghanistan:
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Editor's Note

This is the first book of its kind that presents a compelling insider's perspective with some valuable insight into the war and occupation of Afghanistan.

Abid Jan takes you into the minds of the warriors on the battle field in Afghanistan and to the heart of the decisions that put them there. In this remarkable piece of work, the author nails the tragedy and absurdity of the prep-planned war on Afghanistan. Abid Jan has harnessed his first hand knowledge and in-depth analysis to produce a work of incantatory power in which the lies and misinformation about the Taliban are allowed to collapse by sheer weight of accumulation.

This book gives the first and only clearest and most persuasive explanation of how Osama bin Laden was set up for shouldering the blame of 9/11 attacks, why the Taliban become a prime target of Islamophobes and why perpetrators of 9/11 felt the need to commit this heinous crime.

Written with great clarity and precision, this book exposes the extra ordinary religious motivation and political hypocrisy behind the march to war on Afghanistan.

This is the first book which does more than devastatingly refute the mendacity of the US Afghanistan policy and proves that the war on Afghanistan is illegal and illegitimate by all standards of international law. Abid Jan presents a chilling portrait of the religious forces which have commandeered American foreign policy, revealing the arrogance, assumptions and contradictions about Islam that have had such disastrous consequences, not only for Afghanistan but the world at large.

This book is dedicated to the victims of 9/11—the 3000, who lost their lives in the United States and the thousands upon thousands who died and continue to die in Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan—and the truth seekers, who are trying to expose the real culprits behind the most horrible crime of our age.

Preface

WHILE condemnations for Iraq's occupation continue to dominate the headlines, Afghanistan has slipped beyond the radar screens of both the so-called mainstream media as well as the anti-war groups and independent web bloggers. For the most part critics of the American empire on the left have also approved the official story of 9/11 and the rationale behind the war and occupation of Afghanistan.

For the first time in the history of nation-states, the occupation of a sovereign state has been globally accepted as fully legitimate. The silence and assumed legitimacy of the U.S. occupation of Afghanistan are directly proportional to the Taliban's presumed illegitimacy and the official story of 9/11. Many researchers are exposing the truth behind the official story. However, there is hardly anyone willing to unearth the very foundations of the Taliban's presumed illegitimacy.

The co-opted media and other vested interests played a pivotal role in indoctrinating minds which now consider the occupation of Afghanistan as a benevolent exercise. In fact, it is far worse than the Soviet occupation, which was, at least, reviewed and

condemned at the United Nations on almost a monthly basis.

Today, we are witnessing a strange paradox. While support for Bush's War in Iraq is ebbing away due to relentless pressure by the many anti-war movements, the war goes on in Afghanistan without any meaningful criticism from any quarter. Those, who criticize the voluminous lies and deceptions regarding the Iraq war, are proving themselves to be unwitting victims of much bigger lies with regards to the war of aggression on Afghanistan.

Independent researchers challenge the official story of 9/11, but hardly anyone attempts to connect the dots to see that the bloody drama of 9/11 was staged in order to create a pretext for invading Afghanistan. Like the lies about Saddam's Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), 9/11 was used to justify the invasion of Afghanistan. The lies about Iraq's WMD and the official story of 9/11 are mere ruses used to wage wars which were planned well in advance.

Unfortunately, despite many researchers drawing the conclusion that 9/11 was an "inside job," there is hardly any move to show that 9/11 was a small part of a bigger plan. Analysts are studying facts surrounding the mysterious collapse of WTC towers and the "stand down" of the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD). However, they ignore that the *why 9/11* aspect is just as important as the *how*.

Invasion of Afghanistan was the first military step towards institutionalizing the war against a faith based on praxis, rather than theoretical theological formulations. In the case of Iraq, the motives seem slightly different due to a mix of arrogance, revenge and greed. In the case of Afghanistan, however, the motivation came from the crusading spirit, determined to never allow Muslims to live by Islam.

There is no other explanation to the contrary. Sane minds would never commit the heinous crime of 9/11 against their own people without the hope of achieving higher objectives than mere oil and pipelines—objectives, which they may consider worth

killing 3000 Americans, destroying the landmark buildings and hitting the Pentagon. This book digs out the facts to show the real motives behind 9/11 and the consequences of considering occupation of Afghanistan as legitimate.

Even those who agree with the official story admit that the U.S. administration had "prior knowledge." The question they ignore is that if the administration lied, if the administration ignored warnings, why did it do so? What was the motive? What did it want to gain from allowing these barbaric acts against its own people? The answer is simple: to pave the way for invasion and occupation of Afghanistan for which the administration could not come up with a convincing pretext.

The answer to the next important question, "Why Afghanistan?" lies in the explanation given in the following chapters.

Furthermore, some researchers, such as A. S. Adler, are now coming to the conclusion that the United States' "judgment of the Taliban was seriously mistaken and the overthrow of their regime unjustified." In a public introductory letter about his book, *As thou Goest by the Way,* A.S. Adler writes: "[the Taliban] appear to have been what they claimed to be: carefully observant Moslems with no interest in attacking the US or in harboring those who would commit such acts. As an Islamic government they were required by their own sense of duty to God to provide a suitable judicial proceeding under Moslem law for any accused before that person could be turned over for punishment. Our response to them—essentially a combination of threats and bribes—was as likely to succeed with them as using the same techniques to try to get them to eat pork in public."

Despite admitting the core reality, these researchers doubt that sanctions, attacks and war against the Taliban was religiously motivated. This book provides extensive documentation to prove that such sentiment exists and the scale of the religious offensive is so vast that anti-Taliban sentiments arising from other sources hardly matter. The best of other anti-Taliban sources include:

The various cleptocracies of Central Asia—dependent on Western support for their survival; the Big Brother backers in the Security Council—hardly any less Islamophobic than the United States; the secularists, feminists, gays, statue lovers, big time drug dealers and their state sponsors—equally used as pawns in promoting anti-Taliban campaign. This book shows how these groups and individuals alone could not effectively demonize, let alone overthrow, the Taliban without the support of covert crusaders in the U.S. "mainstream" media, politics, academia and military.

Of course, there was a need—on the part of the Clinton Administration to respond to the bombings of the East African Embassies—even if it understood that the Taliban had nothing to do with those bombings. However, this need was the result of a much wider anti-Taliban campaign. One needs to ask, how did this need arise in the first place? Who was behind the campaign and what was the motivation?

Arguing that Clinton needed to respond is no different than saying Bush Administration needed to respond after 9/11. The question is: Who was behind the terrorist attacks and why did they need 9/11? This book deconstructs the myth that the U.S. administration was caught with their pants down and it had to show its resolve and competency. It is naïve to believe that it went after the Taliban— a regime that almost nobody cared for—merely to look tough. The question is: Why did no body care for the Taliban? Who brought situation to this extent, particularly if researchers, such as A.S. Adler, now conclude that the Taliban were "carefully observant Moslems with no interest in attacking the US or in harboring those who would commit such acts."

Based on discussions with the Taliban officials and the "Al-Qaeda" leaders, and first hand observation of the Taliban rule, this book is an attempt to expose the real motives behind demonizing the Taliban, the execution of 9/11 and the invasion of Afghanistan.

INTRODUCTION

The Pre-planned Aggression

MOST OF us believe that the war on Afghanistan was not only a tremendous success, but also perfectly legitimate. Victory was achieved quickly. The Taliban government was overthrown and Al-Qaeda a non-entity before 9/11 was dispersed. "Radical Islamists" in neighboring Pakistan accepted it as a defeat and seemed demoralized. After the fact, some scoffed at the backwardness and weakness of the Taliban. Above all everyone has now accepted that the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan is the result of the 9/11 attacks in New York and the Taliban's "harboring terrorists."

The events of 9/11 generated worldwide sympathy for the United States Almost all heads of state sent condolences and pledged assistance in hunting down the alleged perpetrators. The Bush administration, sensing the excellent opportunity, seemed happy to feign consulting widely for extra support for the pre-planned war on Afghanistan. Without any real investigations and confirmation of the instant allegation, the U.N. Security Council unanimously passed a resolution requiring all member countries to pursue "terrorists" and the financial systems supporting them.

NATO invoked Article 5 of its Charter, declaring 9/11 as an attack on all nineteen NATO states. The Organization of American States followed suit. Few if any states were to reject requests for assistance from the United States over the following months. We will assess the legal value of these developments in chapter 6 of this book. Suffice it to mention here that 9/11 generated enormous sympathy for the United States.

As a result, the Bush administration immediately identified Osama bin Laden and the least known organization by the name of Al-Qaeda as the culprits.[1] Interestingly, Three days before President Bush's inauguration, Colin Powell at his confirmation hearing discussed for the first time his priorities as the nation's new secretary of state. He spoke on 20 topics—from China and the Balkans to U.N. sanctions and Iraq. He never mentioned the Al-Qaeda "terrorist group."[2] Similarly, Tony Karon's exclusive report in *Time* magazine, *Bin Laden Rides Again: Myth vs. Reality*, was published just two months before 9/11, but despite detailing the hype surrounding Osama bin Laden, the report made no mention of an Al-Qaeda "terrorist network."[3]

In the heat of 9/11, the Taliban were also declared guilty by association. Bush said, he wanted Osama "dead or alive,"[4] and though many found this primitive, very few could understand the desire for vengeance. It is interesting that until 9/11, Bush was very much a lame duck president, the butt of jokes, and under attack for the way his election depended on fraud (later proven) in Florida. By starting a war, he united his country behind him. The events of 9/11 not only saved his presidency but also helped in his re-election.

On September 15, 2001, Bush gave the Taliban an ultimatum: hand over Osama and close his camps, or face the consequences. Afghanistan's Grand Islamic Council did recommend that head of state Mullah Mohammad Omar persuade Osama to leave, and United States and British politicians, as well as the opposition Northern Alliance within Afghanistan, repeatedly said that there

are signs of splits within the Taliban.[5]

On September 18, 2001, the Foreign Minister said it might extradite Osama if the United States provided "solid and convincing" evidence of his involvement in terrorism. Having no evidence, not even a shred of it, Bush told Congress, "There will be no negotiations or discussions. . . there's no need to discuss innocence or guilt . . . we know he's guilty."[6]

The Taliban ambassador to Pakistan, and other leaders, kept repeating the request for evidence. Discussions were proceeding between Pakistani diplomats and clerics and the Taliban. Musharraf also declared that the "Taliban's days are numbered." The Taliban in the meanwhile agreed to handover Osama to an Islamic court in Peshawar, Pakistan. In late September and early October 2001, leaders of Pakistan's two religious parties negotiated Osama's extradition to Pakistan to stand trial for 9/11. However, a US official said, significantly, that "casting our objectives too narrowly" risked "a premature collapse of the international effort [to overthrow the Taliban] if by some lucky chance Mr Bin Laden was captured".[7] The US chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, General Myers, went so far as to say that "the goal has never been to get Bin Laden."[8] Pakistan's General Musharraf also vetoed the deal under United States pressure.[9] The United States said its demands were "clear and nonnegotiable."

On October 9, 2001, the *New York Times* reported that a faction of the Taliban leadership had met secretly with Pakistani officials the day before and said they would try to negotiate the handover of bin Laden if the US stopped bombing for two or three days. The *Times* reported, however, that Pakistani and US officials were doubtful the overture would resolve the crisis because Bush "has said repeatedly that he will not negotiate, or even discuss, terms for the handover of Mr. bin Laden."

The whistle blowing FBI agent Robert Wright told ABC News that FBI headquarters wanted no arrests.[10] In November 2001, the US Air Force complained it had had Al-Qaeda and Taliban

leaders in its sights as many as 10 times over the previous six weeks, but had been unable to attack because they did not receive permission quickly enough.[11] This evidence comes from sources already in the public domain and clearly proves that it is incompatible with what the United States government has said from day one of the attacks. In fact, the war was already planned. The stage was set. Osama was the perfect ruse for invading Afghanistan.

This intransigence was the hallmark of the United States policy of not listening to or accepting any proposal that might become an alternative to the war of aggression. Logically, the primary concern of the United States should have been to find out the real culprits, not closing the doors on solutions other than going on a pre-determined killing spree for invasion and occupation. The United States should have also provided evidence, as it promised,[12] and done more negotiating.

Facing more parliamentary criticism in Britain, British Prime Minister Tony Blair produced a dossier of evidence on October 4, 2001, which contained more pretext than proof. The United States could have provided evidence only if the administration had it. Secretary of State Colin Powell favored providing evidence, arguing it would win more allies. CIA Director Tenet added that it might help to split the Taliban. But Defense Secretary Rumsfeld strenuously opposed producing a dossier, saying it would set a dangerous precedent for future military interventions when the evidence might not be so extensive. Rumsfeld knew that the evidence for invading Afghanistan was not extensive either. He also knew that cooking evidence would be a time consuming task, which might become a precedent that might hamper further such illegal actions. His argument won the day, especially after Pakistan became the first Muslim state to accept the official story of 9/11—it got "aid" instead of evidence.[13]

Whether the Taliban would have accepted evidence is less important than whether the world—especially the Muslim world—

would be swayed toward or away from the United States case. The statement, "There's no need to discuss innocence or guilt. . . we know he's guilty" has left no doubt about the standards of American justice, an impression furthered by United States announcements that "terrorists" would be tried before special military tribunals, not regular law courts. This has been confirmed from the way the United States is running several concentration camps all over the world, particularly Afghanistan, which it claimed to be liberating from the "tyranny" of the Taliban. The consequence was skepticism about American claims. Later events have confirmed that the claims were without basis.

Something does not add up. Negotiations might have continued. The next demand might have been to hand over al-Qaeda leaders to a neutral country. All these things came out in the Taliban proposals. One step might have been the setting up a U.N. International Criminal Tribunal for Terrorism. But, by then, the United States was rejecting every proposal of a peaceful resolution and all extensions of international criminal law. Alternatively, the United States might have appeared reasonable by making public the substantial evidence it claimed to have. Had the Taliban rejected all evidence and compromise, the United States would have won the moral high ground for military action.

Negotiations were not prejudicial to a military response, which despite prior arrangements took 25 days to refine and implement anyway. The United States would have won more general support for its coming war by even *appearing* to negotiate. Alternatively, if Osama was handed over to a third party (OIC or Pakistan as the Taliban suggested), that would have been good, since the United States had ostensibly no vital interest in the Taliban other than that they stop harboring terrorists. However, the United States spurned all negotiations, which shows the falsehood of the assumption that the United States had no vital interest in the removal of the Taliban. Actually, everything was staged to achieve

that very objective, despite beliefs to the contrary.

Gallup polls in 37 countries in late September asked the question: "In your opinion, once the identity of the terrorists is known, should the American government launch a military attack on the country or countries where the terrorists are based, or should the American government seek to extradite the terrorists to stand trial?" Only in the United States, Israel and India (these two countries were already warring on "terrorists") majorities favored the military option. Around 80 percent of Europeans and 90 percent of South Americans favored extradition and trial, as did 80 percent of Bosnians and 69 percent of Pakistanis—the only Muslim countries surveyed. This shows the reasonable, rational and logical response as opposed to a response of a predetermined war.

The United States started with such enormous deception for gaining maximum sympathy, that its rejecting to negotiate solution with the Taliban did not seem damaging. Most allies pledged support, as did rivals like Russia and India with their own terrorist agendas to pursue. China and regional powers as varied as the Central Asian states, Saudi Arabia and Turkey all gave assistance without question, usually permitting bases and flying rights in their countries. Some were bribed. Others, such as Pakistan, were threatened with total war.

Numerous lies regarding the Taliban had already poisoned the public mind. There was much ado about a few isolated incidents. However, those who lived under the Taliban, specifically for observing if the Taliban were really committing the alleged crimes, testified that many of the "well attested" claims against the Taliban had no basis in fact. Once the war started, and the extradition and trial alternative was dropped from polls, far more Westerners who supported the war—and most people everywhere—deplored its civilian casualties. However, the countries, which sent troops to assist the United States, were almost all Western, and only the Anglo-Saxons—Americans, British, Ca-

nadians and Australians—did any serious fighting.

The Muslim world was quite aware and concerned about the issues, which Osama was raising. Osama had declared that the United States sided with repressive Muslim regimes, killed Iraqis, stationed U.S. troops on holy Muslim soil, and supported Israel against the Palestinians. All these facts were widely believed, because they were true and based on solid evidence. Even Blair, in a lame attempt to blunt Osama's message, made Pro-Palestinian statements in preparation of the assault on the Taliban, stating that the "peace talks" in the Middle East must be resumed immediately and establishment of a Palestinian state "is essential for peace."[14] Blair met with Yasir Arafat on October 15, 2001 and declared, "A viable Palestinian state as part of a negotiated and agreed settlement… The end we desire is a just peace in which the Israelis and Palestinians live side by side, each in their own state, secure and able to prosper and develop."[15] These proved to be the same lies with which the United States and its allies tried to deceived Palestinians and the rest of Muslims in 1991 with Madrid Conference.

Some Muslims believed the official story of 9/11. However, those, who knew the potential of Osama and his followers and the level of sophistication such attacks required, instantly rejected these allegations. Brimming with confidence after the successful day of 9/11, Bush referred to his pre-planned war as a "crusade," hardly the way to endear himself to Muslims. The American media also tended to answer the question, "Why do they hate us?" by referring to the nature of Islam and 1.2 billion Muslims, rather than discussing the real issues. The so-called main-stream newspapers, such as the *New York Times*, started developing a mindset for religious war with one article after another with such titles as "This is a Religious War: September 11 was Only the Beginning,"[16] "Yes, this is About Islam,"[17] "The Core of Islamic Rage,"[18] "*Jihad* 101,"[19] "The Deep Intellectual Roots of Islamic Terror,"[20] "Faith and the Secular State,"[21] "Kipling Knew

What the United States May Learn Now,"[22] "Al-Jazeera: What the Muslim World is Watching,"[23] "The Real Cultural Wars," "The Revolt of Islam,"[24] "The One True Faith,"[25] "Holy Warriors Escalate an Old War on a New Front,"[26] and "Feverish Protests Against the West Trace to Grievances Ancient and Modern."[27]

There is compelling evidence, to be presented below, that the 9/11 terrorist attacks could never happen the way the official story is presented to the world. These attacks were extremely sophisticated operations, planned at a very high level for using as an excuse to start an already planned invasion of Afghanistan. The primary objective as discussed in Chapter 3 of this book was to stop the evolution of the Taliban's success into a global Islamic movement for liberation of the Muslim world from the colonial yoke, which Muslim countries have to bear in many forms.

It took the United States only 25 days to begin the war on Afghanistan, compared to the four and a half months of preparations before it could come to Kuwait's aid in 1990. Other military adventures also show that it is totally impossible to organize a military operation within the space of only twenty-five days. Yet, this feat was achieved against Afghanistan. The United States attacked that country on October 7, 2001, a mere twenty-five days after 9/11.

There were 25 days of apparent inaction as the Bush administration presented the façade of trying to reach a diplomatic solution to the ostensible problem. Much of the "restraint" was simply to find time to move the remaining troops and materiel into place and to browbeat reluctant countries such as Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan into providing staging areas and over flight rights. In addition, there was real concern about destabilizing many allied governments in the Muslim world. No diplomatic solution was tried; the administration's line was consistently "no negotiations."

No sovereign country could accept what the United States demanded from the Afghanistan government after 9/11 particularly

when the United States reneged on its public promise to provide any evidence about Osama's involvement in the 9/11 attacks.[28] In spite of all this, the Taliban were willing to negotiate about handing Osama over to a neutral third party. In fact, a deal had been worked out to have Osama tried in Pakistan by a tribunal that would then decide whether to turn him over to the United States. The United States government did not even want that. Its "diplomacy" was deliberately designed to lead to the war and removal of the Taliban.

On the face of it, this was a war against terrorism. The Northern Alliance, with which the United States allied to oust the Taliban, is a bunch of terrorists, known for torture, killing civilians, and raping women.[29]

The most preposterous suggestion that came to the fore in preparation for the pre-planned invasion of Afghanistan was the United States identification of the culprit behind the 9/11 attacks within hours of the event. While it is reasonable that a list of suspects would immediately come to mind in such circumstance. It is another matter to be so certain of a single individual's guilt to the extent that a state is prepared to attack another sovereign state and remove its government. Within minutes after the attack, a parade of politicians and "terrorism experts" appeared on every TV channel, all claiming that the attacks were the work of Osama Bin Laden. Within hours FBI agents were raiding homes of one of the alleged hijackers in Florida (see Chapter 5). Within a few days, all "19 hijackers" were "identified" and the news channels plastered these faces over television screens. This is preposterous. If there had been so much advance knowledge, why the United States could not prevent the attacks in the first place? How could the U.S. authorities have been so certain that they were immediately ready to attack another country?

Even General Musharraf claimed that the evidence the US authorities shared with him was good enough to convict someone in a court of law.[30] The truth is that even more than four years

down the road, the world has not seen a single shred of the evidence he claimed to have seen.

Within a few days, the United States officials were proclaiming Osama's guilt as 100 percent certain, using the expression, "his fingerprints are everywhere,"[31] and the United States was already threatening to attack Afghanistan.

The extent of absurdity of the United States claims is evident from the timeline of its establishing the guilt. It is not even enough time to set up a committee to discuss the personnel and logistics of an investigation into such a complex case.

It is evident that United States authorities were not only happy but also fully prepared to use the 9/11 events to start a war against Afghanistan. There is credible information, summarized below, that alleges the United States authorities were already making plans to attack Afghanistan long before 9/11.

According to *Jane's Intelligence Review*, India joined USA led plans against Afghanistan in March 2001.[32] Rahul Bedi's report, *India joins anti-Taliban coalition,* clearly states: "India is believed to have joined Russia, the USA and Iran in a concerted front against Afghanistan's Taliban regime."

Shireen M. Mazari, Director General of the Institute of Strategic Studies in Islamabad, wrote on August 23, 2001 in daily *The News*:

> …the U.S. is gradually building up towards some military action against the Taliban government. Its first such effort, which was primarily a "Get Osama" one, failed miserably—and the trauma of that cannot be ignored. After all, the only super power of the day could not get Osama from a "ragtag" bunch of Afghans calling themselves the Taliban! Now the U.S. has decided to couch their "Get Osama" policy within a wider garb of a "Get the Taliban" policy. It all began with the imposition of sanctions against the Taliban while the Northern Alliance was heavily armed by France, Russia and India. Alongside the sanctions, the U.S. chose to provide aid to Afghans directly so as to undermine the Taliban government from within. Unfortunately for the U.S., all this has not led to the removal of the

Taliban from Kabul![33]

The signs of U.S. plans against the Taliban were evident since a long time. Earlier, on February 7, 2001, the CIA Director George Tenet told Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that Afghanistan is "growing in potential for state fragmentation and failure that we have observed this past year." Contrary to the realities on the ground, where Northern Alliance was helpless against the Taliban despite assistance from many countries abroad, Tenet told the committee: "The Afghan civil war will continue into the foreseeable future, leaving the country fragmented and unstable. The Taliban remain determined to impose its radical form of Islam on all of Afghanistan, even in the face of resistance from other ethnic groups and the Shia minority…The chaos here is providing an incubator for narcotics traffickers and militant Islamic groups operating in such places as Kashmir, Chechnya, and Central Asia."[34] There are more quotes about George Tenet's wish to start a war against the Taliban than one think.

Tenet has had at least two different plans how to support a war against the Taliban for years. One plan was in the form of a National Security Presidential Directive, the other part of an 80-country attack plan, called "worldwide attack matrix." This is even no big secret. In January 2002, the *Washington Post* wrote about this plan. It includes "propaganda operations, support for internal police and foreign intelligence services, and lethal covert action against terrorist groups or individuals."[35]

Through June and July 2001, as the *Washington Post* described, CIA Director George J. Tenet worked himself "nearly frantic" with concern. "At Langley, Tenet was nearly ready. His proposed assistance to the Northern Alliance rebels ranged from $125 million to $200 million and included money, battlefield intelligence, non-lethal equipment such as body armor and winter clothing."[36]

Bob Woodward reported in the *Washington Post* on September 18, 2001 that the CIA's paramilitary units had been working in Afghanistan for the "past 18 months." These units worked "with

tribes and warlords in southern Afghanistan," to help "create a significant new network in the region of the Taliban's greatest strength."[37] This factor alone is enough to show the length and pre-determination of the United States government to wage a war of aggression on Afghanistan.

It was later revealed by Uzbekistan that Uzbekistan and the United States had been conducting joint covert operations against Afghanistan's Taliban government "for two to three years"[38] and U.S. troops were told of a major exercise to take place mid-September 2001.[39] Reliable western military sources also say that a U.S. contingency plan to attack was complete by end of summer 2001.[40]

In 1999, the CIA found an abandoned airstrip in Afghanistan, and made plans to use it for taking agents in and out, and similar purposes. It is speculated that this is the same airstrip occupied and used as a base of operations early in the later Afghan war.[41] The same year, a joint project run by the CIA and NSA slipped into Afghanistan and placed listening devices within range of al-Qaeda's communication system.[42] If air strips were selected for taking captured Osama out of Afghanistan and all of Al-Qaeda's communications were being monitored, getting Osama should have been a piece of cake. The question is: why was Osama never captured or killed and apparently no hints of the 9/11 plot revealed? Interestingly all this happened when CIA's paramilitary units were fully involved in Afghanistan 18 months before 9/11. The answer is simple: the objective was not capturing Osama. The target was removing the Taliban from power.

CIA Director Tenet later claimed in later 1999 that the CIA established a network of agents throughout Afghanistan and other countries aimed at capturing Osama bin Laden and his deputies.[43] Tenet states that by 9/11, "a map would show that these collection programs and human networks were in place in such numbers to nearly cover Afghanistan. This array meant that, when the military campaign to topple the Taliban and destroy al-

Qaeda began [in October 2001], we were able to support it with an enormous body of information and a large stable of assets."[44] Anyone with an average intelligence can tell that these elaborate plans were never intended to capture Osama, whose whereabouts are still unknown, whereas the real objective of eliminating the Taliban government has been achieved.

By the beginning of 2000, the US had already begun "to quietly build influence" in Central Asia. The US had established significant military-to-military relationships with Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. Soldiers from those countries had been trained by Americans. The militaries of all three countries had an ongoing relationship with the National Guard of a US state—Kazakhstan with Arizona, Kyrgyzstan with Montana, Uzbekistan with Louisiana. These countries also participated in NATO's Partnership for Peace program.[45]

In April 2000, the United States gave permission to greatly expand a military base in the Persian Gulf nation of Qatar, and construction began shortly thereafter. The justification for expanding, Al Adid, a billion-dollar base, was preparedness for renewed action against Iraq.[46] This new headquarters was built of several modular buildings that allow General Franks to basically do anything in Qatar that he does in Tampa.[47] Dozens of other US military bases had sprung up in the region in the 1990s.[48] *Such facilities in Qatar later form the regional headquarters for the US attack on Afghanistan. Bush himself acknowledged importance of Qatar facility in these words: "*In Afghanistan, forces directed from here from Qatar, and headquartered in Tampa, you delivered decisive blows against the Taliban and against al Qaeda."[49]

The *Washington Post* reported on December 19, 2000 that the United States had "quietly begun to align itself with those in the Russian government calling for military action against Afghanistan… Until it backed off under local pressure, it went so far as to explore whether a Central Asian country would permit the use of its territory for such a purpose." According to the *Washington*

Post:

> Second, Assistant Secretary of State Karl Inderfurth met recently with Russia's friends in the government of India to discuss what kind of government should replace the Taliban. Thus, while claiming to oppose a military solution to the Afghan problem, the United States is now talking about the overthrow of a regime that controls nearly the entire country, in the hope it can be replaced with a hypothetical government that does not exist even on paper.[50]

Jane's Intelligence Review reported on March 15, 2001 that the United States was working with India, Iran and Russia "in a concerted front against Afghanistan's Taliban regime." India was supplying the Northern Alliance with military equipment, advisers and helicopter technicians and both India and Russia were using bases in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan for their operations.[51]

Agence France-Presse reported that General William Kernan, commander in chief of the Joint Forces Command, mentioned "the details of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan which fought the Taliban and al-Qaeda after the September 11 attacks." The scenario of dislodging the Taliban was "examined by Central Command in May 2001."[52]

US General Tommy Franks, later to head the US occupation of Afghanistan, was visiting the capital of Tajikistan by May 16, 2001. He said the Bush administration considered Tajikistan "a strategically significant country" and offered military aid. This followed a visit by a Department of Defense official earlier in 2001 and a September 2000 regional visit by Franks. The Guardian later asserted that by this time, "US Rangers were also training special troops in Kyrgyzstan.[53]

News Insight magazine from India reported on June 28, 2001 that the Indian Government supported the planned United States military incursion into Afghanistan. The article, titled "*India in anti-Taliban military plan: India and Iran will "facilitate" the planned U.S.-Russia hostilities against the Taliban,"* reported that India and Iran will "facilitate" American and Russian plans

for "limited military action" against the Taliban if the contemplated tough new economic sanctions don't bend Afghanistan's fundamentalist regime.[54] The report also included a graphic presentation of the expected military movements during the planned operation. Earlier in the month, Russian President Putin told a meeting of the Confederation of Independent States that military action against the Taliban may happen, possibly with Russian involvement using bases and forces from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan as well.[55]

Niaz Naik, a former Pakistani diplomat, said that senior U.S. officials told him in mid-July 2001, that they planned to attack Afghanistan by mid-October at the latest, before the winter snow set in.[56] On July 21, 2001, three American officials, Tom Simons (former US Ambassador to Pakistan), Karl Inderfurth (former Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs) and Lee Coldren (former State Department expert on South Asia) met with Pakistani and Russian intelligence officers in a Berlin hotel.[57] It was the third of a series of back-channel conferences called "brainstorming on Afghanistan." Taliban representatives sat in on previous meetings, but boycotted the third meeting due to worsening tensions. However, the Pakistani ISI relays information from the meeting to the Taliban.[58] At the meeting, former US State Department official Lee Coldren passes on a message from Bush officials. He later says, "I think there was some discussion of the fact that the United States was so disgusted with the Taliban that they might be considering some military action."[59]

Naik also says "it was doubtful that Washington would drop its plan even if bin Laden were to be surrendered immediately by the Taliban."[60] One specific ultimatum conveyed through this meeting to the Taliban was to choose between "carpets of bombs" or "carpets of gold."[61] Niaz Naik says Tom Simons made the "carpets" statement. Simons claims: "It's possible that a mischievous American participant, after several drinks, may have thought it smart to evoke gold carpets and carpet bombs. Even

Americans can't resist the temptation to be mischievous." Naik and the American participants deny that the pipeline was an issue at the meeting.[62] This also negates the theory that the United States dislodged the Taliban only to have facilitate gas pipelines and have access to petroleum resources.

During the summer of 2001, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld's office "sponsored a study of ancient empires—Macedonia, Rome, the Mongols—to figure out how they maintained dominance."[63] By September 9, 2001, a former National Security Presidential Directive describing a "game plan to remove al-Qaeda from the face of the Earth" was placed on Bush's desk for his signature. The plan dealt with all aspects of a war against al-Qaeda, ranging from diplomatic initiatives to military operations in Afghanistan. According to NBC News reporter Jim Miklaszewski, the "directive outlines essentially the same war plan ... put into action after the Sept. 11 attacks. The administration most likely was able to respond so quickly to the attacks because it simply had to pull the plans 'off the shelf.'"[64]

So the plan to wage a war of aggression was ready before 9/11. However, it was not possible to carry it out. Sandy Berger, Clinton's National Security Advisor, stated, "You show me one reporter, one commentator, one member of Congress who thought we should invade Afghanistan before September 11 and I'll buy you dinner in the best restaurant in New York City."[65] In July 2002, British Prime Minister Tony Blair will state: "To be truthful about it, there was no way we could have got the public consent to have suddenly launched a campaign on Afghanistan but for what happened on September 11."[66] This confirms the need for a repeat Pearl Harbor to get public support for the administrations plan to invade and conquer Afghanistan.

These revelations are no less than the Downing Street memos regarding Iraq. While the American media kept the people distracted with "All Condit All the Time" during the summer of 2001, the United States Government was informing other gov-

ernments that it would be at war in Afghanistan, no later than October! How lucky for the United States government that just when it was planning to invade another country, for the express purpose of removing that government, a convenient "terrorist" attack occurred to anger Americans into support for the invasion.

Muslims are not alone in assuming that the United States agencies commit terrorist acts for achieving pre-determined objectives. Many Western, particularly American, analysts conclude that it is the CIA behind global terrorism and even so-called "insurgency" in the occupied countries and incidents such as Anthrax mailing in the United States.[67] Former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski predicted long ago that for the US to maintain its global primacy, it must prevent any possible adversary from controlling Eurasia. He notes that, "The attitude of the American public toward the external projection of American power has been much more ambivalent. The public supported America's engagement in World War II largely because of the shock effect of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor." Furthermore, because of popular resistance to US military expansionism, his ambitious Central Asian strategy could not be implemented "except in the circumstance of a truly massive and widely perceived direct external threat."[68]

Following the trauma of 9/11, the U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld predicted that there would be more terrorist attacks against the American people and civilization at large. How could Rumsfeld have been so sure of that, unless his orders instigated 9/11 attacks, or he was fully aware of the "terrorist's" future plans? According to *Los Angeles Times* military analyst William Arkin, on October 27, 2002, Rumsfeld set out to create a secret army, "a super-Intelligence Support Activity" network that would "bring together CIA and military covert action, information warfare, intelligence, and cover and deception," to stir the pot of spiraling global violence.[69]

It cannot be merely a coincidence that the United States was

fully prepared to attack Afghanistan and at the same time, some wild terrorists had the audacity and full support to carry out such a complicated operation to invoke American wrath.

Apparently, revenge was the motive for the war, but the planning and real motives were far deeper. Although many Americans felt an emotional desire for revenge, the following three principal reasons for war cannot be described in these terms.

The first reason was decimating the Taliban for their dream of establishing what they called a pure Islamic Emirate. A later part of this book describes this aspect in detail.

The second reason was that of imperial credibility. The United States is an empire of a different kind from the Roman or the British, but still one that holds sway over much of the world through a combination of economic and military domination. In order to remain in power, an empire must show no weakness; it must crush any threat to its control. Osama was not a threat. He could not invade and occupy the United States or seriously challenge the American Empire. The threat was the ideology of Islam, which the Taliban were locally promoting. Osama became one of the ruses used for dislodging the Taliban. The last half of the Vietnam War, after the United States government realized there would be no political victory, was fought for credibility to show other countries the price of defiance. Here the case was different after the demise of the Soviet Union. The Taliban had removed the warlords and brought peace and stability to the country. An increasing number of Muslims looked at the Taliban as the pioneers of an emerging model of a truly Islamic society and way of governance. Nothing on their part was perfect by any standard. Nevertheless, the corporate terrorists joined the fry because they were interested in, the interests of many in the United States. American media in particular exaggerated the need to eliminate the Taliban after implicating them for such a devastating staged attack in the center of imperial power.

The third reason was actually the expected bonus or booty of

the crusade. It is the leverage over the oil and natural gas of Central Asia. Afghanistan is the one country that the United States could control where a pipeline can run from those reserves to the Indian Ocean, for the rapidly growing Asian market. The war would provide an opportunity for that, as well as a chance to set up military bases in the former Soviet republics of the region to ward off the emergence of an Islamic alternative to the status quo.

Several American leaders have stated that the United States Government had nothing to do with the 9/11 attack and was genuinely surprised by it.[70] Bush said, "Americans have known surprise attacks—but never before on thousands of civilians. All of this was brought upon us in a single day—and night fell on a different world, a world where freedom itself is under attack."[71] However, they considered this to be an opportunity to get rid of the Taliban rather than bringing the individual culprits to justice. Those who are a little skeptical believe that the United States Government did not have anything to do with organizing the attacks but knew in advance that they were coming and deliberately allowed them to happen, for propaganda reasons.

Those who deeply analyze the facts believe that the Bush administration was actively involved in 9/11 as part of an integrated plan, which involved the coming war in Afghanistan. If we accept that the Bush administration pre-planned the attack on Afghanistan, then this is the only plausible explanation. We will come back to analyze 9/11 in chapter 5. Here it is necessary to begin the first chapter with examining the motivational forces behind those who planned a war on Afghanistan before 9/11 to understand that 9/11 was part of the whole setup, not an isolated incident.

Leading authors and researchers in the United States, who have clearly established that 9/11 was an inside job, need to move ahead and put the rest of the pieces of the puzzle together. They need to find the architects of the war on Afghanistan (chapter

2) and the real challenge that they have undertaken (chapter 3). They also need to find out how the United States sponsored *Jihad* in Afghanistan has turned into the final crusade in Afghanistan (chapter 5).

The last three chapters of the book look into the legitimacy of the United States war and occupation of Afghanistan and confirmation of the real motives behind the war on that country.

CHAPTER 1

The Motivational Force Behind the War

The danger of religious war is real. And religious war follows less from conscious intentions of warriors than from the beliefs that inspire them. Boykin makes the question urgent: What kind of God does this General—and the nation he serves—believe in?

James Carroll,
Crusade: Chronicles of an Unjust War (the American Empire Project)[72]

ON SEPTEMBER 16, 2001, BBC and other global media outlets reported Bush's declaration of a crusade, Osama's first direct denial[73] of any involvement in the 9/11 attack and Dick Cheney's threat that any state harboring terrorists would face the "full wrath" of American military might.[74]

Bush declared, "This crusade, this war on terrorism, is going to take a long time." Whereas Osama told the world, "The United States is pointing the finger at me but I categorically state that I have not done this."[75]

Motivation for the war is evident from Bush's calling the coming war on Afghanistan a "crusade" and leading his friends to believe that he views his new duty as a mission from God. A close

acquaintance of Bush told the *New York Times*:

> I think, in [Bush's] frame, this is what God has asked him to do. It offers him enormous clarity… [Bush believes] he has encountered his reason for being, a conviction informed and shaped by the president's own strain of Christianity.[76]

Journalist Arnon Regular wrote in *Ha'aretz* (Israel's most reputable newspaper), that he has minutes of a meeting among top-level Palestinian leaders, including Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas. The minutes seem quite detailed, because Regular wrote a long article recounting very specific conversations. The last paragraph of the article reads:

> According to Abbas, Bush said: 'God told me to strike at Al-Qaeda and I struck them, and then he instructed me to strike at Saddam, which I did, and now I am determined to solve the problem in the Middle East. If you help me I will act, and if not, the elections will come and I will have to focus on them.'[77]

Bush has carefully avoided venting his anti-Islam sentiment in public. He has also tried not to repeat the word "crusade," or otherwise betray the war-like zeal that motivates his strain of Christianity. Mark Crispin Miller writes in his book, *Cruel and Unusual: Bush/Cheney's New World Order*, that in doing so, "Bush has been less successful, unable, as he is, to mask his true intentions and desires."[78] Five months after urging his "crusade" on September 16, he did it once again in speaking to the United States troops in Anchorage. The Canadians, he said, "stand with us in this incredibly important crusade to defend freedom, this campaign to do what is right for our children and our grandchildren." Bush has otherwise made clear that he could not care less about Muslim sensibilities. "One of the ways to deal with oversupply is to sell out pork in foreign markets," he told the World Pork Expo in Des Moines on June 7, 2002. "We ought to be selling out hogs all across the world." Mark miller concludes:

> For all his weak demurrals, Bush does in fact perceive the 'war on terrorism' as a new crusade, as a member of his family makes explicit:

> 'George sees this as a religious war. He does not have a p.c. view of the war. His view of this was is that they are trying to kill the Christians. And we the Christians will strike back with more force and more ferocity than they will ever know.[79]

Few Americans disagreed with inflicting violent retribution on the masterminds of the mass murders at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon—and on those who aided and abetted a crime that killed thousands of people. To them, however, the enemies were those whom the media presented before them. The media set the stage perfectly well. However, the unsettling questions, which thus far few have been willing to voice is: Were the Taliban responsible for such a complex attack on the United States? Was Al-Qaeda capable of doing it? On the public's mind is the years-long anti-Taliban propaganda, which justified the proposed invasion and continued occupation of Afghanistan.

Although crusade is a commonly used term to denote a grand enterprise with a moral dimension, but in the background of the 9/11 attacks, this was definitely not a gaff on the part of Bush. As arrogant as he is, this was precisely what he meant. In an attempt to shift the blame, Thomas F. Madden, the author of *A Concise History of the Crusades* and co-author of *The Fourth Crusade*, wrote in *National review*: "Clearly the crusades were much on the minds of our enemies long before Bush brought them to their attention."[80] This is so because the intentions of the crusaders were reflected from their words and deeds long before 9/11 and whom they declared as enemies were not blind.

To blunt the psychological impact of Bush's declaration of a crusade on Muslim minds, other warlords in the media instantly took to his defense. Many argued like Madden that the crusades were "in every way a *defensive war*" and "the West's belated response to the Muslim conquest of fully two-thirds of the Christian world." So was presented the war on Afghanistan: a crusade: a defensive war on Afghanistan in response to an attack on the United States. The idea behind arguing that the "entire history of

the crusades is one of Western reaction to Muslim advances," was to check mass Muslim mobilization in response to Bush's declaration of the 21st century crusade.

Fully confident of a total success in turning public opinion in his favor, Bush initially referred to his war on Afghanistan as a "Crusade" and code-named the pre-planned invasion "Infinite Justice," which is the province of the Divine being. This term, literally translated into Arabic, would imply the *adl* (justice) of Allah (God). The world instantly noticed with alarm these linguistic usages. Even the modern-day crusaders did not want all Muslims to stand up in reaction before the United States could fire the first shot at the ideological rivals: the Taliban. That is why the warlords in the United States changed the title for the war of aggression on Afghanistan from crusade to "Operation Enduring Freedom."

Even if we agree that the early crusaders left their homes on a long march of invasions and needless slaughter only for a defensive war, still the war on Afghanistan was not in self-defense at all. In fact, people in Afghanistan at the time of the attack had no way of menacing the United States from afar since they had Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) or long-range bombers. Someone in Afghanistan intending to attack the United States had to get to the United States first and acquire the technical know how and ability to carryout the attack. If there was an imminent threat, it was from terrorists already in the United States or in Europe. Thus, there was enough time to seek Security Council authorization, which is required for such a war unless one is attacking the source of an imminent threat. Instead, the United States deliberately chose not to seek it. The 25 days between 9/11 and the U.S. war of aggression that passed virtually without incident are proof that there was no immediate, overwhelming need for military action, a fundamental requirement of any claim to act in self-defense. It also shows, as we will establish in detail in later sections of this book, that all logistical arrange-

ments were in place before 9/11, which made the invasion possible within the span of merely 25 days.

The Bush administration turned away from its emerging unilateralism—pulling out of the Kyoto protocols, sabotaging the ABM treaty with Russia, etc.—to a new multilateralism. This assumes that multilateralism to the United States means, first predetermining one's agenda and then attempting to browbeat or bribe other countries into agreement or acquiescence. True multilateralism would involve setting up international structures that are democratic, transparent, and accountable to the people and governments abiding by the decisions of these authorities whether favorable or not. To hide the real agenda of its policy makers, the United States has consistently set itself against any such path.

Obsessed with war, confident of the pre-9/11 plans for invasion, determined to remove the Taliban and motivated by the successful staging of 9/11 attacks, the United States administration refused even to seek the authority from the Security Council for invading and occupying Afghanistan. The United States could likely have gained its acquiescence by use of its standard methods of threats and bribery. However, it was so confident of the legitimacy of its actions in light of the 9/11 attack that it did not even try. It also shows that the United States wished very firmly and deliberately to claim the right to unilateral aggression. It wanted to set a precedent for similar adventures in the future.

Actually, Bush inherited his team with such political ambitions and ideas not so much from his father as from his predecessor, Ronald Reagan, who thought in such categories as "the Evil Empire" or "crusades." Bush and his fellows' religious convictions further polished these ambitions.

The religious front of this war on the Muslims' desire to live by Islam provided all possible inspiration and stood firmly behind the Bush administration. Nothing happened overnight. The mindset was prepared for overthrowing the Taliban government with years of biased reports and an elaborate campaign of disin-

formation. Similarly, the religious front in the United States kept backing political forces, which could effectively mobilize military and other resources against its perceived enemies.

One can judge the instigating and mobilizing role of the religious front in the latest crusade from the ways in which religious institutions and individuals work behind the scene to influence key political decisions, such as the invasion and occupation of Muslim countries. One example is the way in which two newspapers of the Church of Rome reacted to the United States elections.

L'Osservatore Romano, the newspaper of the Holy See, did not even report Bush's victory in 2004. In contrast, *Avvenire*, the daily, owned by the Italian bishops' conference and its president, Cardinal Camillo Ruini, appreciated Bush's victory. Cardinal Ruini is also the Pope's vicar for the diocese of Rome.

L'Osservatore Romano's respect for the canons of diplomacy and neutrality is understandable. However, the reticence with which it registered Bush's victory smells of something fishy. Those who closely follow the details can remember how the Vatican welcomed with a sense of relief the news of Bush's presidential election victory in 2000. In 2004, the paper's going beyond its official duty of neutrality is surprising for many because it seems like a deliberate attempt at hiding something.

However, hiding has become a difficult job in the 21st century. In the June 4, 2004 edition of the Italian newspaper, *Corriere della Sera,* the Vatican journalist, Luigi Accattoli, who most faithfully reports the views from the pontifical palazzo, wrote that the Pope had already decided: he preferred the evangelical Bush to the Catholic Kerry. And he wanted to "help him [Bush] with the Catholic voters."[81]

Four years ago—in the opinion of a very trustworthy Vatican observer, John L. Allen, the Rome correspondent of the American weekly "*National Catholic Reporter*"—in an imaginary vote, Vatican leaders and functionaries would have expressed "at least a

60-40 vote in favor of Bush over Al Gore."

Avvenire, on the other hand, stood with Bush against the disappointed opinion makers who considered it a defeat of "liberal, secular, tolerant, moderate" America at the hands of another America, "rural, ignorant, egoist, bigoted," and above all "religious."

Avvenire criticized this analysis in some of its editorials, and contrasted this with its own, different vision of the facts in a lead article by Giorgio Ferrari: "We, of the Heart of America." In Ferrari's views:

> It is precisely on values that Bush, or we might say his extraordinary electoral strategist Karl Rove, fixed his aim. Not on the war, not on Osama Bin Laden, or not only on them, but on the defense of something profoundly American, as difficult for us Europeans to comprehend as it is easy to denigrate: that 'God, country, and family.'[82]

Ferrari is ecstatic to find "an America within America…where one can feel at home"—America of the neoconservatives. In his words: "Some define them hastily as "born-again Christians," others as neoconservatives, still others as theo-conservatives, but none of these definitions is really appropriate, because the reality is much more complex. Certainly, within this great electoral mass there is room for the 'moral majority.'"[83]

Ferrari felt himself at home in "an America that placed Iraq only in the third place" because "the first priority was the defense of a system of values." This is an America that wept while singing 'Amazing Grace,' the most beautiful religious hymn Americans know." One has to note the obsession with defending "a system of values" that is in total contrast to what the Taliban were struggling to establish—the way of life according to Islam. No matter how flawed their approach, the Taliban's struggle in the name of Islam was forcing Muslims to debate and discuss if they have to live by Islam and how? The same ideas lead to the repeated fear mongering statements on the part of modern day crusaders. Re-

gurgitating the sanctity of "our way of life" and "our values" is part of the plan to make people feel threatened.

In the United States, the religious, political and military fronts against Islam work hand in hand. As a result of the political front's removal of the Taliban and paving the way for entering into the heart of Muslim majority part of the world (Iraq), the religious front is now more united and strongly placed behind its favorite crusaders on the political front than ever in United States history.

Outside the United States, Pope John Paul's speech after meeting with Bush on June 4, 2004 provides evidence of a long-term consensus between the world's lone religious and political fronts against Islam. Military might is an effective tool in the hands of a political front.

A noticeable drawing together between Bush, the Methodist and Catholics was underway before the 2004 elections. However, the 2004 elections results reflected it well. Fifty-two percent of the Catholics voted for Bush and 47 percent for Kerry. In 2000, the percentages were reversed: 48 percent for Bush and 51 percent for the Democratic candidate. It shows that the crusade is making a difference.

At another level of more impact, convergence is underway between Catholic Americans and their most heated religious rivals: the Evangelical Protestants, which religious analysts call as "an absolute novelty in the history of the United States." The more they stick together, the more effectively they influence opinion-makers' agenda.

The traditional line-ups—of Catholics always supporting Democrats and Evangelicals supporting Republicans—have completely changed. There were bishops who refused to give communion to Kerry, who, unlike Bush, just seemed opposed to the war of aggression with a religious motivation.

At the same time, a growing number of Catholics made common cause with the Evangelicals, in support of Bush, who calls

himself a "messenger" of God, who is doing "the Lord's will"[84] with his invasions and occupations. Influential religious figures played a key role in Bush's decision to invade Afghanistan.

The alliance of the crusader's of different shades took some time to come out of the closet in the public light. The world witnessed a good example of this display of unity seven days before the Bush-Pope meeting in 2004, Bush met in Washington a panel of religious thinkers, brought together by *Christianity Today*, the magazine founded by the most famous of the evangelical Islam-basher, Billy Graham.[85] There were two highly influential Catholics among the group: the editor of "*Crisis*," Deal Hudson, and the editor of "*First Things*," Fr. Richard John Neuhaus.

The way the online edition of "Christianity Today" posted transcripts of a few hours long interview, shows how Bush, Evangelicals, Catholics and other religious thinkers find each other in perfect harmony on all issues. Bush answered questions on every topic from Iraq to Israel, the Pope, Islam, Cuba, terrorism, torture, the family, school, and prayer. The post fully and repeatedly quoted Bush—a sign of full agreement.[86]

Bush's public reference to crusade and his practical steps towards removing the Taliban from power have played a great role in convergence between Catholicism and evangelical Protestantism on the religious front. Muslim puppets, such as General Musharraf from the Muslim world, proudly tell reporters in *Newsweek* (March 04, 2001) that they do not pray five times a day in their bid to show that they care the least for religion.[87] On the other hand, Bush never hesitates to tell publicly about his reading each morning a page from the writings of Oswald Chambers (1874-1917), one of the most popular evangelical spiritual teachers of the past century. Only overly naïve would take reference to "crusade" from such a person as just a gaff, who starts each day kneeling in prayers and begins each cabinet meeting with prayers."[88]

What further confirm Bush's religious beliefs and motivations

are reports that say he is an assiduous reader of the writings of another evangelical, a former chaplain of the United States Senate, Lloyd Ogilvie. Bush claims he is a "born again" Christian who plans to re-read the entire Bible in the span of a year, as he has done several times since he attended Donald Evans' Bible school from 1985-1986. Unfortunately, Bush is not alone. "The influence of religion also pervades the White House. The first words that David Frum heard on entering the White House to work as a speech writer were 'Missed you at Bible study.'"[89]

For paving the way for commencing the 21st century crusade in Afghanistan and facilitating the merger of different Christian sects, apart from Robert Bork and Robert Royal, the most inner circle of Bush's colleagues includes a very authoritative Catholic priest, Father Neuhaus, who is both a theologian and a political analyst. All of them are Catholics coming from Protestant faith. Father Neuhaus directs *First Things*, the leading magazine for Catholic neoconservatives.

Things are not as simple as denying the war on Afghanistan as a crusade. Some graphic presentations are also available which show various personalities and their positions in oil companies in a family tree structure. These charts show that the war on Afghanistan is for oil and pipelines. Actually, religiously motivated persons ignited this war and they are now extending it with the oil of religious fanaticism. This is evident from the inner circle of those who influence Bush's decisions. Father Neuhaus is one of the close advisors to Bush. Neuhaus, in turn, has his confidant Michael Novak, who studied theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University and still teaches in the theological faculties of Rome. Novak went to the Vatican before the United States invasion of Iraq to illustrate the theological justifications for Bush's decision to launch another invasion and occupation in the Muslim world (Iraq). It would be naive to believe that such theological justifications were not part of Bush's arsenal for removing the Taliban from power.

On one occasion during the interview, Bush admitted that he needs "Father Richard around more." Father Neuhas, in turn, needs Avery Dulles around him more, not only for contribution to *First Things*, but also for broader planning because he, too, is active both at the political and religious fronts against Islam. Avery Dulles was a Jesuit and then made a cardinal in 2001. This "born again Christian" comes from a family of the WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) establishment. His father, John W. Foster Dulles, was secretary of state during the Eisenhower presidency, and his uncle, Allen W. Dulles, was head of the CIA.

Just as commencement of the latest crusade—war of aggression on Afghanistan—was planned long before the staged 9/11 attacks, all these developments behind the scenes did not occur over night with the election to Bush to power. Nor will the crusade end with Bush's departure. The efforts at collaboration between Evangelicals and Catholics in the United States began after the fall of Soviet Union. In mid-90s' they released a joint document with an unequivocal title: *Evangelicals and Catholics together*. Arrival of the ideological rival, the Taliban, and their declaring the Qur'an as their constitution was a bolt from the blue for this emerging alliance.

For Evangelicals, at the head of the dialogue, there was Charles Colson, a former assistant to Nixon, who was also destroyed by the Watergate scandal, but then rose to prominence as a born again Christian. For Catholics, there was Bush's mentor and advisor Father Neuhaus, with the support of Cardinal O'Connor and the future cardinal Dulles.

While efforts were underway to divide Muslims with the introduction of various classifying notions, such as radicals, moderates and Islamists, leaders on the religious front of the crusade made substantial gains in bringing different factions together.

Father Neuhaus came out with a book, *The Naked Public Square*, to impress the Evangelicals, and so he did. It was a wake up call to let all on the religious front see the growing disappear-

ance of religion from public life. The book was a successful attempt at bringing to light traits that are common to both Catholic and evangelical thought and for putting them into practice.

Since then, the Evangelicals have made great progress. They have been successful in developing an ideology to create human cannon fodder to deploy against Islam on all fronts: media, academia, political and military. The cover story of the *U.S. News and World Report* declared on April 24, 1995: "Religious Conservatives Think Their Time has Come" to take power in the United States.

Around the same time their ideological rivals, the Taliban were busy establishing an Islamic Emirate with little experience and no guidance from outside at all. The war on the Taliban in 2001 confirmed that the religious zealots in the United States have not only consolidated that power, but also gained an upper hand in influencing the state policy for launching "pre-emptive" strikes on their perceived enemies.

During the last few years of the 20th century, Muslims from around the world were busy discussing the Taliban's progress on establishing an Islamic society and state. Help gradually started pouring in for them. At the same time, the religious right groups in the United States ran multi-billion dollar networks "for God's sake." Back in 1995, Patric Trueman, a former Justice Department lawyer, noted that the leader of the conservative Christian movement, James Dobson, commanded "armies of people" and was anchorman of the Republican Party. Therefore, the efforts to establish living by Islam in Afghanistan and efforts of the Christian groups to take power in the United States for ultimately establishing the Kingdom of God on the Earth simultaneously intensified in the last decade of the 20th century.

Since 2001, we have witnessed that influence of the Religious Right has been decisive in many of the choices of the United States presidency: from the invasion of Afghanistan to removing ideological rivals, to the undermining of Sudan in the name of

"peace," the invasion of Iraq, and more dedicated support than ever for Israel.

An article from the *Christian Statesman*, titled *Christianization of the Republican Party*, claims:

> Once dismissed as a small regional movement, Christian conservatives have become a staple of politics nearly everywhere. Christian conservatives now hold a majority of seats in 36% of all Republican Party state committees (or 18 of 50 states), plus large minorities in 81% of the rest, double their strength from a decade before. The twin surges of Christians into GOP ranks in the early 1980s and early 1990s have begun to bear fruit, as naive, idealistic recruits have transformed into savvy operatives and leaders, building organizations, winning leadership positions, fighting onto platform committees, and electing many of their own to public office.[90]

Religious zealots had always been behind the plans for paving the way for invading Afghanistan. Until the invasion of Afghanistan, support from the religious front remained invisible. This, however, was not the case in 2003 when the Vatican openly changed its stance on the war on Iraq from rejection to support. These developments are neither unusual nor new. An unusual book by the United States Ambassador to the Vatican, "*The United States and the Holy See: The Long History*"[91] gives a detailed account of the political adventures of the religious front. The book reconstructs the history of diplomatic relations between the United States and the Holy See, from their beginning in 1788 until today.

In the final pages, James Nicholson writes about one of his conversations with Pope John Paul II just two days after the staged September 11, 2001 attacks.

> I met the Pope at Castelgandolfo for about twenty minutes.... After we had spoken at length and prayed together, the Pope told me that he believed the events of September 11 were truly an attack,' and that we were justified in taking defensive action..... It was at this meeting that the foundations were laid for the support of the Holy See for our campaign against terrorism. It is extraordinary that the Pope and the Church wished to help us, and likewise worth noticing that this

support continues today.

Thus, the highest political and religious levels in the anti-Islam camp approved the beginning of a crusade with the invasion of Afghanistan. In the above statement, note the timing. The conversation took place just two days after 9/11. Now note the wording: Pope's belief that the events were "truly an attack." In addition, take note the logic: "we were justified in taking defensive action." Now remember Madden who claims "crusades were a defensive war." Note the fact that the Taliban did not attack the United States, nor did the Taliban declared a war on the United States. The Vatican, nevertheless, called it "an attack," to justify a crusade by calling it "defensive action" and above all, in Nicholson's words, "this support continues today."

It also must not be a surprise for many that Michael Novak is known as a prophet of "democratic capitalism" which is one of the covers used to hide the actual faces, their real motives and the forces behind the ongoing war. According to Sandro Magister, who is an analyst for Italian newspaper *L'espresso* concludes: "The doctrine of the exportation of democracy is typically evangelical. And Bush is evangelical when he says, 'I believe freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.'"[92]

The story, however, does not end with this. Exporting democracy is no more an evangelical project alone. Julian Coman and Bruce Johnston of the British *Daily Telegraph's* (October 10, 2004) report from Rome: "Vatican buries the hatchet with Blair and Bush over Iraq" and gave official support for a military option for "protecting Iraq's nascent democracy." Therefore, it is a joint Catholic-evangelical project undertaken by the political front and implemented with chemical weapons and other crimes against humanity. In other words, it is a total Christian project, led by many fronts from the media to the military. One must note that in the case of invading Afghanistan to remove the Taliban from power the joint plans by the religious and political circles were not made as public in the case of Iraq. The coming

out from the closet is a sign of the increasing confidence of the crusaders.

This is where Zionists join in and gradually this Catholic-evangelical alliance start deeply associating with the neo-cons, with persons such as Michael Horowitz, a zealous defender of persecuted Christians throughout the world: perfectly in line with the Vatican's point of view.[93] The Taliban strict restrictions on proselytizing Muslims by Christian missionaries were a deathblow to the missionary zeal of the crusaders.

Started with the removal of the Taliban and followed by the occupation of Iraq, all stars now seem perfectly aligned for the religious front of the crusade against Islam. In an interview with Laurie Goodstein of the *New York Times,* on May 31, 2004, Father Neuhaus said, "It is an extraordinary realignment that if continues is going to create a very different kind of configuration of Christianity in America."

This "different kind of configuration of Christianity in America" is an understatement, on the part of Neuhaus. This "configuration" has already started affecting the rest of the world. Even non-Muslims, such as Philip Jenkins, raise the frightening prospect of a re-run of the medieval Crusades (this time with much more devastating weaponry) in his book, *The Next Christendom: The Coming Global Christianity*. After commencement of the 21st century crusades in Afghanistan,[94] a wholehearted disavowal of the old Christendom— and all forms of coercive and imperialistic Christianity—is nowhere seen in the conversations, statements or plans of the leaders of the religious front.

The religious front's political adventures and support of barbarism, as we witness in Afghanistan and Iraq, pave the way for mainstreaming the modern day crusades and plans for effectively dealing with Islam, which Philip Jenkins describes in his book. We witness the consolidation of the same thoughts in the unanimous and repeated statement of almost every leader from G8 on the political front of the crusade. One after another, the G8 lead-

ers said the bombing in London on July 7, 2005 was an attack on "our way of life" and the "Islamists" would never succeed in changing "our values." This is a very powerful argument that the modern day leading crusaders, Bush and Blair, have and continue to make to advance their agenda. It also strikes the Western mindset well. This is evident from every other leader's repeating the same mantra of a war on "our way of life."

The Taliban were blamed for being religious and not secular. Moreover, there is a continual clamor about "political Islam." In fact, the Christian religious front considers its involvement in political affairs and foreign policy as inevitable because they foresee and plan for widening the crusade. They think long term. According to Jenkins's long-term view, people tend to think of Muslim nations as the fastest growing, but Christian nations are growing at least as fast. Again, by 2050, nearly 20 of the 25 largest nations will be predominantly or entirely Christian or Muslim. Similarly, on the political front of the crusade, the *New York Times* reported: "The Bush administration is retooling its slogan for the fight against Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups, pushing the idea that the long-term struggle is as much an ideological battle as a military mission, senior administration and military officials said Monday [July 25, 2005]."[95]

Keeping in view the crusaders' thinking in the above mentioned terms, it must not be surprising to see more than 150,000 dead in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the Western media's considering this butchery as an initial "collateral damage."[96] It is not surprising why no one even bothers to monitor the victims of the latest adventures of the Christian armies. That is why starving over half a million children to death by the Iraqi sanctions were considered "worth it" by the then U.S. secretary of state.[97] And that is the reason for the media and even the United Nations' silence over the United States' use of White Phosphorus against civilian populations.

The modern day crusaders' long-term thinking is evident from

Jenkins's words: "By 2050, there should be about three Christians for every two Muslims worldwide. Some 34 percent of the world's population will then be Christian, roughly what the figure was at the height of European hegemony in 1900." At least 10 will be the sites of intense conflict, where Christian and Muslim communities vie for dominance. These conflicts may make the religious wars of the 16th century Europe look very tame. Within these long-term plans, the invasion of Afghanistan to remove the Taliban was just a fraction, and the starting point of the last crusade against Islam.

To prepare for future conflicts, the religious front of the multi-sector crusade has planned to reach all segments of the power structure at all levels. One of the crucial areas of influence is the so-called think tanks. An Italian intellectual, Marco Respinti, who knows the religious front very well, wrote an article: "*New Theologies: the Dawning of the Theoconservative Era in United States*" in the September 19, 2003 issue of the daily, *Il Foglio*. He explains the influence of neoconservatives, who are active on the political front in the United States. In one think tank alone, he assesses the influence and number of the neoconservatives in these words: "Today Robert Bork is senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C., together with Walter Berns, Lynne V. Cheney, David Frum, Newt Gingrich, Jean J. Kirkpatrick, Irving Kristol, Michael A. Ledeen, Joshua Muravchik, Michael Novak, Richard N. Perle and Ben J. Wattemberg." Appointment of anti-Islam propaganda warlord, Daniel Pipes, to the board of the United States Institute of Peace is part of the same influence.

The religious front's deep involvement with the think tanks makes the Church one of the torchbearers of the crusade in the name of democracy because crusade under this label has been made so easy and acceptable to the public mind that people hardly feel like arguing against it despite knowing what has become of democracy.

Headlines such as "Trying Democracy in Baghdad, with the Vatican's Blessing,"[98] "The Vatican Deploys its Divisions in Iraq – Under the Banner of NATO,"[99] "The Pope Receives Iraqi premier Allawi," and the "Church Encourages Islamic Journey to Democracy,"[100] are telling signs of the political adventures of the crusade's religious front beyond Afghanistan.

The way Pope met Allawi in private on November 04, 2004 in Rome and then blessed Allawi's wife, Thana, the minister for development, Mehdi Hahedh, the minister for human rights, Bakhtiar Amin, and the Iraqi ambassador to the Vatican, Albert Yelda, in another meetings, shows how the Vatican has granted full recognition to the United States-installed puppet regimes for consolidation of occupations. On the other end Hamid Karzai says "We remember that during the years of Afghanistan's occupation by the Soviet Union, the Pope raised his voice of support to the Afghan people,"[101] ignoring "church leaders voicing qualified support" for the United States bombing of Afghanistan and calling it a "retaliation."[102] The reason is clear: The illegitimate war and occupation made Karzai's accession to the throne possible.

James Nicholson, the United States ambassador to the Vatican, went ahead with a pre-scheduled September 13, 2001, audience with the Pope to present his diplomatic credentials. According to *Times* magazine, along with his prayers, the aging Pontiff used the solemn ceremony to express publicly the Vatican's solidarity with the United States. However, as Nicholson recalls, the Pope went one step further, leaning over to say directly to the new ambassador, "This was not just an attack against America, but against all humanity." These and other papal comments in the weeks following 9/11, says Nicholson, gave an "implied justification" from the Holy See for the subsequent U.S.-led military campaign in Afghanistan. It was a prized show of Vatican support for a White House keen on strengthening its standing among American Catholics.[103]

Soon after 9/11, the Vatican intensified its attempts at influencing future puppets in Afghanistan. A papal delegation met former King of Afghanistan Zahir Shah in the last week of November 2001 at his villa. Vatican Secretary for Relations with States Jean-Louis Tauran and Archbishop Paolo Romeo, the apostolic nuncio in Italy, attended the meeting. Interestingly, no details of the meeting, held on the eve of the so-called inter-Afghan peace conference in Bonn, were given.[104]

The Vatican changes its approach in the latest crusade according to the situation, carefully gauging sentiments in the Muslim world. Just one year before meeting with Allawi, calling for democratic transition and openly supporting bloody adventures in Muslim countries, *La Civiltà Cattolica*—the magazine of the Rome Jesuits, printed with the supervision and authorization of the secretariat of state—wrote that the pretext of transplanting democracy to these countries is "particularly offensive for the Islamic community." Today, the Vatican believes that Muslim communities must accommodate occupation forces, so that they may plant democracy there. This is the result of the seemingly successful occupation of Afghanistan.

The adventures go beyond supporting occupation. There has been application of systematic pressure on the political front for the strongest military action possible. Long before the Vatican's open declaration of supporting the United States occupation of Iraq, on September 20, 2004, Cardinal Ruini spoke to the permanent council of the Italian bishops' conference. Ruini repeated the duty of the Christian West to "oppose organized terror with the greatest energy and determination, without giving the slightest impression of considering their blackmail and their impositions," and at the same time, to transform into "our principal allies" the elements of the Muslim world that desire "liberty and democracy."

This is a blatant disregard of the United States motives, lies for the war on Afghanistan and Iraq, and a blind commitment

to never allowing an alternative Islamic governing system to take root anywhere in the world. Instead the focus is on the ultimate goal i.e., conversion of most of the world to Christianity. Charles Duhigg's article, Evangelicals Flock into Iraq on a Mission of Faith, in the *Los Angeles Times,* March 18, 2004 [105] and David Rennie's report, "Bible Belt Missionaries set out on a 'war for souls' in Iraq," in *Telegraph* UK, December 27, 2003[106] are eye-opening write-ups in this regard.

Feeling rejuvenated with the seeming success in Afghanistan, the crusaders behind the scenes demanded the pawns on the political front for more military adventures on religious grounds. Rome's popular daily *Il Foglio* made an open appeal on September 21, 2004 to the Italian government to become a promoter within NATO and the European Union of a massive deployment of the troops of the Atlantic Alliance. Among others, Vittorio E. Parsi, for Avvenire, the newspaper of the Italian bishops' conference, signed the appeal.

Similarly, the Vatican secretary of state, Cardinal Angelo Sodano, expressed admiration for the United States and severely criticized an excessively anti-American and secularist Europe. He also criticized the U.N. in an interview to the New York correspondent of the newspaper *La Stampa* on September 22, 2004.

These examples of the visible aggression of the religious front are enough to give us a clue to their behind-the-scenes-struggle against Islam. Removal of the Taliban was just a starting point of the unfolding scheme. There was hesitation and reluctance to support the next war in Iraq because not everyone had assumed it a just war or expected full cooperation of the oppressed Iraqis. The growing resistance now gives the crusaders an indication that the Iraqis did not reject Saddam as strongly and forcefully as they are rejecting the United States occupation. The crusaders now see a flavor of Islam in resistance and the religious front of the crusade has now intensified its struggle to make the occupation a success under the banner of fighting the dream of "Caliphate.".

Apparently, the world is convinced that war on Afghanistan and Iraq violates a taboo widely diffused in Catholic circles: a taboo that denounces as immoral not only making war, but even thinking about the possibility of a war. The reality, however, is very different. The leaders in the religious front provide full justification for the Bush's doctrine of pre-emption.

Bush's confidant George Weigel, a frontline representative of the Catholic American neoconservatives and a close friend of the prefect of the papal household, Bishop James M. Harvey, goes to the extent of sidelining the U.N. and international community. Writing in *The Catholic Difference* (2003), Weigel presents the logic that "a correct reading of the just-war tradition does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that prior Security Council approval is morally imperative."[107]

While making a case for violating all international norms and standards for occupations such as Afghanistan and Iraq, Weigel argues that the world should not worry "about overriding the presumption of 'sovereign immunity' that nation-states traditionally enjoy." The reason he gave was that such countries do not display "a minimum of agreement to minimal international norms of order…[and] its behavior demonstrates that it holds the principles of international order in contempt."[108]

Earlier, among the sixty influential Americans, who signed the "letter From America" soon after September 11, 2001, Novak, Weigel, and other famous Catholics such as Mary Ann Glendo were the most prominent. They are in total alliance with the academic front led by Fukuyama and Huntington, who justified a war on Afghanistan. The re-introduced Christian concept of "just war" continues to this day in the form of just occupations, just torture, just use of White Phosphorus and depleted Uranium, just burning of the Taliban corpses and just massacres.

While justifying the already planned 21st century crusade, the authors throw realism out: "The idea of a 'just war' is broadly based, with roots in many of the world's diverse religious and

secular moral traditions … To be sure, some people, often in the name of realism, insist that war is essentially a realm of self-interest and necessity, making most attempts at moral analysis irrelevant. We disagree."[109] The world is reaping the fruits of idealism pushed down its throats by the crusaders of our age, who are effectively using media, academia and political fronts for pushing their agenda.

The crusaders' struggle is not limited only to justifying the political front's physical war on Afghanistan and then Iraq in the name of a "just war," they also work hard to bring as many countries into the coalition of the barbarians as possible. Vittorio E. Parsi's, who teaches geopolitics at the Catholic University of Milan, presents the crusader's vision and support to the renewed alliance between the United States and Europe in his latest book, *The inevitable Alliance: Europe and the United States beyond Iraq*. To the author, "equality of all states" is an "untenable legal fiction."[110]

The Taliban were put under strict economic sanctions and their government was not recognized. They could not even dream of the resources, planning, outreach, access to power and global designs of the crusaders, who were pitted against the Taliban. The crusaders' much dreamed about religious empire is almost in place and in action to Christianize the world. Jim Wallis, editor of *Sojourners*, an evangelical Christian magazine that advocates social justice, writes in "*Dangerous Religion, George W. Bush's theology of empire*":

> The Bush theology deserves to be examined on biblical grounds. Is it really Christian, or merely American? Does it take a global view of God's world or just assert American nationalism in the latest update of 'manifest destiny?' To this aggressive extension of American power in the world, President George W. Bush adds God - and that changes the picture dramatically. It's one thing for a nation to assert its raw dominance in the world; it's quite another to suggest, as this president does, that the success of American military and foreign policy is connected to a religiously inspired " mission," and even that his

presidency may be a divine appointment for a time such as this.[111]

Organized efforts are underway to draft Iraqi and Afghan constitutions in a manner to confine Islam to private lives and restrict Muslims from living collective lives by Islam. To the contrary, in the United States, the religious front has found its empire under the Bush administration. The United States is experiencing a major transformation from its so-called secular to an openly religious government. Bush's faith-based initiative is central to this transformation and raises serious questions about the future policies and approach towards Muslim countries. Bill Berkowitz's analysis "Slouching toward theocracy," provides comprehensive overview of the United States government's transformation into a religiously motivated super power.[112]

In his State of the Union address, Bush renewed a call for Congress to make permanent his faith-based proposals that would allow religious organizations to compete for more government contracts and grants. The March, 2004, issue of *Church and State* reports that the "Faith Czar" Jim Towey announced to reporters that $40 billion dollars was now available to religious charities.

While the puppet regimes in Afghanistan and Pakistan are forced to gradually suffocate religious institutions, Daniel Zwerdling's study of White House press releases and the White House website found that religious groups could apply to more than a hundred federal programs that gave out more than $65 billion. In addition, religious groups could apply for more money through state-administered programs. The text of an executive order signed by Bush was released on June 1, 2004.[113]

On September 22, 2003, the White House announced new rules, making $28 billion available to religious charities that proselytize and discriminate in hiring. The criteria for funding are as simple as supporting Bush's candidacy and getting one million dollars.[114]

From a *New York Times*' report about Governor Jeb Bush's launching faith based prison[115] to an article in *The Atlantic* (Oc-

tober 2002),[116] describing the enormous efforts for spreading Christianity worldwide show how the religious empire is thriving and how the religious front of the latest crusade is at work both at home and abroad.

The ongoing United States-led barbarism in the Muslim majority countries is basically not because of oil or democracy, but because of Christian extremism coupled with the greedy adventures of the oil mafia and neo-cons. This is what we can safely conclude from the study of the religious motivation behind the demonization campaign against Islam in general and the Taliban in particular. Nevertheless, every sensible and peace-loving human being would hope that this is really a war for oil and would end, at least, when the oil supplies run out.

At the same time, we cannot live with the misconceptions about the real motives behind the war of aggression on Afghanistan and Iraq. Common sense suggests that ensuring cheap oil supplies and putting pipelines never required 9/11 at home and this level of militarism abroad. Without a religious motivation, it is impossible to tempt even a single individual to lie to the extent to which the Bush administration has been lying; to deceive the whole world to the extent to which the co-opted media has been misleading the world about the Taliban; to starve millions to death for 12 years in Iraq; to torture and kill fellow human beings to the extent we are witnessing at the hands of apparently sensible Americans and their "civilized" allies since the staged 9/11 attacks.

It is obvious that in individual as well as collective cases, the spirit of a wider, final crusade plays a vital part in formulating an oppressive domestic and totalitarian foreign policy, particularly when the warlords understand how to make use of their media, academia, national government and armed forces for "Divine purposes."

Statements and actions of the individuals and institutions behind the 21st century crusade are on the record. The most re-

cent example of this are the statements and the appointment of Paul Bonicelli to be deputy director of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which is in charge of all programs to promote democracy and good governance overseas. More significant to the administration, perhaps, is the fact that Bonicelli is dean of academic affairs at tiny Patrick Henry College in rural Virginia. The fundamentalist institution's motto is "For Christ and Liberty." It requires that all of its 300 students sign a 10-part "statement of faith" declaring, among other things, that hell is a place where "all who die outside of Christ shall be confined in conscious torment for eternity." William Fisher, who has managed economic development programs in the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and Asia, writes:

> What's wrong with this picture is that the USAID programs Bonicelli will run are important weapons in the arsenal of Bush's new public diplomacy czarina, White House confidante Karen Hughes. These programs are intended to play a central role in boosting Bush's efforts to foster democracy and freedom in Iraq and throughout the broader Middle East. One can only wonder how Muslims, the target audience for these USAID programs, will react to the view that 'all who die outside of Christ shall be confined in conscious torment for eternity.'[117]

Comments of the political and military leaders are hardly different from Vatican's warning to Christians against marrying Muslims.[118] These undeniable words and deed encourage others to undertake inhuman and irrational adventures against Muslims and Muslim majority states. It is human nature that when another people and their faith is so falsely depicted as "evil" and its followers are presented as the enemies, the masses become numb to the atrocities committed against that people. Butchering a people labeled as Taliban and burning their dead bodies hardly make a news headline in the Western press. Similarly, seeing the United States soldiers dragging their perceived enemies on a dog's leash in Abu Ghraib type of modern concentration camps can hardly evoke rage against men responsible for making the environment

conducive for such crimes.

The above-mentioned undeniable examples show that inspiration from the religious front has resulted in the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan and continues to inspire more crimes against humanity. It is clearly evident that a media, academia and military which rests upon the inspiration of a religion and acts upon the morbid dread and matchless hatred of Muslims and their way of life is actually what drives non-Muslim majority nations into never ending wars with the Muslim world. The wars of the latest crusade are convenient because Muslims are now effectively divided into 57 states and it is easy to pick and punish these one by one, starting with the one, which wanted to make the Qur'an its constitution.

Bush, Powell and Boykin's description of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as part of a "Crusade" is telling those who are familiar with medieval history that these wars are hardly different from crusades. Crusades were also waged on behalf of Christianity against Islam, not in self-defense as the modern day crusaders argue. Crusaders of the past were, nevertheless, morally far superior to what we have today. They had the courage to call a spade a spade. They never tried to invent lies to justify their religious wars against Islam.

The senseless torture by the Crusaders finds a mirror in the sadism of American soldiers. General Boykin and company's connection to the torture in Afghanistan and Iraq goes far beyond the merely theoretical level. According to investigative journalist Seymour Hersh, General Boykin himself was involved in the design of the military policies that allowed for the use of torture against Muslim prisoners.[119] Through General Boykin, the fundamentalist belief in a Christian holy war against Islam is linked with the use of humiliation and pain to break prisoners.

A new report by Seymour Hersh in *The New Yorker* magazine begins:

> The roots of the Abu Ghraib prison scandal lie not in the criminal

> inclinations of a few Army reservists but in a decision, approved last year by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, to expand a highly secret operation, which had been focused on the hunt for Al-Qaeda, to the interrogation of prisoners in Iraq. Rumsfeld's decision embittered the American intelligence community, damaged the effectiveness of elite combat units, and hurt America's prospects in the war on terror.[120]

Now, here is where that categorical morality gets really twisted: Bush and Blair, the leading crusaders, seem to believe that because their cause is a good one, whatever they do to support that cause is good. Thus, for them, killing civilians with chemical weapons is not a wicked thing, just a "collateral damage." It is a sign of moral resolve hardened by religious motivation. Starting a war on the basis of lies against a non-threatening "opponent" is not cruel or cowardly for them. It is strength in the face of "evil."

CHAPTER 2

The Architects of War

The war into which we have plunged in Iraq and Afghanistan, then is a civil-religious war to decide who shall rule the Islamic world.

Patrick J. Buchanan[121]

IT IS HARD to believe, but personalities driven by religious motives and apocalyptic visions have greatly influenced the United States' foreign policy towards the Muslim world. After invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, there is strong existing and emerging evidence that supports this view.

Mark Miller writes in his book, *Cruel and Unusual*, that it would be comforting to see Bush's words and deeds "as a case of individual mania, which reasonable people—Christian and non-Christian—might shrug off." Unfortunately, the issue of religious war is not limited to Bush alone.

> …this is no laughing matter, as Bush is not alone in his apocalyptic frame of mind, but aided and abetted very powerfully. Having variously seized our nation's government, the GOP also pursues 'religious war.'[122]

Apocalyptic thinking—especially in the Christian Right—joins

other factors influencing United States policy towards Muslim countries, such as controlling global oil sources, assisting corporate-driven globalization, militaristic imperialism, and more. Why focus on this one factor? Because the Christian Right is a powerful force and the Evangelical movement is shaping politics, academia, media and culture in the United States, and they are the largest voting bloc in the Republican Party, so they can expect politicians to pay attention to their interests.[123]

On the one hand, the anti-Islam agenda of these forces is well known and on the other, George Bush takes his born-again religion seriously. The way he applies religion to the political decisions has been discussed widely.[124] That is why we need to understand the link between the Evangelical movement, the apocalyptic thinking shared by military, media and political leaders, and their role in making a war on Afghanistan.

According to history professor Paul S. Boyer, author of *When Time Shall Be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture*, religious views in the United States have "always had an enormous, if indirect and under-recognized, role [in] shaping public policy." Boyer advises the Americans to pay attention to this hidden truth because of the "shadowy but vital way that belief in biblical prophecy is helping mold grassroots attitudes toward current United States foreign policy," especially in the Muslim world.[125]

Evangelicals and their covert allies, for example, are having an increasing influence in shaping the United States' foreign policy. One does not need to go through painful research to understand that Evangelicals are systematically spreading hatred against Islam in a very organized manner. The title of Laurie Goodstein's report in the *New York Time* (May 27, 2003) tells it all: "Seeing Islam as 'Evil' Faith, Evangelicals Seek Converts." What is considered as evil is not allowed to grow and establish itself. Elimination of evil has always been considered as legitimate. So become invasion and occupation of Afghanistan legitimate by default. The focus

of Islamophobes, according to the *New York Times* report, is on "how to woo Muslims away from Islam."

According to Goodstein:

> At the grass roots of evangelical Christianity, many are now absorbing the antipathy for Islam that emerged last year with the incendiary comments of ministers. The sharp language, from religious leaders like Franklin Graham, Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson and Jerry Vines, the former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, has drawn rebukes from Muslims and Christian groups alike. Mr. Graham called Islam 'a very evil and wicked religion,' and Mr. Vines called Muhammad, Islam's founder and prophet, a 'demon- possessed pedophile.'…The oratorical tone of these authors and lecturers varies, but they share the basic presumption that the world's two largest religions are headed for a confrontation, with Christianity representing what is good, true and peaceful, and Islam what is evil, false and violent.[126]

The *New York Times* and others outlets of the so-called mainstream media have been devotedly quoting these preachers of hate.[127] The objective is not to condemn their extremism but to promote these ideas in the garb of objective analysis. If a lecture by an Evangelical preacher reaches 20 people, the *New York Times* makes its reports available to 1.3 million people through direct circulation;[128] not to speak of the 270,000 paid subscribers and other visitors to the 40 web sites of its sister publications, at the very least.[129]

The influence of anti-Islam elements, which shape the United States policy toward the Muslim world, is spread far and wide. A Southern Baptist magazine named Michael Horowitz one of the 10 most influential Christians of the year in 1997. The only catch: He is Jewish.

The former Reagan administration official earned the accolade, on a top-10 list with Mother Teresa and Billy Graham, for rallying American Evangelicals to the plight of persecuted Christians abroad.

The grass-roots movement Mr. Horowitz founded—inspired

by the specter of Western passivity during the Holocaust—actually galvanized interest in global issues among America's growing ranks of evangelical Christians. Their rising involvement is being felt from the pews to the White House, where Evangelicals' influence has helped shape a series of legislative and policy moves, particularly the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Evangelicals have been gradually exposing their interest in international causes with the same moral fervor they have long brought to domestic matters. According to Peter Waldman, Staff reporter of the *Wall Street Journal*:

> Since 1998, they have helped win federal laws to fight religious persecution overseas, to crack down on international sex trafficking and to help resolve one of Africa's longest and bloodiest civil wars, in southern Sudan. In so doing, evangelical groups, once among America's staunchest isolationists, are making a mark on U.S. foreign policy. They have tipped the balance, at least for the moment, in the perennial rivalry in Washington between "realists," who believe the U.S. has limited capacity to change the world and should not try, and "idealists," who strive to give U.S. conduct a moral purpose.[130]

Most importantly, Evangelicals are not a marginalized group or a fringe movement. Waldman reports that a Gallup Poll shows, the Evangelicals are growing in numbers, and they are no less than 43 percent of the United States population. Interestingly, Evangelicals are playing an increasing role in the military. Department of Defense statistics show that 40 percent of active duty personnel are evangelical Christians. Sixty percent of taxpayer-funded military chaplains are evangelical. The percentage of Evangelical Christian chaplains is higher than their faith's representation in the ranks. The military directs them not to proselytize. However, many say that would force them to deny a basic tenet of their faith.[131]

The widely available copies of *The Soldier's Bible* in the United States carries at the back inspirational words from military leaders such as Lt. Gen. William Boykin who said of his battle against Osman Atto, a businessman who got rich in oil exploration be-

fore Somalia collapsed into anarchy in 1991, "I knew my God was bigger than his. I knew that my God was a real God and his was an idol."[132]

American analysts such as Peter Waldman are good at tracing the history of Christian activism in America's foreign affairs, which dates back to the early 20th century, and included strong backing among establishment Protestant churches for the foreign-policy idealism of Woodrow Wilson and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

This evangelical activism did not start with the increasing American influence in the world affairs. Though driven in its early years by slave traders and other rogues, later on Evangelicals also increasingly influenced the British Empire. According to Waldman, "religion played a role in Britain's push into the Mideast later in the 19th century," and in today's Washington, Evangelicals are playing the same role as "Britain's imperial Evangelicals made common cause with the neoconservatives of their era, known as liberals."[133]

Just like the modern day crusade in the name of democracy, the liberals' mission was spreading representative government and free trade. David Livingstone, the famous explorer of Africa, in 1857 said, "the two pioneers of civilization, Christianity and commerce, should be inseparable."[134] Similarly, Mr. Horowitz says, the same "tough-minded Christianity" that propelled Britain's empire drives American Evangelicals.

As for the United States policy in Afghanistan and Iraq, Bush, himself a born-again Christian,[135] has sometimes invoked a notion of America's latter-day manifest destiny. "I believe freedom is the almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world," Mr. Bush said at many occasions, including the 2004 Republican Convention. According to Bob Woodward's book "Plan of Attack," Mr. Bush, when asked if he consulted his father, said, "You know, he is the wrong father to appeal to in terms of strength. There is a higher father that I appeal to."[136]

Bruce Lincoln, a Biblical scholar, looked at Bushes speech an-

nouncing the start of military action against Afghanistan: only three of 970 words were unambiguously religious, but to the well-scripted eye, the speech had plenty of Biblical imagery and allusions from the text such as the Book of Revelation.[137]

More born-again Christians work in the Bush administration than in any other in modern history, says Richard Land, a top executive with the Southern Baptist Convention, the nation's largest Protestant church.[138] They include National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice and Attorney General John Ashcroft, whose denomination, the Assemblies of God, is especially active overseas.

The views of Evangelicals and neoconservatives, long aligned in some ways, did not grew more so after September 11, 2001. They are only exposed after 9/11. Spreading hatred against Islam and undermining any attempt on the part of Muslims to live by Islam has just become a norm. Democracy and religious freedom are no more fig leaves to cover the anti-Islam designs. In some Christian circles, evangelizing to Muslims acquired a higher priority. Falwell went on to launch the Moral Majority, and he currently claims that Jews and Christians are locked in a joint struggle against a violent Islam founded by the "terrorist" Muhammad.[139] LaHaye became co-author of the Left Behind series of apocalyptic novels, which portray Israel as under attack by the forces of the Antichrist.[140] "A lot of Evangelicals perceive Islam, in its militant forms, as the new antichrist," says Mr. Marty of the University of Chicago.[141]

This is part of the apocalyptic thinking which is shaping the United States policy since the demise of Soviet Union in particular. The references to evil, liberty and Satan in the United States political and military leadership at the top level reflect the mindset that has been shaped over a period of time. Apocalyptic views in the United States—that involves the anticipation of a coming confrontation that will result in a substantial transformation of society on a global scale—have deep links to the early

Christian settlers, who saw the establishment of what became the United States as a fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. They believed that the nation they were building needed to be defended against the subversive machinations of a literal Satan and his evil allies.[142]

Today, Mathew Rothschild of *The Progressive* dubs the current Bush administration foreign policy "messianic militarism."[143] This tendency is not unique to the current administration but echoes the history of dualistic apocalypticism and a demonizing form of anticommunism that dominated U.S. culture for most of the 20th century.[144] When Ronald Reagan declared the Soviet Union the Evil Empire and launched a massive military buildup in the early 1980s, his actions were based on apocalyptic claims from both the Christian Right and a new movement built by hawkish cold war ex-liberals dubbed neoconservatism. Khurram Husain in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* argues that the neocon "claims were all drawn from worst-case scenarios.[they] made projections of Soviet stockpiles and built up a picture of a Soviet Union bent on dominating the world based on wild speculation."[145]

With the collapse of communism in Europe, the United States was reframed as the defender of global civilization against the heathens in "rogue" Muslim states, where, according to the neoconservatives' perception, terrorism still festered, women rights are abused and human rights are violated. This opponent-swap drew from an even earlier apocalyptic focus than anticommunism—a worldview extension of the earliest Christian millennial visions, which came to the United States "from the original, English-speaking heartland, itself grafted on the crusades and the voyages of discovery."[146] With the election of George Bush in 2000, the apocalyptic predictions of neoconservative militarists garnered even more support.

Analysts in the United States believe that the 2004 elections were panned out as a choice between committed Evangelicals and committed secularists. In this contest, Evangelicals won.[147] After

re-election, in his second inaugural address, Bush repeated the word "freedom" several times, once in the phrase "untamed fire of freedom" (said in the same sentence as the phrase "hope kindles hope"). This, like many other statements in his speech, is a favorite Biblical echo of American Evangelicals. They often quote the lines from the book of Jeremiah in the Bible that say, "I will kindle an unquenchable fire in the gates of Jerusalem" (Chapter 17: Verse 27) or else "I will kindle a fire in her towns that will consume all who are around her" (50: 32).

In such ways, as Matt Rothschild, Editor of *The Progressive* puts it, these "hidden passages" send a signal to Bush's mass base, the Evangelicals. In one part of the speech, Bush says: "History also has a visible direction, set by liberty and the Author of Liberty." The line directly refers to the Biblical phrases, "You killed the author of life" (Acts 3:15) and, "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith" (Hebrews 12:2). As Rothschild notes, "The Author of Liberty is The Author of Life, and that author is Jesus." Freedom, for Bush, is another way of saying Jesus, and the missionaries married the "spread of freedom" by the U.S. military with the spread of American evangelicalism.[148]

According to Kees van der Pijl, a European scholar: "Today, the missionary ideology constructed around the civilization/barbarity dichotomy must satisfy the tastes of a Western public…because every hegemonic strategy has to build on the available foundation of attitudes and dispositions in the wider population if it is to be effective." Therefore in the current Bush administration, "the End of History/Axis of Evil line of thinking …argues that for the world to reach its definitive form in terms of civilization….[it is necessary to] neutralize the states 'mired in history' as potential rabble-rousers, the 'rogue states' beyond the pale."[149]

Most of the Christian Right and many militarist hawks in the neoconservative movement share such a dualistic apocalyptic vision. This coalition of "messianic militarism" eclipses the power of other sectors that helped elect Bush: moderate corporate inter-

nationalists, anti-interventionist libertarians, and paleoconservatives—so named because of their allegiance to the isolationism, unilateralism, and xenophobia of the Old Right.

Wes Allison, *Times* staff writer, concludes that Evangelicals are dominating the United States policy in the new era and "religious conservatives have the most political power in generations."[150] "Let's Take America Back!" goes the current campaign of the Christian Coalition. Alan Keyes, candidate for the United States Senate in Illinois and founder of Renew America, a conservative political action group, warns, "American liberty is under internal attack as never before in our history." According to Vijay Prashad, an Indian analyst writing for *Frontline*: "U.S. evangelicalism does not represent Christianity, but it does, however, represent the agenda of the Bush administration."[151]

The White House web site carries Bush's remarks to the National Association of Evangelicals. Bush's words show the conviction and beliefs which underline policies of the sitting administration, at least. Touching upon the same Biblical phrases mentioned above, Bush said:

> The National Association of Evangelicals was founded 62 years ago with the highest of calling—to proclaim the Kingdom of God. Today, your organization includes 51 denominations representing some 30 million people. You're doing God's work with conviction and kindness, and, on behalf of our country, I thank you….America is a nation with a mission. We're called to fight terrorism around the world, and we're waging that fight. As freedom's home and freedom's defender, we are called to expand the realm of human liberty… I'm fortunate enough to be President during a time in which our country holds great influence in the world, and I feel that we must use that influence for great purpose.[152]

The United States government and the Evangelicals, neo-cons, Christian-Zionists, all share the same great purpose. The Evangelicals' agenda is no different than any other. In his book, *Mission, Myth and Money in a Multicoloured World*, Jules Gomes exposes some untold facts. Gomes is a leading Indian Christian scholar,

a member of the teaching faculty at one of the largest Protestant seminaries in India, the United Theological College at Bangalore. In this insightful book, Gomes describes in detail the dark and little-known world of Western Evangelicals, their association with other totalitarian groups and similarity of their agenda.

Gomes reveals that the Christian Evangelicals whom he has interacted with closely for many years see America as God's chosen nation, capitalism as "sacrosanct," globalization (a euphemism for American imperialism) as a "blessing," the carpet bombing of Afghanistan as "necessary," the war on Iraq as a "crusade" and the American flag as a "quasi-religious icon." In short, he says, he has discovered, much to his dismay, that 'the western church [is] replicating the imperialistic behavior of the western world'. The only difference now is, he writes, that the centre of imperialism, economic, cultural and political, has shifted from Europe to America. Today, America leads the world in sending out missionaries to other lands. In this regard, Sam George reports 2001 statistics—from *Operation World* , 21st century edition by Patrick Johnstone & Jason Mandryk—in *Indian Missions* (October-December 2004). Accordingly, America has sent out 60,200 missionaries to 220 countries. 'Coca-Colonization', as Gomes describes American imperialism, thus goes hand in hand with Christianization.

Gomes writes, let alone the Protestant fundamentalists, even the apparently less extreme U.S. Catholic bishops blessed the American invasion of Afghanistan. The Evangelicals are now among the most fervent supporters of the American invasion and occupation of Iraq. Impartial analysts conclude that there must be noble souls among Evangelicals as well. However, they insist that taken as a whole, the evangelical project constitutes a major menace, a thinly veiled guise for western imperialism, and a powerful threat to religious and cultural communities.[153]

The main reason for the Crusade

For American Evangelicals, the end of the Cold War provided

an important opening for Christianizing the world and winning the battle against evil. For that, they have two options: the use of redemptive violence and missionary approach.

Some analysts argue that Bush and his fellow born again Christians believe in the myth of redemptive violence or messianic militarism,[154] which posits a war between good and evil, between God and Satan. For God to win, evil needs to be destroyed by God's faithful followers.[155] And of course, Bush and his fellows see the "war on terrorism"—lately turned to war on Caliphate—as a "monumental struggle between good and evil." On September 11, Bush told the American people, "Today, our nation saw evil." In his State of the Union Address on January 29, 2002, he referred to an "axis of evil."

On the missionary front, as the International Monetary Fund-induced rollback of state services proceeded in earnest, the United States government promoted "non-state" actors to do the work that the state used to do. Among these "non-state" actors, the United States administrations encouraged groups like U.S. "faith-based organizations" (including Evangelicals) to conduct social service work around the world. It is no accident that the Manila meeting took place in 1989, when the Berlin Wall fell.

The Manila meeting brought together church leaders from across the planet, and partnered them with U.S. churches. Luis Bush, head of the AD2000 & Beyond Movement, offered a concept for the new evangelism called 10/40: "The core of the unreached people of the world live in a rectangular-shaped window! Often called `The Resistant Belt', the window extends from West Africa to East Asia, from 10 North to 40 North of the equator. If we are serious about providing a valid opportunity for every person to experience the truth and saving power of Jesus Christ, we cannot ignore the compelling reality of the 10/40 Window regions and its billions of impoverished souls."[156]

In 1989, American Evangelicals also held the Global Consultation on World Evangelization in Singapore and created the

Joshua Project. The Global Consultation aimed to organize Evangelicals to go forth into the 10/40 Window to convert the poor aggressively. As the United States government cut back on the Peace Corp and on its already modest foreign aid, it began to encourage private work, including that of missionaries. For the past few decades, the Evangelicals have been a faith-based Peace Corp. In the throes of the Cold War, the United States government did not promote the missions for fear that this would only alienate them from the peoples of the Third World. Instead, the John F. Kennedy administration produced a secular "mission", the Peace Corp, to send young Americans into the Third World to conduct development activities and to win over hearts and minds to America.

In 2003, Reverend Richard Cizik of the National Association of Evangelicals told the press, "Evangelicals have substituted Islam for the Soviet Union. The Muslims have become the modern day equivalent of the Evil Empire."[157] The 10/40 Window idea spawned a movement called Window International Network, while the Southern Baptist Convention moved their International Missions Board to concentrate on Muslim populations. In the past 15 years, the number of missionaries who work among Muslims has quadrupled. Barry Yeoman of the *Wall Street Journal* reports that Columbia International University (CIU) in South Carolina is offering "intensive course on how to win converts in Islamic countries." Rick Love, the international director of Frontiers, runs this course. Frontiers is the largest Christian group in the world that focuses exclusively on proselytizing to Muslims.[158]

The mission is targeting Islam. "We see Islam as the final frontier," says David Cashin, a professor of Intercultural Studies at CIU who used to don Muslim clothing and pursue converts in the teashops of Kaliakoir, Bangladesh.[159] For assuring success in this mission, courses at places like CIU teach the missionaries to camouflage themselves. "In Indonesia, evangelists ran a quilt-making business to provide cover for Western missionaries, allowing

them to employ—and proselytize—scores of Muslims." Students on the mission to the Muslim world are told that:

> Muslims must be reached by whatever means possible. Their zeal is helping to fuel the biggest evangelical foray into the Muslim world since missionary pioneer Samuel Zwemer declared Islam a 'dying religion' in 1916 and predicted that "when the crescent wanes, the Cross will prove dominant.'[160]

Anything that can pose a serious challenge to this ambitious agenda, such as the establishment of an Islamic governance system, which the Taliban were struggling to establish, must be crushed. The real front behind the campaign against the Taliban was exposed when in August 2001, the Taliban government in Afghanistan arrested two members of Antioch Community Church: Dayna Curry and Heather Mercer. Curry and Mercer came to Kabul with Shelter For Life, a Christian missionary and relief organization that works in Afghanistan, Angola, Burundi, Honduras, Iran, Iraq, India, Kosovo, Macedonia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Western Sahara. The Taliban were the only one who accused Curry and Mercer of proselytizing, a crime during its regime in Afghanistan.

Their incarceration played a small role in the United States government's already well-extensive media campaign against the Taliban. However, the way the United States assigned a special role to the CIA and its forces to release them[161] and the way President Bush feted them on the White House lawn gives us some clues about the real front against the Taliban. Few denied that Curry and Mercer had gone to convert Afghans, for they had been part of a global movement of American Evangelicals whose goal is to harvest as many souls for their brand of Christianity. Neither Curry nor Mercer denied what they had done. Their pastor, Jeff Abshire, told the press, "they wanted to serve others and show God's love for people through practical ways" and "introduce people to God and see them `disciplined' as followers of Christ".

"They had a calling to serve the poorest of the poor," President Bush said at a White House ceremony shortly after the Hollywood-style rescue of Curry and Mercer. "Their faith was a source of hope that kept them from being discouraged." But Curry and Mercer were doing more than relief work: Once home, they admitted to violating Afghan law by showing "part of a Jesus film" and giving a Christian storybook to a Muslim family.[162]

The Taliban government was becoming a source of major concern for the Evangelicals and other Christian missionaries. Muslims were gradually realizing the need to establish an Islamic state that knows no boundaries and all divided nations are like an Ummah. The Taliban's weaknesses were an excellent source for other Muslims to learn and refine ways to make living by Islam possible. This posed a major threat to the global designs of the missionaries.

For example, the anti-Islam prayers reflect Columbia International University (CIU) in South Carolina's official attitude toward what it considers a competitor religion. Evangelicals will never allow establishment of a competitor religion as a way of life and a model for humanity. Prominent on the CIU's Web site is an essay posted shortly after 9/11. "To claim that 'Islam' means 'peace' is just one more attempt to mislead the public," it reads. "Muslim leaders have spoken of their goal to spread Islam in the West until Islam becomes a dominant, global power." Warren Larson, who directs the university's Muslim Studies program and served as a mentor to John Weaver, the Afghanistan missionary, wrote the essay. A former missionary himself, Larson fears that Christianity might be losing the race for world domination. One can imagine antagonism towards Muslims struggle to establish living by Islam from the fact that even increasing Muslim population bother the leading crusaders of 21st Century. "Islam is biologically taking over the world," he says. "They're having babies faster than we are."[163]

The motives for religious war on the part of the religious front

and their allies on the political front boils down to the struggle for dominating the world. The misconceptions and malicious intentions are obvious from the following statement of Patrick Buchanan:

> The war into which we have plunged in Iraq and Afghanistan, then is a civil-religious war to decide who shall rule the Islamic world. Governments of men who are part of America's world. Or regimes are True Believers sworn to purge their world of Zionists, infidels, Christians and collaborators. Today's struggle for the hearts and minds of Muslims and Arabs is between Ataturk and the Ayatollah.[164]

Faith in force or super-fascism

The religiously motivated political, academia, media and military fronts have joined forces to form Project for the New American Century which is a neo-conservative think-tank that promotes an ideology of total U.S. world domination through the use of force. The group embraces and disseminates an ideology of faith in force, U.S. supremacy, and rejection of the rule of law in international affairs.

The group's core ideas are expressed in a September 2000 report produced for Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, Jeb Bush, and Lewis Libby entitled *Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources For a New Century*. The Sunday Herald referred to the report as a "blueprint for U.S. world domination."[165] PNAC's membership includes people such as Richard Perle, Elliot Abrams and William Kristol. A writer, Norman Podhoretz, is one of the founding members, who described the PNAC mission and the war on Iraq as, "A process of the reformation and modernization of Islam."[166]

According to the Sonoma State University media research group Project Censored,[167] *The Neoconservative Plan for Global Dominance*[168] was the Top Censored Media Story of 2002-2003.[169] Many impartial observers, such as John Pilger, believe that these religious zealots are imposing a "violent and undemocratic order" throughout the world. He thinks the actions of Bush and com-

pany and all who "insist on describing themselves as 'liberals' and 'left of centre', even 'anti-fascists" are "little different from the actions of fascists."[170] The insiders further confirmed these views. Pilger notes in one of his article:

> The former senior CIA analyst Ray McGovern, who once prepared the White House daily briefing, told me that the authors of the PNAC and those now occupying positions of executive power used to be known in Washington as "the crazies". He said, "We should now be very worried about fascism".[171]

Similarly, views of a key architect in post-9/11 Bush Administration's legal policy have confirmed that there is not even a "little difference" between the modern day crusaders and earlier fascists. John Yoo, who also served as General Counsel of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, publicly argued there is no law that could prevent Bush from ordering the torture of a child of a suspect in custody—including by crushing that child's testicles.[172]

PNAC began to enter the public consciousness when journalist Neil Mackay wrote about the September 2000 report in the *Sunday Herald* (September 15, 2002). According to the article, the report sparked outrage from British Labour MP Tom Dalyell.

Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP, father of the House of Commons and one of the leading rebel voices against war with Iraq, said: "This is a blueprint for US world domination—a new world order of their making. These are the thought processes of fantasist Americans who want to control the world."

Although the goals in the publicly available reports revolve around military control of the Gulf region; simultaneously fighting multiple wars, permanent bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait; increased military pressure on China, creation of "US Space Forces" and development of "world-wide command-and-control system." But the facts on the ground reveal that the single objective is defeating the ideology of Islam. As we have seen in the past two chapters, the next section concludes that the objective of the 21st century crusaders in the garb of "liberals" and "democrats"

is not financially profiting for war. It is the spiritual satisfaction which the super-fascist crusaders achieve with every new war of aggression and occupation in the Muslim world.

A majority of Muslims are not even aware of PNAC, whereas informed Americans, such as the editor of TVLies.org, have reached the following conclusion:

> Even a rookie detective will tell you that motive and means are the keys to identifying suspects in a crime. The self-proclaimed goals of the Project for a New American Century (PNAC) clearly establish a more realistic and plausible motive to create a "new Pearl Harbor" than can be attributed to any Islamic extremist. As a matter of fact, the events of 9/11 were perhaps the most counterproductive factors in the history of Islamic progress. They resulted in an overwhelming backlash against the many Islamic people around the world.[173]

Unfortunately, the PNAC is not alone. There are dozens of such think tanks and institutes, engaged in influencing the United States policy against Islam. PNAS 's office is nowhere else than on the 5th floor of the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) building on 17th St, in downtown Washington. The AEI is the key node of a collection of neoconservative foreign policy experts and scholars, the most influential of whom are members of the PNAC. It's no surprise that Bush, on February 26, 2003 chose to unveil his vision of a new Middle Eastern order at the AEI. According to Pepe Escobar:

> The AEI is intimately connected to the Likud Party in Israel - which for all practical purposes has a deep impact on American foreign policy in the Middle East, thanks to the AEI's influence. In this mutually-beneficial environment, AEI stalwarts are known as Likudniks. It's no surprise, then, how unparalleled is the AEI's intellectual Islamophobia. Loathing and contempt for Islam as a religion and as a way of life… For Bush, Iraq is begging to be educated in the principles of democracy… But this very presumption is seemingly central to the intellectual Islamophobia of both the AEI and PNAC.[174]

The fear of *Khilafah,* not "terrorism"

Tied to general fear of Muslims is the real fear: the fear of

Khilafah. In chapter 3 of this book, we will explore the reason for this fear. Here we will establish the existence of this fear.

A prominent leader from South Asia, Mohammed Ali Johar, predicted in 1924:

> It is difficult to anticipate the exact effects the "abolition" of Khilafah will have on the minds of Muslims in India. I can safely affirm that it will prove a disaster both to Islam and to civilization. The suppression of the time honored institution which was, through out the Muslim world, regarded as a symbol of Islamic unity will cause the disintegration of Islam...., I fear that the removal of this ideal will drive the unadvanced and semi-civilized peoples..., into ranks of revolution and disorder.[175]

Eighty-one years later, we witness that the "civilized" world is busy in the noble cause of digging out Saddam's atrocities, but at the same time tries to burry deep Uzbek president, Islam Karimov's massacre of civilians in Andijan. The reason for such a silence is the justification which Islam Karimov put forward for his massacre and continued human rights violations in Uzbekistan. In Karimov's words, the victims "wanted to establish *Khilafah*."[176] Atrocities of similar, dictatorial regimes in many Muslims countries are acceptable to the "civilized" world because these are considered as secular bulwarks against Hizb ut Tahrir-like movements, whose main crime is the struggle for establishing *Khilafah*.

The so-called mainstream media and the architects of war at the political and religions levels, make everyone believe that the trouble started, at the earliest, around the Taliban's coming to power in Afghanistan. In fact, the global troubles have been attributed to *Khilafah* since its inception in the 7th century. Thirteen centuries later, when the British Empire abolished the remnants of *Khilafah* in 1924, it took a sigh of relief and considered it as the ultimate victory against Islam.

To the utter disappointment of Britain and its allies, the problem, nevertheless, remains. *Khilafah* still provides motivation to many actions and reactions; movements and counter-movements

in the Muslim world. Consequently, the centuries old zeal of Islamophobes to abolish *Khilafah* is as much the root of all unacknowledged terrorism of the United States, Britain and their allies as the renewed zeal among Muslims to seek self-determination and real liberation from the colonial yoke. Although a majority may not be thinking in terms of establishing Khilafah, but it will be the natural consequence of true liberation and unified approach towards tackling the prevailing problems. That is why the totalitarian warlords in Washington and London are opposed to granting real independence to Muslim masses and spread the fear of "Caliphate."

Elisabeth Bumiller of the *New York Times* points out in his December 11 column that policy hawks in the Pentagon have used the term Caliphate internally since the planning stages for the war in Iraq, but the administration's public use of the word increased this past summer and autumn:

> Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said it in a speech last Monday in Washington and again on Thursday on PBS. Eric Edelman, the under secretary of defense for policy, said it the week before in a roundtable at the Council on Foreign Relations. Stephen Hadley, the national security adviser, said it in October in speeches in New York and Los Angeles. General John Abizaid, the top American commander in the Middle East, said it in September in hearings on Capitol Hill.[177]

The major problem with *Khilafah* is the morbid dread it strikes in the hearts of those who are determined not to allow Muslims to become united, exercise their right to self-determination and live by the Qur'an. The key to materializing these objectives lies in thwarting Muslim's organized struggle towards real liberation from the puppet regimes and uniting the divided world of Islam.

Just the thought of this struggle leads the Islamophobes into taking many pre-emptive measures, which, in turn, lead to grievances, reaction and counter measures on the part of Muslims.

The more time passes, the more people realize the importance of a central, independent authority for Muslims. Unlike all the

now defunct revolutions of human history, the 7th century revolution in the heart of Arabia not only culminated in establishing a way of life but also setting guidelines for human governance, which are still valid today.

This realization of the need to have a central, independent authority for Muslims is directly proportional to the struggle on the part of the architects of war on Afghanistan who will never allow Muslims to take any steps that may lead to the establishment of an alternative model to the existing unjust socio-political and economic order.

The "war on terrorism" is a post 9/11 slogan. In fact, it is a summary title for all the anti-Islam efforts: from intellectual escapades to legal hurdles, wars, occupations, detentions, torture and criminalizing the concept of *Khilafah*. In this process, terrorism is used as a synonym of *Khilafah*.

One can notice this by carefully listening to the brief statements at the end of summits and conferences these days. It seems as if there is nothing going on in the world except terrorism. The crux of all messages is: We are committed, determined and stand as one against the evil of terrorism. We would not allow terrorists to win. They are against our values and way of life.

A realistic look forces one to ask: Where does the alleged 'Muslim terrorism' stand in comparison to the mass killings, tortures, detentions, and exploitations carried out to deter Muslims from being organized and united. This proves that the war is actually on something other than the deceptively labeled terrorism. The first physical action of this war was the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan.

One month before 9/11, the *New York Times* reports that most Americans are made to believe that terrorism "is the greatest threat to the United States and that it is becoming more widespread and lethal." The Americans are made "to think that the United States is the most popular target of terrorists and they almost certainly have the impression that extremist Islamic groups

cause most terrorism." Larry C. Johnson, nevertheless, concludes: "None of these beliefs are based in fact."[178]

Johnson cites figures from the CIA reports. Accordingly, deaths from "international terrorism fell to 2,527 in the decade of 1900's from 4,833 in the 80's." Compare the 2,527 deaths in the 90s due to acknowledged terrorism with the death of 1.8 million in Iraq during the same years due to unacknowledged terrorism of the United States, its allies and the United Nations. The United States and allies' terrorism remained unacknowledged because they justified it with lies about Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction. For example, compare the 4,833 deaths due to acknowledged Muslim terrorism with the one million deaths due to unacknowledged aggression of Iraq against Iran on the behest of the United States and its allies.

So, what is consuming the world: the acknowledged terrorism of Muslims or the unacknowledged terrorism of the United States and its allies? This brings us to the point that the endless tirades about Muslim terrorism are directed at holding Muslims from exercising their right to self-determination. Anything in the name of *Khilafah* in particular becomes part of the struggle towards this end and is instantly criminalized.

Many people believe these measures are part of the wider crackdowns for safety and security in the wake of 9/11. This, however, is not true. The reality is that anything in the name of *Khilafah* has been ridiculed and presented as a threat to safety since 1924 in particular. The reason: Islamophobes do not want to see real *Khilafah* re-emerge after their assuming in 1924 that they are done with the remnants of a symbolic *Khilafah* forever.

An example of this attitude is the reaction in the British press at the eve of *Khilafah* Conference in London in 1994, long before the staged 9/11 and 7/7. A headline in *Independent* (August 07, 1994) reads: "Muslim body accused of racism: Muslim rally angers Jews." A headline in *Telegraph* (August 8, 1994) reads: "Wembley survives the Muslim call to arms." An inset in the

same story reads: "Fundamentalists' Elusive Dream of An Islamic Empire."

The morbid dread of *Khilafah* is evident from the editorials in the leading British dailies at this occasion. "The threat of *Jihad*," reads the title of the *Telegraph* editorial, which goes on to link the *Khilafah* conference with the happenings in Algeria: "Islamic fundamentalists won a majority in recent elections, but, for *political reasons*, have been denied by the old guard." The editorial goes on to sow the seeds of dissention among Muslims: "in Britain yesterday, for example, a rally of Islamic fundamentalists caused nothing but alarm by its challenge to the British Muslim community's moderate leadership."

The Guardian attempted to belittle the conference in its August 8, 1994 report with comments such as: "Much of the Islamic rhetoric meant little to many of the young British Muslims," as if the participants were forced to join the conference, or that popular opinion decides what is Islamic and what is not.

The fear-mongering trend was not limited to a few presstitutes. *Times* titled its editorial: "Marching Muslims: Reminder of the need for vigilance" (August 08, 1994) and went on to scare the public: "The rally yesterday of some 8000 Muslims in Wembley Arena provoked understandable nervousness in Britain and abroad." That "understandable nervousness" is not there since 1994, or 7/7, but since 1400 years. It did not end with systematically abolishing *Khilafah* in 1924.

A report in *The Independent* (August 8, 1994) by Tim Kelsey went to the extreme in fear mongering. Headline of the report tells the whole story: "Fundamentalist gathering seeks political overthrow of Western democracies: Muslims call for Israeli state to be destroyed." One must remember that this is coming from a more progressive paper and not from some right-wing publication and that too in 1994, when even the Taliban had not come to power.

It is understandable that the enemies of Islam would go to any

length, beyond these fear-mongering reports, to discredit the concept of *Khilafah* and deny them the right to self-determination. This includes staged terror attacks, lies for justifying invasions and occupation, and support to criminal regimes, which promise, in turn, not to let Muslims live by Islam. That is how the turmoil widens and the hopes for peace diminish with each passing day.

CHAPTER 3

The Real Challenge

We are being challenged by Islam these years - globally as well as locally. It is a challenge we have to take seriously. We have let this issue float about for too long because we are tolerant and lazy. "We have to show our opposition to Islam and we have to, at times, run the risk of having unflattering labels placed on us because there are some things for which we should display no tolerance.

Queen Margrethe II of Denmark
Daily *Telegraph*, U.K.
April 15, 2005.

TO THE ANTI-ISLAM alliance of neo-cons, Evangelicals, Christian-Zionists and capitalists, the ideology of Islam is the challenge to overcome. According to the principles of Islam, there is no basis for division among Muslims with respect to place of birth, ethnicity, culture, language, national boundaries or nationality. This ideology also nullifies the concept of nation-states as a major foundation for separation among Muslims. These modes and systems of identification are invalid because not only they would force Muslims to worship their respective states and their secular laws, but also because they would divide their interests. That is why the United States and its allies shiver to

the core when Muslims refer to the concept of the *Ummah* and establishing an Islamic state or *Khilafah.*

In fact the concept of *Ummah* and *Khilafah* runs contrary to the totalitarian designs of the religiously motivated persons on the media, academia, political and military form of the war on Islam. Just six days after the fall of Berlin Wall, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Colin Powell presented a new strategy document to President Bush Senior, proposing that the US shift from countering Soviet attempts at world dominance to ensuring US world dominance. Bush accepted this plan in a public speech, with slight modifications, on August 2, 1990. The same day Iraq began invading Kuwait. In early 1992, Powell, counter to his usual public dove persona, told the United States Congress that the United States requires "sufficient power" to "deter any challenger from ever dreaming of challenging us on the world stage." Powell clearly expressed his desires. He said, "I want to be the bully on the block." Powell's early ideas of global hegemony were formalized by others in a February 18, 1992 policy document.[179] The then Defense Secretary Dick Cheney stated that part of the American mission described in the 46-page document was to convince "potential competitors that they need not aspire to a greater role or pursue a more aggressive posture to protect their legitimate interests."[180] This strategy, called Pentagon's Defense Planning Guidance for the Fiscal Years 1994-1999, was finally realized as policy when Bush Junior became president in 2001.[181]

Nick Cohen summarized the totalitarian policy in the Observer in these words: "America's friends are potential enemies. They must be in a state of dependence and seek solutions to their problems in Washington."[182] The policy document was prepared by Paul Wolfowitz and Lewis Libby, who had relatively low posts at the time, but under Bush Junior became Deputy Defense Secretary and Vice President Cheney's Chief of Staff, respectively. The document conspicuously avoided mention of collective security arrangements through the United Nations, instead suggested

the US "should expect future coalitions to be ad hoc assemblies, often not lasting beyond the crisis being confronted."[183] Senator Lincoln Chafee (R), later noted that Bush Junior's "plan for preemptive strikes was formed back at the end of the first Bush administration with that 1992 report."[184] In his last days in office as Defense Secretary, Dick Cheney released a document, called Defense Strategy for the 1990s.[185] This document reasserted the plans for US global domination outlined in an earlier Pentagon policy paper. But because of Clinton's presidential victory, the implementation of these plans had to wait until Bush Junior came to power in 2001 and Cheney becomes vice president. However, Cheney and others continued to refine this vision of global domination through the Project for the New American Century think tank while they wait to reassume political power.[186]

Zionist influence continued to play a role in this crusade for global dominance. The Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies, an Israeli think tank, published a paper entitled "A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm."[187] The paper is not much different from other Israeli right-wing papers at the time, except the authors: the lead writer is Richard Perle, now chairman of the Defense Policy Board in the US, and very influential with President Bush. Several of the other authors now hold key positions in Washington. The paper advises the new, right-wing Israeli leader Binyamin Netanyahu to make a complete break with the past by adopting a strategy "based on an entirely new intellectual foundation, one that restores strategic initiative and provides the nation the room to engage every possible energy on rebuilding Zionism ..." The first step was to remove Saddam Hussein in Iraq. A war with Iraq would destabilize the entire Middle East, which would allow governments in Syria, Iran, Lebanon and other countries to be replaced. "Israel will not only contain its foes; it will transcend them," the paper concludes.[188]

These hegemonic designs made the totalitarian feel scared of

anything that could challenge the status quo or which could become an alternative to the kind of order they had in mind for recreating the world in their own image. Thus, any intentional or unintentional reference of effort in the direction of uniting Muslims is considered a serious threat. The recent statements from U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, President George W. Bush and British Home Secretary Charles Clarke reveal this deep-seated fear. Before we can move toward understanding the root cause of this fear, it is necessary to take a look at these three statements, which appeared within a week's time. On September 30, 2005, Rumsfeld said:

> Those voters are demonstrating again today that there exists no conflict between Western values and Muslim values. What exists is a conflict within the Muslim faith—between majorities in every country who desire freedom, and a lethal minority intent on denying freedom to others and re-establishing a caliphate.

Rumsfeld has been constantly repeating this idea for quite some time, using the word "caliphate." In an interview with *Spiegel*, he repeated the same theme on October 31, 2005,[189] and specifically mentioned it in his briefing before the Department of Defense on November 1, 2005.[190] On November 20, he said on CNN's Late Edition, "Think of that country being turned over to the Zarqawis, the people who behead people, the people who kill innocent men, women and children, the people who are determined to reestablish a caliphate around the world."[191]

Rumsfeld and his supporters continue to ignore this fact: Muslims have never before been bent on killing themselves and others to establish *Khilafah*. Throughout the bloodshed, these questions have remained unanswered: "Where were these Muslims before the United States invasion? Why didn't they try to establish *Khilafah* in Iraq when Saddam's government was falling?" Even if Saddam's regime was not on its last legs, according to Rumsfeld's assumption, more tyranny existed under Saddam Hussain than exists now. Yet Saddam's military power was a cap pistol com-

pared to United States military power. Why did caliphate-lovers previously not express their determination?

In an historic speech on October 6, 2005, Bush expressed the same fear when he discussed the objectives for the war in these words:

> Some call this evil Islamic radicalism; others, militant Jihadism; still others, Islamo-fascism. Whatever it is called, this ideology is very different from the religion of Islam. This form of radicalism exploits Islam to serve a violent, political vision: the establishment, by terrorism and subversion and insurgency, of a totalitarian empire that denies all political and religious freedom. These extremists distort the idea of jihad into a call for terrorist murder against Christians and Jews and Hindus -- and also against Muslims from other traditions, whom they regard as heretics.

British Home Secretary Charles Clarke repeated the same fear of *Khilafah* on October 5, 2005:

> What drive these people on are ideas. And unlike the liberation movements of the post World War II era in many parts of the world, these are not in pursuit of political ideas like national independence from colonial rule, or equality for all citizens without regard for race or creed, or freedom of expression without totalitarian repression. Such ambitions are, at least in principle, negotiable and in many cases have actually been negotiated. However there can be no negotiation about the re-creation of the Caliphate; there can be no negotiation about the imposition of *Shari'ah* law; there can be no negotiation about the suppression of equality between the sexes; there can be no negotiation about the ending of free speech. These values are fundamental to our civilizations and are simply not up for negotiation.[192]

Therefore, the only justification left for the United States invasions and occupation of Muslim countries is to save humanity from the curse of *Khilafah.* Is the United States realizing the "curse" of *Khilafah* now, after invading and occupying Afghanistan and Iraq under other pretexts? No, it is not. It has now become obvious that waging a war on *Khilafah* was the primary U.S. motive to demonize the Taliban and to engage in pre-9/11 planning for invading and occupying Afghanistan because their

presence and policies were considered a threat to the world order envisioned by the totalitarians in the United States.

The Project for the New American Century (PNAC), a neo-conservative think tank was formed in the spring of 1997 around the time of appearance of the Taliban on the scene. PNAC issued its statement of principles with the stated aims: "to shape a new century favorable to American principles and interests," to achieve "a foreign policy that boldly and purposefully promotes American principles abroad," "to increase defense spending significantly," to challenge "regimes hostile to US interests and values," and to "accept America's unique role in preserving and extending an international order friendly to our security, our prosperity, and our principles."[193] These principles matter because they were signed by a group which has now become "a rollcall of today's Bush inner circle."[194] According to ABC's Ted Koppel, PNAC's ideas have "been called a secret blueprint for US global domination."[195]

To understand the motive of these totalitarians behind invading Afghanistan, what we need to understand is the basic concept of Islam, which the Western totalitarians are so strongly associating with terrorism and are attempting to prove as evil without letting people understand the reality of Islamic belief.

Khilafah does not appear in a vacuum without an ideological and spiritual background. Nor is its objective the creation of an empire that will rule the world for the sake of ruling. One has to understand the purpose of life in Islam to comprehend this religion's requirements for the collective life of Muslims. Islam means submission to Allah and His Will. Once a person submits himself or herself to Allah and comes into the fold of Islam, that individual is required to live in accordance with the way of life prescribed by the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. From the Islamic perspective, any standard, law, value and way of life to which one submits and follows becomes his *Deen* (way of life).[196] That is why the Qur'an has stressed: "Lo! The *Deen* with Allah is Islam"

(Qur'an 3:19). At another place in the Qur'an, Allah has pointed out that with the establishment of Islam, He has rewarded the people completely: "This day have I perfected your *Deen* for you and completed My favor unto you and have chosen for you as *Deen* Al-Islam" (Qur'an 5:3).[197] The overall objective of collectively submitting to the Will of Allah is to establish a society and system of true justice on Earth. The current political establishments in Washington and allied capitals would consider such an idea to be a threat to their power.

To achieve worldly objectives, human beings have been submitting themselves to different powers and ideologies throughout human history. In the present age, most of humanity has submitted to the power and authority of the state and the ideology of the separation of power between church and state. In Islam, both religion and state are part of the *Deen,* and submission is allowed only to Allah and His Law. It means that no sphere of life is free from living according to the Will and Law of Allah.[198] Living according to any standard other than Allah is the greatest sin (*Shirk,* as it is called in Islam).[199]

In the Muslim world today, all discussions on *Shirk* and *Tawheed* (the oneness and uniqueness of Allah) have been limited to religion. The concept of state has been left alone, as if Allah's Will, Law and Standards do not apply to the state at all and as if the state acts in a vacuum without any dealings with human beings for whose guidance the Qur'an is revealed. That is why present-day Muslims consider someone bowing down before a statue as *Shirk,* no matter how much that person may insist that he or she believes in the oneness of Allah—the prerequisite for being a Muslim. However, at the same time, a majority of Muslims do not consider submitting themselves to laws, standards, systems and a way of life other than those prescribed by Allah as *Shirk*. This is because the self-proclaimed "moderate" Muslims in particular have diminished the concept of *Deen* in modern-day thinking. The overall thinking of Muslims is shaped in world

where the secular European model or a public order (or state) has replaced the concept of *Darul Islam*. The secular model has taken sovereignty away from Allah and given to the State. And that is an act of *Shirk*!

Despite the fact that Muslims say that Islam *is a way of life*, there is hardly any reaction to the reality that the prevailing mode of life in the Muslim world is un-Islamic. Similarly, none of the Muslim states conducts its business purely in accordance with the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*.[200] State and public life are free of religion, but when it comes to religion itself, we witness extreme reactions. For example, any blasphemous remarks or physical desecration of the Qur'an automatically receives a knee-jerk reaction from Muslims, such as the reaction to the publication of a cartoon of Prophet Mohammed (pbuh). The basic reason is that despite rejecting the concept of separation of church and state, this concept has still heavily influenced and affected Muslim mind. They have literally accepted this concept and find no problem living by it. Similarly, they think that the state is the ultimate form of human governance. In addition, even the best possible Muslim efforts at living according to Islam are limited to thinking inside the box of the nation-state system.

With the nation-state system, the world map is set in one style in which each state has the legal authority to make rules binding on its inhabitants. The relationship between government and religion varies from state to state. At the minimum, governments are not hostile to religion as was the case in the former Soviet Union. Most governments accept at least minimum respect for religion because of popular feelings and support for religious beliefs.

Similarly, efforts are underway to standardize and reduce cultural differences as much as possible. The speed of these changes varies from region to region, but the ultimate objective and direction are the same everywhere (except in the United States where Bush and company are establishing theocracy with no

qualms). Not only is the separation of church and state globally established, but also religion—even in its limited and misunderstood form—is not considered the basis of human organization anywhere in the world. The single, authentic standard for human organization is state and nationality. Therefore, development of the human mind has taken place within the framework of nationhood since the introduction of the concept of nation-states. In fact, adding Islam before or after a country's title shows only ignorance about Islam as well as the concept of the modern state.

Modern-day religious, political, military and intellectual crusaders are fully aware of the basic requirement that Muslims must live by Islam. In their view, verbal submission to Allah's Will by itself has no meaning. However, today's Muslim leaders in all walks of life are trained to adopt the principles of imperialist powers, which are focused on maintaining the existing state of affairs. Thus, for Muslims the problem of division, external interference and subjugation begins at home. In total contrast to common practice of limiting Islam to a few rituals, Islam is the basis; not only of the overall governing system, but also of human organization among Muslims at the local level. The only basis of social organization and collective identity for Muslims is no less, and no more, than the *Deen* of Islam. The concept of separation of church and state is contrary to the basic principles of Islam because it is a form of *Shirk*—the greatest sin in Islam. Separation of church and state means living by standards other than those revealed by Allah (Qur'an 5:48-49, 6:89).[201] The whole concept of separation of church and state is in opposition to the concept of *Tawheed.* The reason is simple: according to the Qur'an, the only standard for human organization is Islam (Qur'an 21:92 and 23:52-53).[202] In Islam, the basis of system and organization is the *Deen* of Islam. The limit of this organization is the *Ummah* of Islam—the nation that fully believes in Allah's oneness (*Milat-e-Tawheed*), and applies that belief to practical situations in their everyday lives.

The concept of *Darul Islam* (the home of Islam) is too broad to be accommodated within the modern concept of the state. It is impossible to have both at the same time. The ultimate form of organization of the Muslim *Ummah* is *Khilafah*, which is a complete negation of the concept of the state. That is why the mere mention of *Khilafah* forces the well-established major powers of the day into quick knee-jerk reactions. No matter how rudimentary and flawed were the attempts of the Taliban at establishing an Islamic Emirate, the modern-day religious crusaders were scared because this process of establishing an emirate was leading Muslim minds to many questions and clarifications. The influence of these religious crusaders, as mentioned in chapter 1 and 2, forced activists in the political, academic and military ranks to join the 21st century crusade.

The chain reaction of questions and answers as a result of the Taliban's actions could lead to an understanding of the Islamic concept and standard of human organization. A continuation of the Taliban government would have led to purification—not domination—of Islamic thought. This purification of thought in the Muslim world is the first step towards the establishment of an Islamic society, free of every kind of un-Islamic influence.

The fear of discussion, debate, and crystallization of Islamic thought among Muslims is evident from Patrick Buchanan's declaration of war on the Muslim world. Writing in his book, *Where the Right Went Wrong*, Buchanan makes a case for religious war in these terms:

> If a clash of civilizations is coming, the West is unchallenged in wealth and weaponry. Yet, wealth did not prevent the collapse of Europe's Empires, nor did awesome weaponry prevent the collapse of the Soviet Empire. Rome was mighty, Christianity weak. Christianity endured and prevailed. Rome fell. America's enemy then is not a state we can crush with sanctions or an enemy we can defeat with force of arms. The enemy is a cause, a movement, an idea.[203]

Accordingly, following this line of thinking, the Taliban were not a military threat. They did not challenge the United States.

Even the Taliban had no clear thought-out strategies. They only had a strong determination and intention to make living by Islam possible despite claims to the contrary that the 21st century is not a time to fully live by Islam. This attitude was giving rise to a debate among Muslims and a movement in the direction of Taliban's stated intentions.[204] The fear of discussion and debate on this issue is evident from British Home Secretary Charles Clarke statement, saying: "There can be no negotiation about the re-creation of the Caliphate; there can be no negotiation about the imposition of *Shari'ah* law; there can be no negotiation about the suppression of equality between the sexes; there can be no negotiation about the ending of free speech."[205]

Of course, there can be no negotiation with Rumsfeld and company on the issue of how the Muslims need to live their lives after they submit themselves to Allah. But Rumsfeld's repetition of "no negotiation" reflects the morbid dread of the purification of polluted Islamic thought as well as attempts at suppressing free speech when it comes to making the public understand the basic concepts of Islam. For example, it is a revolution in itself for Muslims to realize that there is no basis for classifying human beings on the basis of ethnic origin, language, place of birth and nationality. Allah does say, however, that He has made people into different tribes only for the sake of identification. The sin comes in treating others differently on the basis of these classifications and erecting the wall of nation-states between them, which pits one Muslim state against the other for worldly interests.

Anyone who accepts Islam becomes part of the *Ummah* and is obliged to live by the Law and standards of Allah alone. Unless one leaves the fold of Islam, there is no compromise on this basic principle. But with this obligation, one is bestowed with some inalienable rights as well. Unlike Israel, where an estimated 300,000 immigrants are considered non-Jews by the rabbinate and the government, and face problems in getting citizenship,[206] just coming to the fold of Islam is good enough for one to im-

mediately become part of the *Ummah* and a citizen of the Islamic State/Emirate/*Darul Islam* regardless of the place of birth and ethnic origin.

Both Muslims and non-Muslims routinely call Muslim majority countries Islamic states. Muslims are made to believe that even if all Muslim countries are amalgamated into a single Islamic entity, it will still be comprised of land, population, rulers and the ruled. So what's the difference? Therefore, the Muslim mind has accepted the present divisions of territory into several Muslim countries as perfectly valid. Furthermore, some Muslims believe that if some "Islamic" articles are added to the constitutions of Muslim countries, this change will make these states Islamic. Others are of the opinion that there is no need for such additions to the constitutions. All these distinctions are part of the attempts to limit Islam by putting it into the box of "nation" and nation-states.

For nationalizing Islam and eliminating differences between a single Islamic entity (*Darul Islam*) and un-Islamic states, many countries with Muslim majorities have been attempting to model themselves on un-Islamic states for a long time. As a result, even well-known scholars and leaders of religious parties are confused about the difference between an Islamic and an un-Islamic state. They try their best to avoid discussion on the difference between a Muslim and Islamic entity. As a result, most Muslims are under the impression that if the majority of the population is Muslim and their "leaders" proclaim to be Muslim, the difference between an Islamic and an un-Islamic state is reduced to an Islamically permissible fraction. In fact, even if the division of Muslims into several states is perfectly valid, still it does not help Muslims become a single *Ummah* as required by the Qur'anic injunctions.

Dictators, such as General Pervez Musharraf, feel proud to speak on the issue and tell the world that Muslims cannot live by Islam the way they lived under the *Khilafah* in the 7th century.[207] He hardly realizes that the existing 57 Muslim states are

no more than colonial encroachments on the ruins of an Islamic entity. These encroachments were erected only to make Muslims feel at home rather than to have them think about living as one *Ummah*. *Ummah* is the most dreaded word for those who harbor hatred for Islam. For Islamophobes, Muslims division in many nations and many states is not a problem at all. However, any thought of the emergence of a single *Ummah* on the part of Muslims becomes extremism and totalitarianism for Islamophobes. The reason is simple: In the absence of divided Muslims; in the absence of Muslim puppet kings, dictators and generals, the occupiers—along with their multinational corporations and IMF and World Bank—will have no way to carry out their policies of social, cultural and economic exploitation. Edward W. Said noted in 1996:

> …[no wonder] that most Islamic countries today are too poverty-stricken, tyrannical and hopelessly inept militarily as well as scientifically to be much of a threat to anyone except their own citizens; and never mind that the most powerful of them -- like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan and Pakistan -- are totally within the US orbit. What matters to "experts" like Miller, Samuel Huntington, Martin Kramer, Bernard Lewis, Daniel Pipes, Steven Emerson and Barry Rubin, plus a whole battery of Israeli academics, is to make sure that the "threat" is kept before our eyes, the better to excoriate Islam for terror, despotism and violence, while assuring themselves profitable consultancies, frequent TV appearances and book contracts.[208]

If there were an *Ummah*, it would be unimaginable that a part of the Islamic state would be reeling under foreign occupation, with the rest of the *Ummah* standing on the sidelines. Presently, there are 57 Muslim countries, with 57 policies and 57 *Shirk*-infested national anthems, divided interests and unclear strategies. The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Arab League are useless for the same reason. It hardly hurts the interests of any of these states if the United States is occupying Afghanistan and Iraq today, plans to invade Syria tomorrow, or attacks Iran the next day. The United States has cut the body into

pieces and feels free to attack any part of that body when it sees fit with no fear of any real opposition or resistance. Interestingly, many of the leading warlords, such as Thomas Friedman of the *New York Times*, present Arabs different from Muslims. While referring to Muslims, they would write "Arabs and Muslims," as if Arabs are not Muslims.[209] The effect of such propaganda is extremely serious. Even those who are against occupation and oppression of Muslims around the world start speaking in the same language that confirms these divisions among Muslims.[210]

The sovereignty and independence of Muslim nation-states are yet another big joke. On the one hand, school textbooks in these countries are filled with patriotic lessons, and national radio and television stations never stop blaring songs to deify the state and promote national chauvinism. On the other hand, however, these states are no more than mere puppets in the control of their colonial masters. Pakistan is a sad story, but a very important example in this regard. There are certain aspects, such as occupation of the country by the national army and being a nuclear power, that are worthy of attention. Pakistan has failed to use its military power to deter enemies and defend the country's much-vaunted sovereignty in a global order in which independence of Muslim states is hardly more than a joke.

As discussed in detail in chapter 1, for modern-day crusaders, sovereignty and independence of states mean nothing. Vittorio E. Parsi's, who teaches geopolitics at the Catholic University of Milan, presents the crusader's vision as described in chapter 1 and 2 of this book and support to the renewed alliance between the United States and Europe in his latest book *L'alleanza inevitabile: Europa e Stati Uniti oltre l'Iraq* (The Inevitable Alliance: Europe and the United States Beyond Iraq) published by Bocconi University in Milan (2003). To the author, "equality of all states" is an "untenable legal fiction."

Giving one's life in defense of so-called sovereign Muslim states has no value or permission in Islam. These Muslim states give

priority to defending the interests of the United States and its bullying allies over protecting the rights of their people at home and other oppressed Muslims abroad. In the context of suffering Muslims in Palestine and Kashmir, did General Musharraf not clearly tell his nation in a televised address on January 12, 2001, that we are not responsible for Muslims and Islam everywhere? His exact words in Urdu were: "*Hum Koi Islam Ke Tekkadar to Naheen.*" The use of this slang in the context of Palestine and other trouble spots throughout the world means that we are not solely responsible for defending Islam and Muslims in other places in the name of Islam.[211]

Thus, the state and *Ummah* (*Millat*) are two extremes at the opposite ends of the spectrum. States limit Muslims to specific geographic boundaries and make them think about their internal affairs alone. In contrast, *Ummah* makes Muslims think globally about living by Islam as well as addressing problems and needs of all Muslims. However, in most Muslim countries these extremes—*mulk-o-millat* (state and *Ummah*)—are put together by the media and public in their daily routine and used as complementary or inseparable realities. State and *Ummah* are in total contrast to each other. However, their combination in daily speech shows Muslims' ignorance of the basic concepts behind these terminologies. This way, Muslim loyalties and patriotism have been divided. *Ummah* or *Millat* has been subordinated to each Muslim state. So is Islam. For some, their respective nations have become *Millat* for them.

As a result of nationalizing Islam in nation-states, Islam in every Muslim state requires loyalty to the government. Islam in Kuwait, for example, has the responsibility to save the Kuwaiti Sheikhs and support their policies. In Saudi Arabia, Islam requires support for the King. In every Muslim country, it is considered Islamic to save the state. There is an army of religious scholars in every state. When it comes to defending the rulers and state in the name of Islam, there is no dearth of Qur'anic

verses and *Ahadiths* to which reference is made. Things take a strange turn when the interests of Muslim states clash with each other. In that kind of case, *Ijthihad*[212] in one state stands in total contrast to the *Ijthihad* of religious scholars in the other. Popular *Ijthihad* of religious leaders everywhere has to follow state policy because they are bound to look at the problem from the state's perspective. Thinking or working for Muslims' collective benefit has no place in Muslim thought or action today.

Every state has to put its interests at the forefront and give priority to addressing its own national problems. During the first Gulf War, for example, supporting American forces was absolute *Kufr* (disbelief) for Iraqi scholars; whereas for Saudis, inviting and hosting American troops were not only valid but also compulsory from their Islamic perspective. This is exactly how the architects of dividing the Muslim *Ummah* into nation-states wanted it to be. They could then favor one side and watch as Muslims fought against one another over who would be the lucky recipient of their good graces.

As a result of the *Ummah's* division into several nation-states, Islam has had to remain under government protection. In return, it has to serve the government's agenda as if it were a slave. Muslims are trained to think in terms of their respective states before interpreting Islam. The recent barrage of French and American *fatwas* by local Muslims against "terrorism" is a telling sign of progress in this regard.[213] A serious question in this regard is: If application of the same Qur'anic injunctions starts changing at different places and times, how many different types of Islam would emerge with the passage of time? That is why secularists in Muslim countries argue that religion must be kept out of state affairs to avoid such confusion. Setting Islam aside is not so difficult. What is difficult for Muslims is to toss out Islam from their public life and still remain Muslims.

Therefore, the roots of present confusion in the Muslim world lie in the introduction of nation-states—not the "misinterpreta-

tion" of Islam. Western colonialists have erected state boundaries among Muslims to such an extent that Muslim masses and scholars can hardly overcome these barriers. With all their flag-waving and nationalistic slogans, Muslims can hardly see or recognize themselves as a single *Ummah*. These boundaries are as much ideological as they are psychological. To possess an Islamic perspective, it is imperative to set aside various national perspectives and all lessons of living and dying for the respective 57 Muslim states. Working for the cause of Islam, and working for the cause of a nation are poles apart.

Swimming against the flow of the so-called national interest is almost impossible for any single individual or organization in the Muslim world. It is not only nerve-wracking and exhausting, but is also impossible. To the contrary, swimming with the flow of the so-called national interest is both convenient and satisfying. It gives one the opportunity to taste success. It is not that all Muslims are blind to the reality that there is no place for secular systems and nation-states in Islam. It is actually almost impossible to overcome the prevailing mindset and ignore the established national slogans and priorities against public views.

In Muslim countries, the masses can hardly think outside the box of the concept of nation-states. Anything other than the prevailing system and order seems like implausible ideas with no link to realities on the ground. Of course, some organizations have taken a stand on principles. The result, however, is obvious. The public in general, has lost interest in these organizations. In some cases, they had to give up and quit their stand on principles. Public acceptance and a stand on Islamic principles have become inversely proportional to one another: The more one takes a stand on Islamic principles, the less popular acceptance he or she receives. To put pressure on existing governments in Muslim states, selfless religious leaders have to understand the broader context of the challenge before Muslims. They also have to take masses into confidence. Without winning the hearts and minds

of the public, it is impossible to make an impact on a national level.

Unfortunately, public opinion is shaped by the media, school curriculums and other indoctrination centers, working day and night to promote the concept of nation and state since the inception of each Muslim state. Behind these institutions, there is only one mindset at work: Governments come and go, but the institutions that shape public opinion stay and work incessantly. The challenge before Muslims is to change public opinion. Putting pressure on governments as a result of popularity among the masses is not difficult. In fact, governments are not the real enemies. Even in the United States, presidents and Congress are mere puppets in the hands of the power behind the scene, which is never known to the general public. These are the real molders and shapers of public opinion.

Today, media, education systems and other sources of indoctrination act as a chain around the neck of all nations. Acceptable terminologies, such as public opinion, national interest, national needs, public emotions and public trends, are creations of the hands that rock the national cradles as well as rule the world.

In the Muslim world, both religious or political parties and other organizations always look for a niche in public opinion for their survival and growth. One has to be acceptable to public emotions and trends to prosper. Even writers, columnists and political observers cannot progress unless their views are in consonance with the so-called national interest and the established order. Lists of such patriotic slogans and phrases are so meticulously and intelligently crafted that irrespective of one's political or religious school of thought, everyone fits well in one or another category that directly or indirectly sustains the nation-state system. Further individual success in such an opportunities-lacking environment depends on one's ambitiousness, courage and level of struggle. The ultimate contribution to Islam and *Ummah* that a critic of the government can make remains naught.

So, the impact of much-vaunted public opinion on national security and national priorities is the beginning of a vast quagmire. One can stand up to a corrupt, repressive government, but it is hard for anyone to ignore the indoctrinated public opinion and the media. No matter how much one may curse the powers behind the scenes, public opinion and national priorities always remain locked in the iron grip of those powers. The masses live in denial of reality. This problem is not limited to Muslim states alone: According to Jacob Hornberger, the founder and president of the Future of Freedom Foundation:

> Denying reality, the average American exclaims, 'We live in the freest nation on earth. We can write letters to the editor and publish books.' Suppose Egypt's pharaoh had decreed, 'From this day forward, the slaves shall be permitted to complain openly about their condition and to write pleas to their taskmasters regarding their poor living conditions.' Would this have made the slaves free? …Johann von Goethe once wrote that 'none are more hopelessly enslaved than those who falsely believe they are free.' No words could more accurately capture the plight of the American people. Having been indoctrinated for so long in their government-approved schools, Americans rank among the most enslaved people in history. And their denial of reality does not free them. It simply produces a psychosis marked by high levels of alcohol and other drug addiction.[214]

Unfortunately, Muslims in most of the Muslim states cannot even claim to be as free as many Americans. Free people can say "no". Free people can resist plunder of their resources. They can refuse unjust demands for their time and children. Slaves cannot. There is no freedom without the freedom to say "no". If someone demands that you do something and you can say "no" and refuse to do it, then you are a free human being. If you can be forced to do something or surrender something that you do not wish to do, then you are a slave. No other tests need be applied. If you are in a Muslim state and your government cannot say "no" to an outside government, asking it to sacrifice your sons and daughters, you are a slave of the slave. This is exactly what a Muslim state, Pakistan, did after receiving Bush's "with us or

against us" threat in 2001. Pakistan had no option but to justify its full-scale assistance both in Afghanistan and later in Pakistan in the mass murder of fellow Muslims and invasion of their homes in the name of national security.

A national agenda and priorities never allow one to take a stand on principles in a Muslim country. This problem further intensifies when the struggle is extended beyond national boundaries to address the cause of *Ummah* or international change. Of course, *Ummah* is not limited to one Muslim state alone. How can one think of facing the challenge of organizing a mass movement against the flow of 57 different national agendas and priorities, when it is so hard to take a stand on principles within a single Muslim state against the tide of established norms and mindset? One has to make many compromises on one Islamic principle simply to stay alive and keep moving within the national flow. The prevailing cluelessness among religious parties and Islamic movements about how to proceed is the result of facing the same dilemma of working for Islam and national interest at the same time.

The challenge of staying in the national mainstream has become a curse for those who want to make living according to principles of Islam possible in society. For establishing Islam and also staying in the national mainstream, one has to water down his or her agenda according to the whims of puppets put in place for the modern-day colonialists. This is as true for a single individual, such as an analyst, as it is true for the religious parties and organizations. The moment one adds "unnecessary" items to his or her agenda, that individual is out of the national mainstream, which is equivalent to pronouncing death on that individual or organization. A serious discussion with leaders of national movements and religious parties would reveal a long list of problems they face. If one does not consider leadership of religious parties and movements as superhuman, one has no option but to accept their argument for being ineffective and clueless. One has to ap-

preciate their courage, but it does not mean that one has to agree with their approach as well.

In short, if an individual or political party has to stay in the national mainstream, it would have to keep the load of its principles and ideology as light as possible. If it is concerned about its ideology and is not ready to compromise on it, it has to stay out of the national mainstream. Dr. Israr Ahmad, the founder of Tanzeem-e-Islami in Pakistan, is a living example of this phenomenon. He sacrificed staying in the mainstream for the core principles of Islam and paid the price with remaining on the sidelines: totally marginalized. One has to pick one of these options: staying in or out of the mainstream. We are well aware of the insurmountable hurdles faced by those who have opted to stay in the national mainstream, even if they do not talk about it.

The concept of *Ummah* and the national mainstream are totally incompatible. The problems faced by those who are struggling to establish Islam on the local or national level are an indicator of the bigger problems that a people will have to face if they challenge nation-states, national boundaries and national governments on the international level. Defeating such a challenge on the part of Muslims has now become the sole justification for the United States invasions and occupations of Muslim states. For example, no one has so far claimed that the resistance to the United States occupation in Iraq and Afghanistan is for the sake of establishing *Khilafah*. Yet, repeated statements of Bush and his fellow crusaders, intending to demonize the very concept of *Khilafah*, expose their intentions about launching these wars in the first place.

For Afghanistan, the United States had not even as much justification for launching a war of aggression as it had for invading Iraq. Without producing a single shred of evidence about the involvement of the Taliban or other alleged perpetrators, 9/11 was not good enough an excuse to overthrow the Taliban government and occupy Afghanistan. The real problem was that the Taliban, irrespective of their "misinterpretation of Islam" and "crimes

against women,"[215] were gradually moving towards establishing a society in which nationality, national interests, and the national agenda and priorities were gradually losing their influence on Muslim minds.

Any Muslim could go and live in Afghanistan for as long as he or she wished. Anyone could go and invest in Afghanistan without prior permission of the Taliban leadership. Social scientists were as keen in helping Afghanistan, as were nuclear scientists, business people, anthropologists, religious leaders and technical experts. Most importantly, an environment was leading to open thought and discussion about the application of Islamic principles in modern-day life. Regardless of the faulty application of those principles in some cases in the beginning, the system was gradually moving in the direction that could have given Muslims an idea about life in an Islamic society and model of governance. Many religious leaders in Pakistan had already accepted the broader approach of the Taliban. Input from religious scholars from abroad would have refined ways to implement the basic principles of Islam and pave the way to live according to Islam. That is why the global machinery that maintains the status quo churned into action against the Taliban quite early and did not stop until the job was done. That is the reason that Bush and company has now publicly declared their so-far hidden war on *Khilafah*. They have done so well before anyone stands up and demands an end to nation-states in the Muslim world.

The situation under the Taliban was not forcing religious scholars and leaders to remain in the national mainstream. In fact, there was no national mainstream in existence in Afghanistan. Religious scholars were not bound to worry about molding their opinion not only in favor of the "national interest" but also in favor of Washington's interest. For example, the visit of Akram Khan Durrani, the chief minister of the North West Frontier Province in Pakistan, to the Pentagon on July 12, 2005, to explain the content of a pro-Islam Hasba Bill, which would

introduce a step towards implementation of Islamic way of life,[216] is an excellent example in this regard.[217] Durrani said that he "hopes the US will not oppose the Hasba bill."[218]

Religious scholars in Afghanistan were not obliged to appease policymakers or the United States government or seek approval from the Pentagon. They were part of the policymakers and legislature. They were not worried about the constant need for promotion on the national media. In other states, the apparent opportunities, which give religiously devoted people the illusion to be working for Islam, are actually resulting in the dumping of the energies of these people rather than channeling them in a positive direction. This was not the case in Afghanistan. The religious leadership in Afghanistan was not stuck in a quagmire.

Unlike the rest of the Muslim world, there was no system established in Afghanistan for officially promoting *Shirk*. If the Taliban rule was not fully established on the basis of revealed *Deen*, at least, there was an intention to do so; and efforts were underway for improvement and course correction. None of the rest of Muslim states tried to establish Islam (as defined in the Qur'an and *Sunnah* as a belief and way of life), nor does any Muslim state use Islam as a basic reason for any conflict it faces with the outside world.

Of course, the Taliban may not have been so farsighted. Yet there is no doubt that freedom with regard to discussion, deliberation and implementation of Islam was good enough to pave the way in the right direction. Challenge to the status quo of the established division of territory based on nation-states among Muslims was the most possible, yet an unintended consequence of the Taliban's approach. The Taliban's approach to international relations was more pragmatic than the approach of any of the other 57 Muslim states. For example, their approach to the issue of Chechnya was totally different from that of other Muslim states.

The Taliban's support to the victims of Russian aggression in

Chechnya was one of the crimes of the Taliban government, according to the Taliban's opponents. The Taliban not only gave *de jure* recognition to the *de facto* Republic of Chechnya, but they also extended clear political support for the legitimate rights of the Chechen people. A foreign ministry spokesman in Kabul said on December 20, 1999:

> The Chechen question is the question of the whole world of Islam. The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan considers the silence of the international community and, in particular, that of Islamic countries in reaction to the brutal reaction against the Muslim nation of Chechnya, as unkindness and ignoring the rights of the nation.[219]

The Taliban were supposed to be a bunch of rather uncouth and fanatical newcomers in the world of high diplomacy. Yet none of the other Muslim states had the same clarity of thought and the same political sophistication as shown by these madrassa-educated newcomers to the world of realpolitik. The Afghan deputy minister of foreign affairs, Mulla AbdurRahman Zahid, reminded Muslims of the world not to "keep silent about the cruelties, oppressions and crimes committed by the Russians and to support the legitimate rights of the Chechens because the colonialist powers are always striving to hinder the unity and solidarity of the Muslim *Ummah*."[220] This was a crucial time in which the Taliban's minister emphasized:

> It is incumbent upon the Muslims of the world to strengthen their unity and their solidarity in the light of Islamic guidance against suppression and infringement upon the rights of the Muslims of the world. The Muslim *Ummah* is capable of resolving its problems itself, thanks to the economic and political potential at its disposal.[221]

The timing for such a comment and stand on the part of the Taliban was crucial because the world was totally silent in the face of a Muslim nation's extermination. In the first Chechen war, 1994-96, Russia killed 100,000 Chechen civilians, razed much of the small country, and, in an act of monumental terrorism, scattered 17 million anti-personnel land mines across the tiny nation. Russia was driven from Chechnya in 1996, but its

hardliners and Communists vowed to exterminate the "Chechen bandits".

The world started considering the Taliban as a threat because the rest of the Muslim world was well in line with the oppression of Muslims in Chechnya. For example, two weeks after the OIC delegation's visit, the Russian Information Agency (RIA) reported from Tehran:

> Iran does not oppose the Russian campaign in Chechnya and supports Russia's territorial integrity, though it calls for a political solution to the conflict, Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi told a news conference after meeting his Ukranian counterpart, Borys Tarasyuk, in Tehran. 'Proliferation of any form of terrorism and religious extremism is unacceptable,' the minister said. [222]

This was the time when the United States was proposing sanctions on the Taliban and at the same time the administration of Bill Clinton was largely financing Russia's genocide in Chechnya. The United States supplied Russians with attack helicopters loaded with advanced night-vision devices "to combat terrorism," said the White House. Clinton's national security adviser, Sandy Berger, had conceded: "Clearly Russia has the right to fight terrorism within its borders."[223] At a time when U.N. sanctions were imposed on Afghanistan for being under the "tyranny" of the Taliban, Clinton called for the "liberation" of Grozny by Russia.

This straightforward approach and stand on principles was considered as Talibanization. That is why the world had to face the chorus of "Talibanization of Pakistan" and other Muslim states in the Western media. The Taliban were unknowingly challenging the standards of Muslim organization in the world. Their standards were no more a person's place of birth, race or nationality. As long as one claimed to be Muslim, the secular standard of citizenship hardly mattered for the Taliban to forge strong bonds of brotherhood. They declared the Qur'an as their constitution,[224] which was the first step towards removing secular standards for human organization and governance. The Taliban were not fo-

cusing on changing the faces in power. They were changing the system and the whole approach to governance. Modern-day elections are nothing more than changing faces and gaining legitimacy to the established order. The big threat is when there are calls to change the system and not just the faces. Unlike Pakistan and other Muslim states, the Taliban not only achieved physical independence but also psychological and ideological independence to go about making such changes.

That is why the "stealth crusade" had to target Afghanistan.[225] In the planning for doing so, it is not easy to point out just one group of the stakeholders in the prevailing international order. For example, from a close examination of the agenda of evangelical groups in the Muslim world, it appears that, as a whole, Christian fundamentalism is no longer just a religious mission. It has become part and parcel of the mainstream politics and foreign policies of the West. According to Yogindar Sikand, an analyst from India:

> As is widely believed, many evangelical groups working in the 'Third World' are simply fronts for Western agencies and governments, helping to promote their vested interests and strategic goals. This is most readily apparent from the cozy relationship between Christian fundamentalists and the current Bush administration. Right-wing American Christian groups are known to be sources of immense financial support to Israel. They are also vociferous backers of America's imperialist designs on the Muslim world, seeing these as a divinely mandated crusade against the forces of 'evil'. These Christian groups also served to promote American interests abroad. Several of them received generous funding from far-right American government lobbies, CIA front organizations, American big business and right-wing think tanks. Many missionaries were appointed as sources of vital information for the CIA, and were used to bolster American hegemony by indoctrination and spreading American propaganda. [226]

To consolidate the fear of having Muslims live according to Islam, this mission against Islam is carried out on all fronts, particularly the media front. The Taliban happened to be just one

target of this global struggle. Even thinkers such as Edward Said did not get it specifically right when he concluded that books, like Miller's *The Islamic Threat*, "are symptomatic because they are weapons in the contest to subordinate, beat down, compel and defeat any Arab or Muslim resistance to US-Israeli dominance."[227] Unfortunately, it is not the matter of the United States and Israel alone. When it comes to a very different way of life and law, the Muslim world stands in total contrast to the rest of the world. All those who have a stake in the prevailing world order would do anything to not let Muslims live as an *Ummah* with their own way of life according to the Qur'an, because this will put before humanity another model of social organization and governance: a step towards establishing a just order.

That is why Muslims who aspire and struggle to live by Islam are demonized as extremists, who want to work for the dominance of "political Islam." To further dehumanize a whole culture on the ground that it is (in Bernard Lewis's sneering phrase) "enraged at modernity" is to turn Muslims into the objects of a therapeutic, punitive attention, and close all doors to the possibility of even discussing whether living by Islam is really a threat to humanity. These Islamophobes took full advantage of the Taliban's rule by magnifying their shortcomings to the extent that Muslims can hardly muster enough courage to stand up and say they want to establish a society in which they can live by Islam, let alone demand unity of Muslim *Ummah*, and live under a single Islamic entity: *Khilafah*, Caliphate, Emirate, Islamic State or whatever one may call it.

CHAPTER 4

From *Jihad* to Crusade

Under the reign of Bush II, who fills his speeches with Lyrics from Gospel songs and citations from Biblical sources—and who holds Bible studies in the White House—the U.S. is on a 21st century crusade to make the world right for America.[228]

TH UNITED STATES is the chief architect of what it now calls as terrorism: *Jihad*. Against the Soviet invasion and occupation of the same land and people, it was a perfectly valid *Jihad*. The CIA officials considered even those as *Mujahideen*, who they heavily bribed recently and used against the Taliban.[229] On the other hand, any kind of resistance against the U.S. occupation is considered as terrorism.

It was a Muslim holy war to fight against communists—the United States' perceived enemies—and their allies in Afghanistan from 1979 to 1989. The wheel has turned full circle. Since September 11, it is a Christian holy war to fight against Muslims—the United States' perceived enemies who are resisting occupation. The Bush administration's repeated (if oftentimes retracted) references to the present war as "a crusade," called momentarily by the name of "infinite justice," stages this war as a religious

war. It justifies this rhetoric through reference to the principle of self-defense, that process by which one is incited to war, and incited to become that which one is not, by the hostile act of another. Thus, the 9/11 attacks are represented as the origins, indeed as the initial moments, of a war that is deemed both just and necessary, although its necessity is conceived less in terms of "positive" end (the accomplishment of "peace" or U.S. hegemony) than in terms of the "negative" end that it will endlessly defer the triumph of "militant Islam."

Rosalind Morris, a Professor at Columbia University, writes in her essay, "Theses on the Question of war":

> What is at stake here, now, is therefore not just a return to war but to holy war, for holy war is that kind of war in which justice and necessity are merged in a theological mode. What makes this war necessary, from the perspective of its U.S. defenders, is that a Western, fundamentally Christian nation-state has been confronted by a politicized and militarized Islamic entity whose nature is precisely *not national*. This war originates not merely in an attack on America, then, but in an attack on the principle of nationhood, of which America claims to be the exemplary instance.[230]

Regarding the façade of secularization behind which the new religious war is being waged, Morris writes that secularism is simply "the means by which Protestant Christianity has been made to appear neutral in order that it become global."[231] The Christian Holy war never came to a complete stop. Crusades were followed by colonization under the blessing of Church. According to Steven T. Newcomb, Director of the Indigenous Law Institute, Pope Alexander VI delivered the Inter Cetera papal bull on May 4, 1493.[232] Accordingly, this document, issued shortly after Columbus' first voyage to the Caribbean, expressed the pope's earnest desire that "barbarous nations be subjugated and brought to the faith itself," "for the spread of the Christian Empire." Earlier such crusading Vatican bulls called for "perpetual slavery" of Africans, by capturing, vanquishing, and subduing them, and by taking away all their possessions and property.

Since 9/11 crusade has resurfaced in a new way. In fact, Pope Benedict's August 21, 2005 address to Muslim leaders in Germany[233] is no less than the bull of Pius II, in which he announced a new Crusade shortly after ascending the throne of St. Peter, in 1458. There are very strong reasons for that.[234] For understanding these reasons, we have to step back and see how the U.S.-led *Jihad* has turned into 21st century crusade in Afghanistan.

Unlike the United States adventure in Afghanistan without any evidence of the crimes of the Taliban against the United States, the former Soviet Union had more reasons to justify its military adventures. Afghanistan has a thousand-mile border with the Muslim Central Asian republics of the Soviet Union, which are populated by Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Turkmens peoples that also inhabit Afghanistan. In 1978, there had been a riot of Tajiks against the Russians in Dushanbe, a town on the Soviet side of the frontier. Toward the end of 1979, the Iranian revolution sent tremors of shock to Moscow with its taking American hostages at the American Embassy in Tehran. Actually, it increased the possibility of American military action against Iran within a few hundred miles of the Soviet border. At the same time, the CIA started funding and arming factions in Afghanistan. In an interview with the French magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur*, the former national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, made a stunning confession:

> According to the official version of history, CIA aid to the Mujahideen began during 1980, that is to say, after the Soviet Army invaded Afghanistan, December 24, 1979. But the reality, secretly guarded until now, is completely otherwise. Indeed, it was July 3, 1979, that President Carter signed the first directive for secret aid to the opponents of the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul. And that very day, I wrote a note to the President in which I explained to him that in my opinion this aid was going to induce a Soviet military intervention… We didn't push the Russians to intervene, but we knowingly increased the probability that they would.[235]

Earlier, the former director of the CIA, Robert Gates, stated

in his memoirs, *From the Shadows*, that American intelligence services began to aid the *Mujahideen* in Afghanistan six months before the Soviet intervention. All these developments posed a far greater security threat to Soviet Union than the United States justification for occupation of Afghanistan on the basis of staged 9/11, lies and deception.

Under the present circumstances, a single word against the United States occupation of Afghanistan is instantly labeled as inciting terrorism. To the contrary, at the time of the Soviet occupation, Carter angrily denounced Soviet presence in Afghanistan as "expansionism." He withdrew the SALT II treaty from consideration by the Senate, announced that the United States would boycott the Moscow Olympics, and prepared a major military buildup, which included a Rapid Deployment Force, intended primarily for the Persian Gulf. The Administration requested approval for a CIA covert operation in Afghanistan and initially offered Pakistan four hundred million dollars in aid.

From the day the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, American diplomatic strategy was to mobilize world opinion against the Soviets. American ire was aroused not out of sympathy for the particular victims but by fear of an enemy and what its success in Afghanistan portended for the future. Afghanistan was doomed to be a domino. Architects of the present Afghan occupation such as Richard Perle, the then Assistant Secretary of defense, saw Afghanistan not as the locale of a harsh and dangerous conflict to be ended, but as a place to teach the Soviet Union a lesson. Such warlords became the most influential people in Washington.

Unlike the present total silence, an extraordinary meeting of 35 Islamic countries met in Islamabad on January 27, 1980 to condemn the "Soviet military aggression against the Afghan people" and to urge that no Muslim country recognize the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan—the name given by the Soviet-installed government in Kabul.

Given the natural Muslim resistance to changing their religious

identity and the imposition of godlessness, it did not need a genius to suggest that Islamic international solidarity could be used as a powerful weapon against communism. The task of providing all kinds of assistance to creating such solidarity fell upon Saudi Arabia, together with other Arab monarchies. This duty was accepted readily and together with the United States, they quickly made the American-*Jihad* against the Soviet Union their central cause. It was a natural course of action to take with the help of textbooks and other material flowing in from the University of Nebraska at Omaha.[236]

The *Washington Post's* Joe Stephens and David B. Ottaway report about this process of spreading, what the United States now labels as "Jihadism":

> In the twilight of the Cold War, the United States spent millions of dollars to supply Afghan schoolchildren with textbooks filled with violent images and militant Islamic teachings, part of covert attempts to spur resistance to the Soviet occupation. The "Primers", which were filled with talk of jihad and featured drawings of guns, bullets, soldiers and mines, have served since then as the Afghan school system's core curriculum. Even the Taliban used the American-produced books...[237]

Unlike the ongoing efforts to eliminate the Islamic concept of *Jihad* from school curriculums around the Muslim world, Stephens and Ottaway identify how the U.S. governmental and educational organizations were involved in actually developing *Jihad*-focused textbooks. They write:

> Published in the dominant Afghan languages of Dari and Pashtu, the textbooks were developed in the early 1980s under an AID [Agency for International Development] grant to the University of Nebraska-Omaha and its Center for Afghanistan Studies. The agency spent $51 million on the university's education programs in Afghanistan from 1984 to 1994.[238]

Under the U.S.-sponsored *Jihad* project, the images and talk of resistance to occupation were craftily intermingled with regular education:

> Children were taught to count with illustrations showing tanks, missiles and land mines, agency officials said. They acknowledged that at the time it also suited U.S. interests to stoke hatred of foreign invaders.[239]

An examination of a textbook produced shocking results: An aid-worker in the region reviewed an unrevised 100-page book and counted 43 pages containing violent images or passages. The writers of the *Washington Post* story go on to provide an appalling example of the material:

> One page from the texts of that period shows a resistance fighter with a bandolier and a Kalashnikov slung from his shoulder. The soldier's head is missing. Above the soldier is a verse from the Koran. Below is a Pashtu tribute to the mujaheddin [sic], who are described as obedient to Allah. Such men will sacrifice their wealth and life itself to impose Islamic law on the government, the text says.[240]

Muslim states such as Saudi Arabia did not feel genuinely threatened by the Soviet Union. It is also naïve to assume that the Soviets threatened their patron and ally, the United States, whose direct confrontation with the Soviet Union would have been dangerous and unwise in a nuclear-armed world. Actually, it was crucial for Muslim countries in the American camp to whole-heartedly participate in the U.S.-led *Jihad* at the state level to please their masters in Washington. They had to address concerns at the grassroots level about the widely propagated threat of godless communism to Islam. Unlike the masses, for the administrations in Muslim states, it was not a *Jihad fee sabeelilah* (struggle in the cause of Allah). For them it was *Jihad fee sabeel-e-America* (struggle in the cause of the United States). An increasing number of Saudis were becoming disaffected by the House of Saud—its corruption, self-indulgence, repression, and closeness to the United States. Therefore, the *Jihad* in Afghanistan provided an excellent outlet for many Saudis and Egyptians for venting their desperation and anger. Similarly, it provided an opportunity to dictators like General Zia of Pakistan to divert public attention from his illegitimate rule.

The US-supplied support package had three essential components – organization and logistics, military technology, and ideological support for sustaining and encouraging *Jihad* against "red *Kafirs*" (red infidels)—the communists.

With William Casey as the director of the CIA, the largest covert operation in history was launched after Reagan signed the "National Security Decision Directive 166", calling for American efforts to drive Soviet forces out of Afghanistan "by all means available." The United States counter-insurgency experts worked closely with Pakistan's military intelligence agency (ISI) in organizing *Mujahideen* groups and in planning operations inside Afghanistan. Indeed, it was evident to residents in Islamabad and Peshawar in the 1980's that large numbers of Americans were present and involved in these operations. However, the most important contribution of the United States was the establishment of an international network for bringing in men and material from around the Arab world and beyond. The most ideologically dedicated men were sought, based in the logic that they would be the best fighters in the name of Islam. Advertisements, paid for from CIA funds, were placed in newspapers and newsletters around the world offering inducements and motivations to join the *Jihad*.

At the initial stage of the United States involvement, fears that the Soviet Union would react harshly against Pakistan prompted caution in supplying arms and military technology to the Afghan resistance. Therefore, the strategy then was to minimize the appearance of American involvement and so preserve deniability. Indeed, in the early years, the CIA procured Soviet manufactured arms, captured by the Israelis during various Middle Eastern wars. Some time into the war, however, despite the KGB and Khad[241] perpetrated terrorist bombings in Pakistan, the United States began to take a much more overt position and the U.S.-supplied technology played a key role in defeating the Soviet war machine in Afghanistan.

The third component of the Reagan doctrine, emphasizing ideological support to the Afghan resistance, was implemented through extensive propaganda in the global mass media. United States television channels lavished praise on the "brave fighters for freedom" and special documentary programs were produced with adaptations for Muslim countries. Less well known is the extraordinary effort that went into creating anti-communism and pro-*Jihad* propaganda for Afghan children.

An example is the textbook series underwritten by United States grants through the *Mujahideen*-operated "Education Center for Afghanistan" in the 1980's. These textbooks sought to counterbalance the influence of communism through creating enthusiasm in the Islamic resistance to external forces, which attempted to change Muslim's way of life.

According to Craig Davis, the United Nations program staff chose to ignore the images of violence and militancy in the U.S.-produced children's textbooks for the first five years of the program because "the University of Nebraska did not wish to be seen imposing American values on Afghan educators."[242]

The U.S.-sponsored textbooks, which exhort Afghan children to pluck out the eyes of their enemies and cut off their legs, were widely available in Afghanistan and Pakistan, some in their original form.[243] Years after they were first printed; they were available in schools even during the Taliban reign.

Besides these school books, which presented the Soviet presence as the most brutal occupation in human history, there were several other U.S. and U.N. official reports, approving active and violent resistance against the Soviet occupation as legitimate *Jihad*. These documents give us a stark similarity between the United States and Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and a total contrast in the approach to dislodging the occupiers. What was considered as illegitimate then, is presented as legitimate now.

The United States has now occupied Afghanistan for almost half the period of the Soviet occupation (1979-1988). What is

presented as terrorism against occupation forces today was presented in the following words, which are the hallmark of all reporting from the time of Soviet occupation:

> The military initiative in many ways passed to the *Mujahideen*. They dictated a higher level of combat, which was higher throughout the year and less subject to seasonal fluctuations…*Mujahideen* military capabilities grew in many ways--better cooperation and air defense meant that many areas of the country were effectively free of Soviet/regime control. *Mujahideen* morale is at an all-time high…In many ways 1987 can be described as the year of the Mujahideen.[244]

What is Jihadist-nihilism and terrorism today was called by this official report from the United States as "the spectacular destruction." Attacks on cities and civilians were encouraged and fully assisted. Under the headline "The War of the Cities," the report says:

> The Soviets and the regime increased their emphasis on urban security in 1987. As a result, Mujahideen penetration and operations in major urban centers became more difficult and less frequent. The Soviets improved defensive belts around the cities, and resistance rocket attacks had to be made from greater distances. .. The sights, sounds, and casualties from nearby combat served to curb any increased sense of urban security.[245]

Now compare the terminology used for the government set in place by the Soviets with those which are used to glorify the puppet regime of a known ex-CIA agent,[246] Hamid Karzai:

> The PDPA, Moscow's chosen instrument of rule,…. when a new constitution was imposed by an illegitimate, party-packed assembly,… Diplomatically, the Soviets tried to improve the government's international legitimacy by sending Kabul emissaries on a 6-month-long worldwide diplomatic and public relations campaign... Other countries continued to condemn the occupation and reject the Soviet assertion that there is any solution to the Afghan issue short of Soviet withdrawal…In February, Najib offered to meet opposition representatives in a neutral setting--recognizing their status as equals. Kabul's offer to negotiate remains, but the resistance insists on talking to the Soviets rather than the 'puppet regime.'[247]

According to this report, the United States preferred the continuation of *Jihad* and rejected everything. Even when in mid-winter 1987, Najib had offered to accept an undefined role for former king Zahir Shah. On July 14, 1987, Najib offered specific posts to the opposition, including more than a dozen cabinet seats and the posts of vice president and of deputy prime minister. He also suggested that the post of prime minister could be negotiable. The government later specifically offered this post. After a meeting with Gorbachev, Najib said at a subsequent press conference that he would give up not only his position but also his life, if he personally became an obstacle to peace. However, nothing was acceptable because his government was considered as a "regime" established by the occupation forces. The whole system was demanded to be transformed to be acceptable to the U.S.-allied *Mujahideen*.

This is how the United States pushed Afghanistan into the quagmire that followed. It did not want to call off *Jihad* even when it was not needed any longer. This is typical of the United States policies to say "No" to every proposal offered until the "enemy" is fully obliterated. If we look at the details available from the official reports from Washington, what Najib was presenting during the last days of the Soviet occupation was no less than a total surrender to the U.S.-backed *Mujahideen*. However, in the extremist approach of the United States administration, surrender means nothing as long as the enemy survives. So, the United States either has to nuke them (Japan) or annihilate them on the "high way to death" (Kuwait).

In the fall of 1987, Najib further broadened the "national reconciliation" offer. At the October party conference, Najib offered inclusion to leftist democratic unity, coalition, and the strengthening of posts offered to the opposition. Najib specifically named the U.S.-backed "seven [Alliance] parties" in his appeals. The opposition would be allowed to open offices and publish newspapers if they renounced their U.S.-backed *Jihad*.

Following his admission that Soviet troops had pulled back from some hinterland posts, Najib said Soviet troops would leave and regime forces would stop operations in areas where the Mujahideen ceased their attacks. He implied the resistance could run those areas. At the November Jirga, he said that the Soviet troops could be withdrawn in 12 months or less if the Mujahideen wind up their *Jihad*. However, that was the point when, on the insistence of the U.S., the *Mujahideen* further escalated their attacks and rejected all offers. Again, the principle put forward was simple: no negotiation with a regime installed by occupation forces. *Jihad* had to go on.

All major media outlets highlighted torture and mistreatment of the opponents of the Soviet's installed regime and the U.N. routinely condemned such practices. Torture is now a routine in the United States concentration camps within and outside Afghanistan. The US official reports used to call the simple detention of *Mujahideen* as "incommunicado detention." Today the U.S. vice president orders torture and terror.[248] During the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, the U.S. used to complain about the occupation regime's use of "physical and psychological torture to extract "confessions" and to intimidate regime opponents."[249] Today the US and its allies consider all kinds of torture as perfectly valid and legal. It is the United Nations and its Secretary General wrong, when they call for closing the concentration camp in Guantanamo bay, for example.

All complaints and appeals in the name of humanity against beating of prisoners; subjecting them to electric shocks; burning with cigarettes; immersing in cold water or snow; forcing to watch other people being tortured; placing in cells with the corpses of other torture victims; and depriving prisoners of water, food, and sleep are now some of the most humane treatments which opponents of the Karzai regime would love to have compared to what the Soviets have done to Afghans.

Since the regime in Kabul was an occupation forces-installed

regime, the leaders of the *Jihad* against occupation were allowed to attend the Organization of the Islamic Conference summits. Their spokes-persons were honored to address the delegates. However, the OIC summit would every year rebuff the Afghan government efforts to reclaim Afghanistan's seat in the conference.

In stark contrast to the global legitimacy extended to Karzai's regime, the Soviet installed regime made only limited gains in its worldwide effort to gain international legitimacy in 1987. The regime sent representatives to 52 countries in hopes of upgrading relations. Many countries turned away Kabul's representatives. This gives us the depth of groundwork, which the Islamophobes and corporate terrorists have done over the years to make the world see black as white today. The new occupation is liberation and the reigning tyranny is democracy.

Some might argue that the Security Council has approved the United States occupation of Afghanistan. As we will see in the next chapter, this is not the case. Even if it were so, such an approval would have been irrelevant and meaningless because the same Security Council approved the genocidal sanctions against Iraq. The United Nations resolutions regarding Iraq, which were based on false and biased information, killed 1.8 million Iraqis over a period of 12 years, yet the United Nations could not find out the truth that Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction.

The United Nations, which is dead silent over the United States occupations and war crimes—and rather approves and extends occupation on a yearly basis[250]—was extremely vocal in the case of the Soviet occupation. From January 1980 to 1987, the U.N. General Assembly voted nine times, by overwhelming and generally increasing margins, for a resolution calling for the complete withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan and for Afghan self-determination. It granted full legitimacy to *Jihad* against foreign occupation.

The United Nations' helplessness today is evident from the

fact that its secretary general has called the U.S.-UK war "illegitimate,"[251] but the United Nations has yet to pass a single anti-occupation resolution or the kind of resolutions, which were a routine at the time of Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

It shows that the United Nations' extending or withholding legitimacy to occupation has become meaningless. We need to look at all the historical and associated factors to see the illegitimacy of the United States occupation and legitimacy of the resistance to occupation of Afghanistan.

The United States policy to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and legitimacy of the resistance was summarized briefly like this: "So long as the Soviet Union continues to occupy Afghanistan, the United States Government will maintain its strong support for the Afghan people's cause."[252] It shows that according to the United States, "the Afghan people's cause" could not be served under the Soviet occupation.

However, that is not the case today. The United States makes the world believe that Afghans are better off under its occupation than they were under the Soviet occupation or Taliban rule. To view this realistically, there are no people on the face of the earth whose cause could be served under one or another kind of occupation. Like any other occupation in human history, the United States occupation of Afghanistan will one day definitely come to an end. It is up to those who have considered it legitimate to realize that in fact no occupation can be considered legitimate.

Beginning of the Final Crusade

From Islamic perspective, did the *Jihad* against communism succeed? The answer is: Militarily yes, but strategically it remained unsuccessful until the rise of the Taliban, who, in turn, succeeded in awakening the crusading spirit in many warlords in the United States. The Taliban failed in establishing Islam but their intentions exposed the extent of prevailing hatred against Islam.

For the United States and its allies, the Soviet Union was the enemy but the specter of an Islamic way of life is far worse than the fear of communism. With the rise of the Taliban to power, the crusaders felt devastated because at the same time they witnessed gradual but fundamental change in Muslim attitudes towards occupation and oppression by the outside forces. Fear in the hearts of the modern day crusaders multiplied with the success of mobilizing the spirit of *Jihad* in oppressed people under occupation against their oppressors. Such an awakening and resistance to direct and indirect occupation simply did not exist until approximately 30 years ago as a political force.

Unlike the puppets in power, many Muslim leaders at the grassroots level are concerned about the extent of foreign intervention in the Muslim world. To the contrary, during the 20th century, many revolutionary leaders led Muslim masses against the way of life of Islam. From Kemal Ataturk in Turkey to Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in South Asia, Ahmed Ben Bella in Algeria, Sukarno in Indonesia, Gamal Abdel Nasser in Egypt and Mohammed Mosaddeq in Iran all sought to organize their societies on the basis of secular values against the Qur'an and Sunnah. Some of them, in fact, were openly hostile to Islam altogether and may be correctly considered apostates from Islam. Today, all revolutionary movements in the Muslim world are going the opposite directions: towards paving the way to unite Muslims and their resources, and establishing living by Islam.

In an equal and opposite reaction, these movements in the Muslim world revived the crusading spirit in the religious, political and academic warlords in the West. Reaction to the Taliban rule was part of the broader campaign which struggled to deny Muslims their right to self-determination, and to live their lives according to the Qur'an and *Sunnah*.

In the Muslim world, it took barely a generation or two for the nationalist period to be overtaken by the realization of its futility and aimlessness. The reasons are clear: for Muslims there is

no other way to live other than what is prescribed in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. Nationalism, secularism and divisions among Muslims on the basis of nation states have no place in Islam. For management and effective governance purposes, division of the Islamic State into different provinces/states is totally different than what we have today: 57 states; 57 foreign policies; and 57 approaches to dealing with an issue. Secondly, the imperial interests of Britain, and later the United States, feared independent nationalism as well. Anyone willing to collaborate with the United States was preferred, including the undemocratic Saudi regime, which is chopping off heads and hands in the name of *Shari'ah* as a weekly routine. In time, as the Cold War pressed on, independent nationalism became still more intolerable.

In 1953, Mohammad Mosaddeq of Iran was overthrown in a CIA coup and replaced by Reza Shah Pahlavi who faithfully served U.S. economic and political interests.[253] Again, for economic motives, Britain targeted Nasser while Suharto replaced Indonesia's nationalist president Sukarno after a bloody CIA-led coup that left hundreds of thousands dead. At the time of the morbid dread of communism, even nationalists were considered as untouchable. Imagine in this age of the fear of Islam, the position of those who want to establish an Islamic model of governance, which will take the air out of the bubble of capitalism and secular democracy.

In an attempt to please the powers that be, Muslim opportunists are attempting to officially impose secularism in each Muslim state. They ignore that secular, nationalist governments all over the Muslim world started collapsing long ago. Pressed from outside, corrupt and incompetent from within, they proved unable to defend national interests or deliver social justice. They began to frustrate democracy. As a result, dictatorships flourished. These failures left the Muslim masses with a realization that this is not a way of living individual and collective lives. This realization led Islamic movements to grow and fill the vacuum.

Undoubtedly, for the West liberal democracy is the end of history as Francis Fukuyama postulated. The non-Muslim world may not have any other option beyond the present twisted and exploited form of democracy. However, the concepts of secular democracy as well as division of Muslims into 57 nation-states are fast coming to an end for the Muslim world. Muslims are not option-less.

The theoretical basis for Islamic movements had been outlined in the late 1938-1940 by Maulana Abul Ala Maudoodi of Pakistan, and in 1950 by Saiyyid Qutb of Egypt. In the Early 20th century, the revivalist movement was based on the thought of Allam Iqbal and carried on practically first by Maolana Abul Kalam Azad under the name of Hizb Ullah (1913-1920) and later on by Maulana Maudoodi (1913-20) through Jamat Islamis period of 1941-50. They did not call to arms to stop the decay of Muslim civilization and values, and to return to the Golden Age of early Islam. The focus was solely on greater sensitization, mass awareness and revival of Muslims. But their message was largely ignored until the rise of the Taliban; the campaign for demonizing them, and the United States using lies and deception for yet another occupation. Things took another turn with Bush and Powell's calling the war a crusade and others' calling for a war on Islam,[254] flushing the Qur'an down the toilets by the United States servicemen, and other incidents such as General Boykin's remarks against Islam (see Chapter 2). These developments suddenly made the message relevant.

The Iranian revolution was the first milestone in forging a crusading attitude among the American warlords. General Zia-ul-Haq's cosmetic Islamization was ignored but not that of the Taliban's attempt to establish an Islamic society. Afghanistan under the Taliban provided the real motivation to the crusaders to get up, organize and plan their crusade in the real sense.

Although Muslim frustration kept growing, the anger was not directed in a positive way. Muslims were unable to generate a

coherent path of action due to lack of understanding the real problem. The real breakthrough came when the U.S.-led *Jihad* in Afghanistan first pitted Muslims against communists and then the main sponsor of the *Jihad* left them alone when they were in need of consolidating their gains.

The United States dedication to demonizing the Taliban, fully supported by the so-called mainstream media for many years and the massive human and technical resources devoted to bringing down the rudimentary Islamic State in Afghanistan enabled the creation of potent and unified Islamic entities. No 20th century Muslim ideologue could even have dreamed of such a spectacular success of Islamic thought. The global struggle towards ensuring Muslims' right to self-determination has finally come into its own along with a parallel force of the crusaders—joined by Zionists and neo-cons—that has vowed not to allow Muslims to live by Islam regardless of any consequences. Statements from Bush, Rumsfeld and other senior officials from UK—as quoted in chapter 3—against *Khilafah* further sensitize Muslims and make them understand the reason for the excessive campaign against the concept of *Khilafah* and *Ummah*.

The world did not witness the beginning of the last crusade on October 7, 2001. The war was already on in the form of economic sanctions, demonizing campaign and doing everything to avoid giving Taliban the diplomatic recognition they needed. It is not only the religiously inspired administrations in the United States and Britain, which launched the crusade against the Taliban. Pakistan's military regime also played an active role in the cold crusade that preceded the war after 9/11.

General Musharraf did not even hesitate in letting the U.S. kill innocent Afghans to punish the Taliban. He also played a direct role in killing Afghan children to appease the United States. According to a BBC report, titled "Pakistan blamed for refugee misery,"[255] a U.N. spokesperson said children at the Jalozai camp near Peshawar were dying every day, a situation exacerbated by

Pakistan's decision to only allow limited amounts of supplies to be delivered there. Kris Janowski told the BBC reporter that "Children are dying unnecessarily" due to Pakistan's policy to punish the Taliban under the pressure from United States.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reported that 3,150 shelters had been destroyed by rain, footpaths had been turned into cesspools and the smell of human excrement pervaded the camp. In his words: "The refusal to supply aid to these desperate people is incomprehensible because it doesn't really get anybody anywhere."[256]

The Pakistani ambassador to the United Nations defended his country's actions. Pakistan wanted to punish the Taliban with enforcement of the United Nations imposed sanctions. Due to drought, there was catastrophic crop failure. According to a BBC report the donor countries refused to provide funds for UNHCR activities because they were "angry at the activities of the ruling Taliban, especially its recent destruction of Buddhist statues, [was] thought to be a factor in their unwillingness to provide aid." Pakistan also joined the killing of human beings in protest of defending statues and argued at the United Nations that "running a big relief operation in Pakistan would only attract thousands more refugees across the border." So let the children die.

Pakistan thus played a pivotal role in commencing the 21st century crusade. It turned the Taliban into scapegoats. Russians who killed one and a half million Afghans; maimed one million more, and forced six million out of the eighteen million people to migrate were effectively forgotten. The Taliban, nevertheless, were singled out as the most savage people on the face of the earth.

Seven hundred children died because of malnutrition and the severe cold weather exactly at the same time when the world was busy mourning the destruction of the lifeless statues in Bamiyan. The crusaders were busy undermining the future of not only Afghans but also Muslims all over the world, but everyone was forced to worry about the past in Afghanistan. Economic sanc-

tions were in place to hurt the whole nation with femicide. Yet UNESCO and NGOs from Norway and Sweden came forward with a project to rebuild the face of statues in Bamiyan, which were worn out with time. When the Taliban asked them to spend that money in saving the lives of the suffering and dying children, they were told the money was only for the statues. Even Kofi Annan flew to Pakistan to talk to the Taliban representative about the statues. However, he never bothered to come down from his pedestal and talk about the children who were dying at the same time.

It seems the statue issue was used as a convenient diversion away from the effective genocide of children that was taking place. We now live in a world where lifeless rocks are more precious than the lives of children. The Taliban's Roving Ambassador, Sayyid Rahmatullah Hashmi, told the audience before the destruction of the statues during a lecture given at the University of South Carolina in 2001:

> I don't say we have to retaliate in blowing the statues; we have not done that. But if we were to destroy those statues, we would have destroyed them three years before now, because we captured those areas three years before now. We didn't want to blow them. And now the situation has come, and it's not our decision. This is the decision of the scholars and the people. And that is the decision has been approved by the Supreme Court. We cannot reject this decision. So these guys are there, the OIC and some, even I think some ministers from different countries are there to save the lives of these statutes. I think they will not be blown because of the concerns of these people. But it is really, really ridiculous. These people do not care about children, about people who are dying there, about the foreign interference that still exists, they only care about the statues. And I'm sure they don't care about our heritage. They don t care about our heritage; they only care about their picnic site. Maybe they'll have a good picnic site there, seeing those statues. They don't care about our heritage, I'm sure. If they were to care about our past, they wouldn't destroy our future. And I'm sure these sanctions which are imposed on our government will never change us, because for us, our ideology is everything. To try to change our ideology with

> economic sanctions will never work. It may work in the United States, where the economy is everything, but for us, our ideology is everything…And we believe that it is better to die for something than to live for nothing.[257]

The above statement from the Taliban's roving ambassador has the admission of the Taliban's crime. It is not about the destruction of the statues or any other charges against the Taliban. It is about the commitment to their "ideology." That is what was hurting the crusaders. That is what the Pakistani leadership and many others could not see. The Taliban's ideology of establishing Islam and living by Islam was their main crime, which could not go unpunished by the crusaders.

Crusaders vs. the Taliban

There is a difference between implementing a few Islamic punishments and establishing an Islamic society and a model of governance. As far as chopping of hands and heads is concerned, Saudi Arabia is the only country that routinely implements such punishments. But the modern day crusaders are protecting Saudi Kingdom and the king's rule for obvious reasons. Saudi Arabia has no potential or ambition to lead and unify the *Ummah*, nor can it assume leadership responsibility for the *Ummah* under the present rulers. They are the worst oppressive-puppets the Muslim world has ever seen. On the other hand, the Taliban introduced the concept of establishing an independent Islamic society, which had the potential to become a model for the rest of the Muslim world.

The Taliban had nothing else other than ideas and limited resources to carryout these ideas. Their actions and intentions were leading to more questions and clarifications regarding *Ummah*, its living by Islam and its total independence for the never-ending direct and indirect colonialism. But it is the ideas on which war has been declared. The first two paragraphs of Barbara Crossette's news story in *New York Times* (Sep 30, 1998) are a tell tale of

the leading demand of the crusaders:

> Miles away in his small office in a third-floor walkup in Queens, the representative of the Taliban, which now controls all but one corner of one province of Afghanistan—and have ruled the capital, Kabul, for two years—was still waiting to be heard. 'The United Nations is using the seat of Afghanistan as a tool of pressure on an Islamic emirate to change its policies and to impose on it a kind of coalition government what will be consequently a secular government,' said Abdul Hakeem Mujahid, the Taliban's most important diplomat. 'This is their goal.'

Just like Saddam Hussain's agreeing to any demand to prove that he has no weapons of mass destruction was an exercise in futility, every attempt on the part of the Taliban to prove that they have nothing to do with terrorism and other charges was also fruitless. The verdict against them was already handed down before the trial even began. The United States is the accuser, judge, jury and executioner.

Answering a volley of questions at a news conference in Islamabad on February 01, 2000, Senior Afghan leader Mulla Mohammad Rabbani pointed out that his government had floated a number of proposals to the international community to allay their doubts, but their response had not been helpful. "We presented many proposals to the United States and also the ways to resolve this issue. I think this can be resolved through negotiations and in no other way." [258]

Mulla Rabbani reiterated his government's position that Afghanistan was averse to terrorism "of all kinds, everywhere," and more so because it was an Islamic state. "Islam is opposed to terrorism," he stated. Furthermore, the chair of the Taliban Council of Ministers agreed to a Pakistani proposal for the resumption of talks with the rival Northern Alliance to amicably resolve the lingering Afghan civil strife. "There was a proposal from the Pakistani side for talks with the Northern Alliance and we told them that we have always been willing to hold talks."[259]

The crusaders' intentions to deal with the main intention of

the Taliban were obvious after the United States' rained down 79 cruise missiles on Afghanistan on August 20, 1998. American leaders promised that the military attacks were just the beginning of a larger campaign. "I think it's very important for the American people to understand that we are involved in a long-term struggle," Secretary of State Madeleine Albright told reporters on Friday, 21 August 1998. The administration in Washington was not listening to the reasonable proposals of the Afghani government, but instead the decision to invade was already made regardless of what the Afghan government agreed to do. The Charge of the Taliban supporting or carrying out acts of terrorism was merely used as an excuse to attack Afghanistan, but the case had no bases in fact.

At Odds with Islam

From the beginning, the issue was Islam, not the Taliban. Therefore, all who came to the driver's seat of the crusade since then have repeated the 1998 expression of the long-term war.

The Taliban government was not recognized. The United Nations imposed sanctions on the Taliban government. Afghanistan was denied its seat at the United Nations. The embedded media had convinced the world that this discrimination was due to the alleged poor human rights record of the Taliban. One may point out here that many nations have a deplorable human rights record but continue to hold a seat at the United Nations. One of the worst human rights violators is the United States itself, followed by those dictators who have full American support. Many may still doubt, but there is evidence that the core issue was Islam, which the Taliban happened to promote at the "wrong" time in an immature way. They happened to be the first victim on a long list of potential challenges to the success of the final crusade.

We need to look deeper to find if it really was the issue of human rights or terrorism that became a hurdle to the recognition

of the Taliban government or it was just the fear of the Muslims' living by Islam that played an important rallying role in organizing an opposition to the Taliban rule.

If the Taliban government was not broad-based, was any of the U.S.-friendly regimes in the Middle East broad-based for that matter? If Afghan refugees were not returning to Afghanistan, was it due to problems with the government in Kabul or lack of opportunities in Afghanistan due to the continued United Nations sanctions? The United Nations and the so-called world community were willing to provide material facilities for repatriation of the refugees but the same United Nations and Western countries had created an insurmountable psychological barrier by portraying the Taliban as monsters and making living in Afghanistan very difficult due to unnecessary economic sanctions that had made every development opportunity almost impossible. Home was no more home for the Afghans because of the sanctions and extremely few opportunities for development due to the cold-shouldered attitude of the Western as well as Muslim states, who could pour in billions of dollars but only for defeating the former Soviet Union, and nothing to promote human development and the establishment of available economy.

When we compare the Taliban reign with the post-Taliban Afghanistan, we can have a good answer to the concerns raised about the situation before October 07, 2001. Most of the refugees are still not returning despite the fact that the Pakistani government is taking more serious actions—to the extent of demolishing refugees' homes—to force them leave Pakistan.[260]

One part of the propaganda suggested that refugees are not going back to Afghanistan because of the Taliban. The question is: How many immigrants to the West are economic migrants on the run from financial problems at home? A majority of immigrants and refugees from the developing countries are not going back to their homelands due to the financial problems they have to face on return. The same was the case with Afghan refugees at

the time of the Taliban, whose attempts for self-sufficiency were stifled by outside hostile forces.

As far as judging the Taliban's goodness with the scale of Afghan refugees' repatriation from Pakistan, one may ask: Why do we ignore Israeli government's stubborn refusal to allow more than 800,000 Palestinians refugees to return, 500,000 of whom are still living in refugee camps in Southern Lebanon, and still facing the wrath of Israeli bombing and shelling? The Taliban had no objection to the return of refugees from Pakistan and Iran. If removal of the Taliban was necessary for facilitating repatriation of the Afghan refugees, whose government needs to be dislodged to make return of the Palestinian refugees possible? The original pre-requisite for Israel's admission into the U.N. was that they were to allow all the Palestinian refugees to return to their homes. Unlike, Israel, the Taliban had not forced hundreds of thousands of Afghans to leave their homes and take refuge elsewhere. The refugees in Pakistan were from the era of Soviet occupation. They did not invade Pakistan to attack the refugee camps. They were not violating United Nations resolutions like India and Israel. It was the heat of the propaganda that made us look at the partial reality with a jaundiced eye.

It was interesting to hear at that time that "international community" would recognize the Taliban only if they accepted the moral principles, standards and obligations which the "world community" held as sacred and inviolable. No one could dare ask: why is the "world community" silent over India and Israel's fifty years of systematic repression and terrorism within and outside their borders? How about the United States' record of violating international law and all norms of human decency?

Of course, the crimes on the part of the United States do not justify crimes committed by anyone else. However, the point is that the Taliban's government was not so exceptionally wrong to justify any kind of illegal and immoral action against it. Its crimes pale by comparison when seen in the context of human

rights record of the United States and its closest allies.

This shows that human rights are taken for granted when the interests of the so-called international community are at stake. The destruction of statues is blown out of proportion when the need arises to punish the Taliban in the name of human rights, aggression or terrorism. The June 2001 decision of the World Food Program (WFP) to stop a $12 million bread distribution program for 300,000 people in Kabul, unless the ruling Taliban militia halts restrictions on hiring women, confirmed to the skeptics who believed that the Taliban's decision to destroy the Buddha statues was far less "fanatical" than the decisions taken by the United States, its allies and the United Nations agencies to basically starve to death hundreds of thousands of innocent people.

The WFP story did not seem too convincing at all. According to Reuters, the Taliban Information Minister Qudratullah Jamal confirmed on April 4, 2001 that there was "no objection from [the Taliban] side against the WFP survey…" The WFP Deputy Country Director Peter Goosens then suddenly appeared on the scene, unsatisfied and threatening. He demanded more women and their more active involvement. Goosens said between 600 and 700 women would be necessary to complete the survey, which he called a "huge exercise," over a two-month period. The WFP mentioned in its Emergency Report No. 12 of 2001 that more than 1.5 million needy Afghans could face severe food shortages in the next few months. It means that WFP then abandoned them just because they could not recruit enough women.

It needs no great wisdom to understand that bread is neither something that the Afghans would stock unnecessarily nor could it be stocked for too long. It was also insane to assume that the "barbarian" men would eat all the bread distributed by WFP bakeries and let women and children watch them filling their stomachs. No one denies the importance of the survey or the participation of women in that exercise. However, it certainly was not as big an issue to start starving the already dying Afghans.[261]

Muslim writers in particular were given more attention for their rant against the Taliban. For example, Saira Shah was awarded with numerous awards for her anti-Taliban stance. She contributed a few articles to the *Mirror* in the U.K. when the anti-Taliban propaganda was at its climax in the summer 2001. She accused the Taliban for applying capital punishment to prostitutes and implied that the Taliban should adopt a more tolerant attitude because poverty was forcing Afghan women into prostitution.

Perhaps Saira Shah, et al. should have investigated the causes which are driving women into prostitution in the fourth largest economy in the world (Britain). They did not try finding a public telephone box in Central London that is not plastered with prostitutes advertising their services. Is it because of poverty in U.K.?[262] Were the Taliban responsible for poverty in Afghanistan? None of the propagandists, who were going under cover to find faults with the Taliban government, went undercover into Chechnya to find about women abuse and suffering there. They did not report with as much enthusiasm the rape of the tens of thousands of Muslim women in Bosnia. They hardly have time to find out how Palestinian women have been suffering over the past fifty-eight years seeing their schoolchildren shot dead by the fourth most powerful army in the world.

There are far worse regimes than the Taliban in the world but somehow they do not deserve the wrath of the alliance of the Zionist, neo-cons and crusaders because they do not promote a model that becomes a target of the crusaders. These tyrannical regimes are rather friends of the United States and its allies, whether they are in Latin America, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, or Saudi Arabia. In Saudi Arabia, women are not allowed to drive. Any criticism of Saudi Arabia would cause a diplomatic row and spineless politicians having to kneel down to despotic regimes because they provide jobs for the crusaders' economy!

No one dared to make a comparison of the Taliban government with other human rights violators around the world. Imag-

ine Kuwait, for instance, which is a government restored by the United States at a great cost. When the Amir returned to his gold toilet seats, he expelled 290,000 Palestinians out of the total of 350,000 before the war. They were driven out by a combination of summary executions, torture, detention, forced expulsions, and a variety of other pressures.[263]

Amnesty International has documented that 40 Palestinians were summarily executed and another 120 disappeared. Five thousand were detained, most of them were beaten and/or tortured. Another 7,000 Palestinians were formally expelled—not to speak of the treatment of women.[264] According to a BBC report, about 450,000 Palestinians lived in Kuwait before the Iraqi invasion. Most were expelled or pressured to leave after "liberation," and the Palestinian community has dwindled to around 9,000.[265]

According to *Middle East Watch* (a division of the New York-based Human Rights Watch) report, titled "Punishing the Victim: Rape and Mistreatment of Asian Maids," the Kuwaiti government has "explicitly excluded" the treatment of domestic servants from criminal and civil laws.

Almost without exception the women interviewed in Kuwait spoke of debt bondage, passport deprivation, and near total confinement in their employers' homes." Those who never get tired remembering Taliban's "oppressive" treatment of women can hardly see that besides making it impossible for some working women to leave the country, Kuwaiti law forbids foreigners to travel even inside Kuwait without a passport. It means that many of these women are effectively prisoners of their employer. "We were unable to find a single case in which an employer was prosecuted," said Dorothy Q. Thomas of the Women's Rights Project, who visited Kuwait and helped to prepare the report. "In case after case it was the victim who was punished."[266]

As for comparing other alleged crimes of the Taliban, we can safely say that they did not shoot down a passenger plane and kill hundreds of innocent civilian passengers. They did not send

thirty-three bombers to light up the skies over another country, and kill dozens of innocent civilians, including daughter of a head of state. They did not organize "hit teams" to assassinate foreign heads of state. They did not slaughter 50,000 people like the U.S.-backed El Salvador government, whose death squads chopped up people and ran trucks over their heads. It was not simply terrorism but "international terrorism"; still there was no condemnation, no Amnesty International Report and no war against terrorists, as the United States itself was involved. They did not nuke another country. They did not starve 1.8 million innocent people to death. They did not lie to the world and to the United Nations through their teeth to justify the invasion and occupation of another country. They did not occupy other countries and raze cities to the ground or showered civilians with White Phosphorus. They did not establish concentration camps on all continents. They did not establish a police state to the extent of the garrison state that we witness in the United States.

If the Taliban had to be removed and criminalized for life for their "crimes," what about those who assisted the Indonesian army in killing several hundred thousand people during a 1965 purge, which is one of the largest political bloodletting in history. The Taliban did not organize its own army in other countries such as the United States in Laos under "White Star Operation," running 800 sorties a day, dropping 1.5 million tons of bombs, and depopulating the Plan of Jars from its 150,000 inhabitants.

The Taliban did not kill more than two million people and left 23 million craters to turn Vietnam into swamps. The Taliban did not assist the Congolese army in taking over Patrice Lumumba's government, abducting Lumumba from the U.N. protected house and shipping him off to his death.

The Taliban did not drop 108,000 tons of bombs on Cambodia, destroying hundreds of villages and killing thousands of civilians under the pretext of killing National Liberation Front soldiers. The Taliban did not build the most repressive security

organization to keep the Shah of Iran in power. The Taliban did not carry out terror campaigns in Nicaragua, where the use of CIA's sabotage manual is a classic example of how the United States sponsored and organized terror acts that would make a society simply cease to work.

The Taliban keep the Israeli terror machine in action by financing it with up to 100 billion dollars of financial aid since 1948. Except Israel, no other country receives $ 1000 per capita for every man, women and child and an average of $10,000 per soldier subsidy from the United States.

The Taliban were criticized for going after those who were undermining and militarily attacking their government from within the country. It means the Taliban had no right to self-defense, whereas successive U.S. administrations have every right to preempt wars and intervene beyond its borders. Iraq and Afghanistan are just the latest in the long list of interventions abroad in the name of self-defense. The only difference is that the United States didn't invade Panama and other states—Grenada, Nicaragua, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iran, Lebanon, Libya, Panama, Somalia, and Vietnam—to defend itself against Islam. The objective there was exerting hegemony in its sphere of influence. This, however, has been the core objective in the case of invading and occupying Afghanistan.

The Afghan people did not experience at the hands of the Taliban what they are going through today at the hands of the United States forces and the puppet regime of Hamid Karzai. According to the *Guardian*, the United States has turned Afghanistan into a "huge U.S. jail."[267] According to the report: "In Kabul, Nader Nadery, of the Human Rights Commission, told us, 'Afghanistan is being transformed into an enormous U.S. jail. What we have here is a military strategy that has spawned serious human rights abuses, a system of which Afghanistan is but one part.' In the past 18 months, the commission has logged more than 800 allegations of human rights abuses committed by U.S.

troops."[268] Alec Russell of the daily *Telegraph* (February 27, 2006) reported Pentagon officials admitting that U.S. run jail in Afghanistan is "worse than Guantanamo."

The news reports talk about the United States' turning Afghanistan into a mess[269] but no one dares compare it with the allegations which were turned into justification for invading and occupying Afghanistan. The allegations against the Taliban still remain the basic cause for the international silence over the United States and its allies' criminal adventures in Afghanistan.

Is it not more than ironic that despite its own indescribable criminal record, it is only the United States that has the right to declare others terrorists and deny them the right to live. Russia has a right to cleanse Chechnya of the Muslims, India has the right to cleans Kashmir of the Muslims, Israel has the right to do whatever it likes to do to the Palestinians populations but the Taliban were the only monsters because they were engaged with internal enemies. We must not forget that the Northern Alliance was fully sponsored by the United States, France, India, Iran, Turkey, Israel and former soviet states.

The crux of the issue is that it was absolutely not the matter of human rights or terrorism. There were and there still are far worse human rights violators engaged in committing crimes against humanity. The United Nations itself played a role in the terror campaign that killed close to 5,000 babies a month in Iraq with its genocidal sanctions. The United States itself supports the most authoritarian, repressive governments and military juntas that have no intentions to establish Islam.

Musharraf of Pakistan, Karimov of Uzbekistan, Mubarak of Egypt and the Saud family of Saudi Arabia, are the best examples of human rights violators supported and sponsored by the United States. Yet the Taliban's government was never supposed to be recognized under the pretext of human rights abuses. The reason is simple: the United States did not want a Muslim self-assertion—an Islamic identity to remain and flourish that could in-

spire people to understand living by Islam and refuse to be part of an unjust and exploitative order of the globo-bullies. The crusaders did not want the establishment of an Islamic model, no matter how rudimentary, crude, weak and incompetent it was.

Just for political reasons, the United States officials repeatedly claimed that the issue for invading Afghanistan was terrorism, not Islam. Whereas in reality, American media, academia and political analysts never stopped associating Taliban with "militant" Islam—an imaginary "creation" of Islamophobes for replacing the fear of the "Red Menace."

In Afghanistan, the priorities for the United States were not human rights and democracy.[270] It was elimination of the threat to its hegemony by the emergence of an Islamic model. Debates about terrorism only distract the world from the real issue: the powerful United States wants to continue dominating the world, pitting one state against the other, manipulating facts to influence public opinion, hence maintaining the status quo. This applies more to the Muslim world.

Taliban became the enemy because unlike Karzai, under whose rule prostitution, liquor, and pork is prevalent in the little area under his masters' control in Kabul,[271] the Taliban were not ready to accept unconditional assimilation into, support of, sympathy towards, and whole-hearted participation in the social and political secular system of the United States, which is used only as a weapon against Islam. When it comes to its own policies, it is clearly established in the earlier chapters, that the US policies are clearly driven by religious motivation.

The Taliban were not ready to virtually abolish all distinction between Muslims and others in the name of liberalism or modernization. Thus, the United States and its allies put forward unqualified individuals and groups as "representatives" of Islam, who may be unethical, deviants, or outright heretics from the religion. No subjective measures are being used to ascertain the qualifications of such people where goal is to lead Muslims into

confusion about their religion and way of life.

These self-proclaimed liberals and moderates presented Islamic *Shari'ah* as antiquated, irrelevant, authoritarian, unsophisticated, and limited. Homosexual became open advocates for Muslim reform. The notion was popularized that even people who deny the messengership of Muhammad (pbuh) and its finality or who commit open *shirk* (see page 91) can possibly be Muslims.

Other efforts were geared towards removing references to any potentially "offensive" terms and institutions, i.e. *Madaris, Madrassa, Jihad*, deviance, disbelief, heresy, disbeliever, particularly the Arabic terms *Kafir*, *Kufr*, *Bid'ah*, from their language or speech. Criterion for scholarship or leadership was completely changed during this time, insisting that the "real" scholars are the politicians, scientists, doctors, lawyers, engineers, architects and gay rights activists to underplay the role of religious scholarship within the society and make it unappealing by portraying it as limited. With the removal of the Taliban, these measures have gained further legitimacy.

By making public statements such as, the "Taliban were not following Islam," or "the Taliban were not real Muslims," Karl Inderfurth and other American officials intended to create a nationalistic or ethnic view and approach to Islam, or more accurately, create a new religion that cannot truly be called Islam. It will certainly be a kind of Islam that would not pose a challenge to the United States injustice and double standards or offer anything that will make Islam seen as a viable alternative to the moribund democracy, capitalism and all associated systems together.

One year before 9/11, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Karl Inderfurth, told the Voice of America (September 1, 2000) that the kind of Islam "that is practiced by Pakistan is not that which is practiced in Afghanistan." Inderfurth followed the Islamophobes' approach to dividing Muslims by adding: "there is a difference between militant Islam and moderate Islam." This was long before Musharraf—and many other opportunists who

mushroomed after 9/11 as "moderates"—came up with the mantra of "enlightened moderation" in 2004. With their shallow knowledge and sinister agenda, the American leaders were busy explaining the self-classified types of Muslims and Islam in a way to make these classifications as legitimate expressions for the rest of the world, even though they have no meaning whatsoever in Islamic scholarship or among Muslim themselves.

Such statements on the part of United States leadership were intended to kill two birds with one stone i.e., to legitimize the negative connotation of terms such as "militant Islam" and to further create a morbid dread of the Taliban for justifying continued sanctions and the policy of not extending recognition to the Taliban government, thus, keeping the doors open to invasion and occupation. We need to look at both aspects of Mr. Inderfurth's statement for an elaborate analysis to understand the way the Taliban were gradually undermined and genuine issues were being pushed under the carpet.

The reality behind the Taliban-phobia

Contrary to the United States anti-Taliban propaganda, just a week in Afghanistan was good enough for an impartial observer to conclude that the morbid dread of the Taliban and their rule was no more than a campaign of absolute disinformation based on some twisted facts, half truths, and outright lies.

It was not the exaggerated differences between Pakistani and Afghani Islam, but other reasons based on which the United States and its allies were refusing to recognize the Taliban government. To counter the United States propaganda, there were solid facts that made the Taliban's government the most deserving government for recognition. The return of Taliban, especially at the time when murder, rape and genocide by the United States funded warlords was rampant, sounded more like the cavalry arriving to rescue the trapped people of Afghanistan and they were hailed with great enthusiasm and support. The Taliban then de-

livered just what the people of Afghanistan were looking forward to for the last many years: law, order and security.

One of the pretexts cited for not extending recognition to the Taliban was that their government was not "broad-based." However, it is a matter of public record that none of the previously United States and United Nations recognized governments in Kabul were broad-based.

Anyone with first hand knowledge of the Taliban government knows the ministries in Kabul were widely allocated to different ethnic groups, as was the case under the Taliban. The whole Ministry of planning was in the hands of Persian speaking Badakhshanis. Similarly, the Persian-speaking minority was leading the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare. Someone from outside had never ruled the province of Paktia with a majority of Pashto speaking communities, but under the Taliban a Persian speaking Badakhshani was governor of the province. The same were responsible for the whole infantry division in the army, which also had Shi'a divisions fighting side by side the Sunnis against those who were supported from outside to undermine the Taliban's government.

The Taliban government had given a share in power to almost every Afghan ethnic minority even in the absence of the sham elections that we witness under the United States occupation. What the Taliban did not want among their ranks were former communists and the so-called liberals who were interested in bringing former King Zahir Shah back to power. If Afghanistan needed anything then, it was definitely not a monarchy. Instead, it needed a strong recognized government to sustain peace, law and order that was established by the Taliban. The United States and its allies could not accomplish this goal in the last four years. But recognizing the Taliban government meant recognizing their efforts towards establishing Islam, irrespective of their flaws. Before the arrival of the Taliban, the situation in Afghanistan was much worse than Kosovo and it needed some serious measures to

disarm the heavily armed factions and the public. NATO troops are doing just the same in Kosovo. Unlike the United States and its allies, the Taliban did the same in Afghanistan very successfully.

Since the United States could not capitalize on the rise of the Taliban or influence the Taliban decision-making circle, some of their acts were declared despicable and unacceptable and the propaganda was spread to the extent that people from every other nation followed suit. Besides the stigma of "harboring Arab terrorists," the Taliban were accused for "women apartheid," "technology phobia" and practicing big brother approach to every aspect of Afghan life.

According to the *New York Times*:

> Women are essentially under house arrest in Afghanistan. The Taliban, a fundamentalist Islamic group that runs most of the country, has issued edict after edict keeping women and girls from studying, working, receiving medical care and even leaving their homes. International organizations and private relief groups want to help women, but to get permission they need to compromise with the Taliban. The question of how far to go has no good answer, but an agreement the United Nations signed recently is a terrible mistake.[272]

This propaganda flew in the face of the reality on the ground. During the peak time of this propaganda, Deputy Chief Protocol of the Taliban at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Daud Shah Niazi, pointed out in an interview that women had no access to basic education in almost 70 percent of the Afghanistan even before the Taliban's coming to power. Furthermore, the University and schools remained closed for most of the past 15 years. But no one made an issue out of it. Everyone was looking at the empty part of the glass vis-à-vis the Taliban rule and expecting them to clear overnight all the mess created by the two super-powers that accumulated over the years. Since occupation in 2001, even the United States could not do a fraction of what the Taliban had done in almost the same number of years.

Marion Lloyd admitted the constraints faced by the Taliban in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* January 15, 1999. Lloyd wrote that:

> The university, which had been closed for much of the past 15 years, reopened in March 1997 under the administration of the Taliban." He also witnessed that the campus, "ravaged by civil war," was then "hamstrung by poverty.[273]

As a result, the Northern Alliance of Ahmad Shah Masoud and Rabbani took the opportunity to portray themselves as more liberal and tolerant forces. The truth of the matter is that the protection that the Taliban had provided to Afghan women in the war torn country was presented as a denial of their basic rights. To the contrary, Ahmad Shah Masoud and Rabbani's oppression of women by unleashing a horrible reign of rape and murder during their stay in Kabul had been totally forgotten.

A discussion with the government officials, including the faculty members and Chancellor of Kabul University revealed that no one was against women's education or working outside their homes within the limits of Islamic principles for interaction between un-related men and women.[274]

The then Chancellor of Kabul University, Molvi Pir Mohammed Roohani, pointed out that women were working in all the hospitals and teaching medical students at Kabul university. Classes for women commenced in summer 1999.[275] One of the United Nations reports mentioned nursing schools with female students opening or to be opened in Kandahar, Herat and Jallalabad and continuing education programs for women doctors and other female health care providers. It was also mentioned that two of the larger women's hospitals in Kabul and Kandahar were rehabilitated.[276] Also, Afghanistan expert Prof. Barnett Rubin, of New York University, stated that the Taliban had opened several centers in different parts of the country to train women to be doctors and other health care professionals.[277]

The University of Kabul was also planning to open eleven fac-

ulties for women education but contrary to the *New York Times'* report, there was no one to financially or physically assist the university in the reconstruction work and establishment of separate facilities for female students. The Taliban government had no objection whatsoever to any donor's opening schools for girl students in Kabul or any other parts of the country. The problem was that no donor wanted to step in without attaching as a condition, its own values. For example, perspective donors kept insisting on co-education. Without this pre-condition met, no donor was willing to provide assistance in the reconstruction or operation of educational facilities. This is a case similar to the WFP ban on bread distribution as discussed earlier. Due to intransigence and the negative attitudes of the Western governments, the donor community had also adopted the attitude of demi-gods towards the Taliban.

Like any free people, the Taliban had their own values and conditions for accepting funds. They did not want strings attached to the seemingly free dollars. They did not want others to impose their will on the suffering people in the name of assistance.

According to the Chancellor of Kabul University, the Taliban government was not against women education. It had given permission to NGOs and other interested parties to operate home based schools, reconstruct the government schools on the condition that they must not be co-education. Other than that, the Chancellor told the author:

> We have the solution for women education, but we do not have the solution for the world that is bent upon forcing us to keep male and female student together. We don't interfere in the internal affairs of other nations, why should they impose their will and values on us. Even under the U.N.'s Charter you cannot force a people to change their religion or social norms.[278]

The only restriction the Taliban wanted to enforce were proper *hijab* in public and segregation of sexes in educational institutions

and the work place. Contrary to the prevailing myths, women were allowed to go for shopping and fulfilling other needs all alone, except that they had to wear a proper *hijab* in public.

For the first time since 1996, International Women's Day was publicly celebrated on 8 March 2000 in Afghanistan. A formal celebration took place in the capital, 700 women of all ages, including former university professors, engineers, teachers, doctors, nurses and school principals, attended the celebration. Radio Sharia (the Taliban official radio) covered the celebration. Furthermore, a representative of Mullah Omar made a statement. It was the first time the Taliban leadership addressed women in public. Afghan women throughout the country took advantage of this opportunity in four years to discuss issues of concern to them.[279]

The only problem was that the cash strapped Taliban were in no position to arrange separate facilities for women to work and study. According to the Minister of Industries and Mines, Molvi Eid Mohammed, the Taliban were looking for assistance. He challenged reporters, who were planting false stories about women education:

> Let these reporters show us a single example, where any of the community development donors or any of the U.N. agencies had ever tried to provide funds for reconstruction of a girls' school or support salary of its staff, and the Taliban refused to cooperate.[280]

The media continued to portray the Taliban as draconian savages knowing that they had no means of communication to effectively clarify their position. Those who were aware of recent Afghan history and realities on the ground knew very well that the forces against whom the Taliban were struggling from day one, or the forces that are occupying Afghanistan today, had committed the most savage acts.

One needs to understand the status to which the society had fallen during the years of foreign-backed factional fighting after the Soviet withdrawal. The Afghans were left with a devastated in-

frastructure and inadequate humanitarian assistance to cope with the demands of recovery. The Taliban were blamed for harboring Osama—"the terrorist." All the United States funded Afghan Mujahideen were terrorists of the same kind, fighting against the Soviet Union. They were demanding the removal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan whereas Osama bin Laden was demanding U.S. withdrawal from Saudi Arabia.

In Afghanistan, when the same Afghan Osamas, who had garnered $3 billion worth of arms from the CIA, began to fight amongst themselves for control of the country, the United States quietly sidelined itself and waited for the country's disintegration. There was widespread hunger and malnutrition. Civilian casualties of war continued to mount due to lack of medical attention. With the proliferation of land mines, maimed children with amputated limbs were a common sight. The prevalence of unclaimed corpses lying in the streets was further evidence that the people in Afghanistan had lived a surreal, horrific existence during the years of foreign-sponsored factional fighting. Unfortunately, all those short-lived governments, which used to control just a few streets in Kabul, were acceptable to the United Nations, United States and its allies. However, the Taliban were not acceptable despite the initial support from the United States in their establishment in power and despite their controlling 95 per cent of the country. The United States and the United Nations have recognized Hamid Karzai, who does not even hold 95 per cent of Kabul.

Before the Taliban, an atmosphere of anarchy reigned in Afghanistan. Different factions carried out looting of homes, killings, beatings and torture. Raping was rampant. As Amnesty International attested, "rape was condoned by faction leaders as a means of terrorizing conquered populations and rewarding soldiers." It reported the case of a young widow in Kabul, who in early 1994 left her three small children at home to search for food outside. Two soldiers abducted her from the street and took her to their base where 22 men raped her for three days. Upon

release, she returned home to find that her three children had died of hypothermia. The global silence during that period suggests that everything then was perfectly acceptable to the United States, its allies and human rights activists. No one tried to call for sanctions against the sitting regimes in Kabul at that time. Moreover, Interfaith, or someone else from the United States, did not warn Pakistan of any threat from the situation in Afghanistan.

Apart from disarming the warring factions, the Taliban successfully ended raping, looting, extortion and murder in areas where it had established full control. The Taliban achieved this feat with the imposition of *Shari'ah* law to whatever extent and understanding possible. The Taliban also enacted price controls over basic foodstuffs so that people were no longer going hungry, which even the neighboring Pakistan could not do in the last 58 years with a huge government bureaucracy. Above all, establishing law and order was a feat that neither the United States and Europe, nor the U.N. could accomplish. This is now confirmed from the troubled United States occupation and the never-ending chaos in Afghanistan since the departure of the Taliban. Despite all these facts, the United States and its allies did not think the Taliban deserved any credit or recognition.

If the Taliban had no right to punish their people for not wearing *burqa* and beards, the United States and its allies also had no right to punish them for wearing *burqa* and beards. The Afghan people needed much more than a right to removing their *burqas* or shaving their faces.

As for the *burqas*, outside Kabul, where a substantial percentage of women had gotten used to dressing in western fashions, women went on dressing the way they had dressed for decades, if not centuries—with their bodies, hair and faces more or less covered depending on where they were. This is evident from the pictures that are coming out of Afghanistan after the four years of "liberation" from the Taliban "yoke." A.S. (Steve) Adler writes

in his upcoming book, *As thou Goest by the Way* :

> The English speaking, college educated women in Kabul—who were often not only anti-Taliban but anti-religious -- were the people who were most adversely effected by the Taliban and were the most able to communicate their troubles to the Western Media. These women and their Russian speaking counterparts were not, in so many cases, innocent beleaguered secularists caught in a web of religious oppression. They were, quite often, the very people who had been doing their best for over a decade to undermine the cultural foundations of Islam in Afghanistan. It would have been remarkable, in this light, if the Taliban had just left them all alone. While the educated women, including so many, who had been Russian collaborators, were very adept at manipulating the media. The very traditional women, who constitute the overwhelming majority of the women of Afghanistan, were almost completely ignored.

Contrary to the propagated need of removing burqas and beards, Afghanistan needed recognition of a government that had brought stability to a war torn country. It needed UNDP and other donors' generous assistance to initiate programs for harnessing Afghan's potential to alleviate their poverty and become self-reliant. It was important to be aware that there were forces that manipulated the issue of rights to further their political objectives and mask their own roles in the perpetuation of war and poverty in Afghanistan. The world had a choice to either recognize and stabilize the Taliban government, or to break the Taliban's back with sanctions and allow the United States to invade and occupy the country. The world chose the second option and not only the country is now plunged into total chaos but the totalitarian crusaders are planning to invade one Muslim country after another.

Avoiding the Real Issue

The Taliban were blamed for harboring Osama bin Laden. However, the never-ending propaganda could hardly point to the fact that following the 1989 Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Afghan-Arabs, including Osama, began drifting back to their homes in the Arab world. Their heightened political con-

sciousness made them realize that countries like Saudi Arabia and Egypt were just as much client regimes of the United States as the Najibullah regime had been of Moscow. Sensitized to foreign occupation and oppression, these veterans from the American-*Jihad* against the Soviet Union built a formidable constituency in their home countries. Having defeated Soviet imperialism in Afghanistan, they felt that they could do the same to dislodge the corrupt, dictatorial regimes at home. They were confident of standing up to the United States imperialism in Saudi Arabia, for example, with its strong links to Washington since its inception in 1932.

The Taliban were blamed for harboring "terrorists" but the media intentionally made little effort to educate the Western public about the root causes of the problem. For example, during the 1990 Kuwait crisis, the stationing of more than 540,000 non-Muslim United States troops on the soil of Saudi Arabia—considered sacred as the realm containing Mecca and Medina, the birth and death places of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH—angered many freedom-loving Saudis, especially the *Ulema* (religious scholars).

A majority of Saudis did not want foreign forces on their soil. Their discontent rose when, having liberated Kuwait in March 1991, the Pentagon failed to carry out full withdrawal from the kingdom. Among those who protested vocally was Osama, who established a formal committee that advocated religious-political reform.

In 1993, King Fahd created a Consultative Council. He appointed all members of this council who served in a merely advisory capacity. This step failed to pacify Osama bin Laden and others who wanted to end subservience to the United States, beginning with removal of all foreign troops from Saudi soil. During the Yemeni civil war of April-July 1994, when Riyadh backed the Marxist former South Yemeni leaders against the government in Sana, Osama and others condemned the official policy. The

authorities stripped him of Saudi citizenship and expelled him from the country. This was long before the United States could file any charge of terrorism against him.

However, Osama's banishment (to Sudan) did not deter other freedom lovers from pursuing their agenda of throwing out stooges working more for Washington than for their own people. In November 1995, there was an attack on the Saudi National Guard base in Riyadh. Five United States service personnel stationed there were killed in the attack. Of the four Saudis arrested as suspects, three turned out to be "Afghanis." They were all found guilty and executed. This was like Afghanis returning the favor to the Saudis, who helped the Afghans get rid of the Soviet occupation.

However, what put the United States military presence in Saudi Arabia in the limelight was the truck bombing on June 25, 1996, outside the Al Khobar complex near Dhahran air base. The explosion killed nineteen American servicemen and injured more than 400. This occurred a few weeks after Osama had arrived in Afghanistan from Sudan. He was forced to leave when Sudanese government came under pressure from Washington and Riyadh. However, all news-reports from that time show that the United States was keen on implicating Tehran in the bombing despite knowing that the attack was due to local resistance against the presence of American troops in Saudi Arabia.

The co-opted United States media did not want to highlight the Saudi's anger at the United States presence in Saudi Arabia. Osama then called for a *jihad* against the Americans in his country. In his widely publicized words: "The presence of the American crusader forces in Muslim Gulf states...is the greatest danger and [poses] the most serious harm, threatening the world's largest oil reserves," he said. "Pushing out this American occupying enemy is the most important duty after the duty of belief in God." Even Osama's 1998 fatwa against the United States was cosigned by several people, and Osama was in Afghanistan at the time,

yet, none of the known leaders of the Taliban had signed it.

After the Al Khobar bombing, the Saudi authorities grudgingly admitted the presence of American troops on Saudi soil. They were part of the force in charge of 170 United States fighters, bombers and tank-killers stationed in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain. Well-informed Saudi watchers, however, put the number of American servicemen in the kingdom at 15,000 to 20,000, including several thousand in civilian dress, based in Dhahran, Jeddah and the defense ministry in Riyadh.

The Taliban had nothing to do with the Saudi's anger. The anger was, in fact, directed against the United States, which stationed its troops in Saudi Arabia under the pretext of protecting the Kingdom from Iraqi invasion. Once the United States-led coalition had expelled the Iraqis from Kuwait, this mission was accomplished. So there was no need for foreign troops any more, nor was there any official explanation for their presence. The unofficial explanation was that the purpose of the United States warplanes stationed in Saudi Arabia was to enforce the no-fly zone in Iraq. This rationale was flawed in at least four respects.

First, since Washington had publicly acknowledged defense agreements with Kuwait and Bahrain, the question arises: Why not limit the stationing of forces to those countries and exclude Saudi Arabia because of its special religious significance to all Muslims?

Secondly, the southern no-fly zone was not imposed until August 1992, seventeen months after the end of the Gulf War, ostensibly to prevent Saddam Hussein's regime from persecuting the Shiite population of southern Iraq—so this could not have been the reason American aircraft were stationed there before that time.

Thirdly, with one or two aircraft carriers of the United States Fifth Fleet, headquartered in Bahrain, permanently plying the Persian Gulf, was there really a need to station U.S. warplanes on Saudi soil, thus providing fuel to grievances of the Saudis, who

claimed that the kingdom was "occupied" by United States in the same way Afghanistan was occupied by Soviet Union?

Lastly, the no fly zones were not approved or part of the United Nations mandate for dealing with Iraq. The United States unilaterally established these zones.[281]

Most importantly, in preparation for Iraqi invasion in 2003, the United States officially announced that it would be withdrawing troops from Saudi Arabia, but there has been no progress so far. It was just another gimmick to garner more support for the illegal war the United States was planning to impose on Iraq. Note that the Taliban are absent from the scene in all these developments but all resentment against the United States was blamed on them as if they were the policy makers for Washington.

This leads one to the serious issue, which the United States was trying to hide by declaring Saudi dissidents as "Islamic militants" and the Taliban their protectors. Defense experts, such as a former Middle East specialist at the London-based International Institute of Strategic Studies, claimed inside knowledge of joint Washington-Riyadh strategy devised and implemented after the armed uprising in Mecca in November 1979. In case there is an anti-royalist coup, they say, the United States would need seventy-two hours to marshal its full military might to reverse the coup. For many years, the Saudi defense ministry has been purchasing sophisticated weapons systems, chiefly from the United States. But the Pentagon was reportedly alarmed by the account of Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, the commander of the United States-led coalition in the Gulf War, that suggested the Saudi military, especially the Air Force, was incapable of operating the sophisticated weaponry it possessed. Thus, the presence of U.S. military officials at key Saudi military facilities was considered indispensable in order to insure swift coordination and secure communications in case of an emergency.

It was against this background that Osama and others articulat-

ed the thesis that their country was occupied because the sitting regime was being protected by the U.S. Since then the events in the Persian Gulf, centered on relations between Iraq and the United States, have strengthened the views of Saudi dissidents, all of whom are now called Al-Qaeda terrorists to discredit them to the maximum extent possible. In the midst of the deepening Baghdad-Washington crisis of February 1998, which resulted in the buildup of a U.S. armada in the gulf, the dissidents published an assessment that applied to the entire Middle East.

On February 23, 1998, under the aegis of the International Islamic Front (IIF), Osama bin Laden, Ayman al Zawahiri (of Jihad al Islami, Egypt), Abu Yasser Ahmad Taha (of Gamaat al Islamiya, Egypt), Shaikh Mir Hamzah (of Jamiat al Ulema, Pakistan) and Fazl ul Rahman (of Harkat al Jihad, Bangladesh) issued a communiqué with exactly the same language used earlier against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan under the auspices of the United States, which thought 'what goes around, comes around' maxim doesn't apply to Washington's policies. Release of the statement under the aegis of the International Islamic Front (IIF) also supports the point of view of those who claim no organization ever existed in the name of Al-Qaeda.

> For more than seven years the United States has been occupying the lands of Islam in the holiest of places, the Arabian peninsula, plundering its riches, dictating to its rulers, humiliating its people, terrorizing its neighbors, and turning its bases in the peninsula into a spearhead through which to fight the neighboring Muslim peoples," it stated. Again, the Taliban did not dictate this statement. But the U.S. policies had a lot to do with it.[282]

The statement continued:

> Second, despite the great devastation inflicted on the Iraqi people by the Crusader-Zionist alliance, the Americans are once again trying to repeat the horrific massacres.... Third, if the Americans' aims behind these wars are religious and economic, the aim is also to serve the Jews' petty state and divert attention from its occupation of Jerusalem and murder of Muslims there.[283]

This point has now been subsequently demonstrated in that the United States adventures are part of the religious war fought under different pretexts for total deception. The same is true about Israeli occupations and its religiously and racially motivated state policies.

Following the Washington-London air strikes against Iraq in mid-December 1998, spurning the United States demands to hand over Osama to Washington, the Taliban government proposed that the evidence against him be passed on to it so that he could be tried in Afghanistan under Islamic law. The United States refused to cooperate. So in late November the Taliban supreme judge declared Osama innocent.

A decade after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, the mood among United States and Saudi decision makers turned from quiet satisfaction to perplexed hand wringing. In the words of Richard Murphy, the Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East and South Asia during the two Reagan administrations, "We did spawn a monster in Afghanistan."[284]

The United States was shocked to see the "monster" of resistance, which "grew tentacles" and extended from western China to Algeria to the east coast of America, because it thought Soviet occupations are different than the occupations of its own. The United States forgot that it had invaded Afghanistan but is directly or indirectly occupying almost all the Muslim world.

Years later, we find that the Taliban have been effectively turned into a scapegoat but the curse of United States interventions, based now mostly on religious motivations, is not going anywhere. This is now the real specter haunting the world. The 21st century crusade is here to stay because it is not in retaliation for 9/11. It was planned long before the events of 9/11.

The Taliban's actual crimes

The Taliban's actual crimes were not the stories of their "oppression" and "repression" that we find in the Western media.

Actions in the name of *Shari'ah*, for instance, are the norm in Saudi Arabia. Despite this, it remains one of the closet allies of the United States. Successive administrations in Washington consider it a duty to protect the Kingdom.

What the Taliban did against the enemies within is not even a fraction of what Israel is doing to the Palestinians since the 1940s. However, instead of invading Israel for a change of government, all forces of the West are united in its defense. More importantly, the United States excels in the department of racism, human rights abuse, oppression and repression without any accountability to anyone.[285]

The Taliban did not rule more oppressively than the Israeli government functioning through death squads in Tulkarm, Hebron and Ramallah. The Taliban, for example, did not cut water supplies to 218 Afghan villages, which is one example of the Israeli government's lesser crimes against humanity.[286]

The stories of the Taliban's human rights violations are insignificant, not because two wrongs make one right, but simply because there was no reason at all which could justify the United States invasion and occupation of Afghanistan.

As for Osama, the United States administration lied and used the same tactics as it used against Saddam Hussain. The Taliban authorities offered to the United States to settle the Osama issue through dialogue in February 2001 in a manner that does not compromise the national honor of both countries.

The Taliban Ambassador in Islamabad Maulvi Zaeef in an exclusive interview with the *Pakistan Observer*, said:

> We want to solve this simmering issue in a way that takes into account the dignity and honor of both Afghanistan and the United States." He revealed that Taliban Foreign Minister Maulvi Wakil Ahmad Mutawakil has written a letter to the new U.S. administration regarding this issue. According to Zaeef, "We are still waiting for a response from the United States, which we hope will be positive.[287]

According to a State Department message, Mullah Omar tele-

phoned the State Department and offered to talk.[288] This was long before the U.N. sanctions and 9/11—a day after Bill Clinton sent cruise missiles against Afghanistan in 1998.

The United States deliberate attempts at muddying the waters and looking for a perfect excuse to intervene can be judged by a comparison of the CNN report by Henry Schuster, January 30, 2004, and other available information. Schuster's report says that according to declassified United States reports, the United States has asked the Taliban on at least three occasions to expel Osama.[289] However, when the Taliban and even Osama agreed to that proposal, the United States refused to accept it and insisted on the Taliban's handing him over to the United States.[290]

Mullah Omar's September 19, 2001 speech was evidence of the Taliban's dedication to peacefully resolving the Osama issue and the United States stubbornness regarding not listening to any proposal.[291] The reason was simple: the United States interest in the region and its plans to occupy Afghanistan no matter what.

In a nutshell, three main factors played a crucial role in the unprecedented campaign regarding the alleged crimes of the Taliban.

a. The first factor was the unintended consequences of the Taliban's moving away from the prevailing concept of nation-states and governance as described in detail in chapter 3. The relative freedom to discuss Islamic sources for implementation of the core principles of Islam was set to raise awareness and shatter the myths regarding the Islamic way of life and method of governance.
b. The second factor was the efforts by the Islamophobes who were alarmed with the Taliban's declaration of Afghanistan being an Islamic Emirate and their desire to make it a model Islamic society. A strong lobby of Islamophobes teamed up with former communists—those who had lost power after the fall of Najibullah—atheists and the now self-proclaimed "moderates" with Muslim-sounding names but little or no Is-

lam in their lives. Together they magnified beyond all proportions every "wrong" of the Taliban in order to present these as the most horrible crimes human beings had ever witnessed. They lied to demonize the Taliban in an attempt to vilify the concept of an Islamic society, way of life and an alternative model of governance. Most of these Muslim counterparts of Islamophobes are now sitting in Kabul either as officials of Karzai's municipality or working on other positions to consolidate the American occupation of the country.

c. The third factor was the efforts of the most powerful corporate and oil lobby, which intended to have access and control of natural resources in that part of the world. These efforts remained inconsistent during the last half of the 1990s between courting the Taliban as well as looking for an alternative to the Taliban that could let them have full access and control to whatever this powerful group, and ultimately the U.S., wanted under its influence.

The Taliban's actual crime was their inability to deal with the propagandistic media, which were fully supporting the corporate terrorists, neo-cons and the "intellectual" Islamophobes. The Taliban used to show business cards from the Western journalists to prove how these reporters agreed to report the actual situation and real statements from the Taliban leadership. However, upon return to their native countries, they produced reports, which were totally in contrast to the reality they observed.

Pir Mohammed Roohani, the Vice Chancellor of Kabul University, had a file load of letters and appeals, which he had sent to all the Western donors for help in reconstruction of girl schools. All these requests were turned down because the donors wanted written assurances that all education facilities would be co-educational. Roohani used to tell reporters that the Taliban are not against women's education; they do not have funds and other resources to revive all girls' education facilities. However, the reporters would go back and report that the Taliban have banned

women from education. This is just one example of the many issues used for demonizing the Taliban.

So, despite working independently, the media, the "intellectual" Islamophobes and the real crusaders from the religious front complemented each other's agenda to the extent that even the progressive left, with strong critics of U.S. imperialism and propaganda, started falling for these lies. The following analysis would further clarify this point.

In search of natural resources, the corporate groups had adopted a carrot and stick approach for courting the Taliban. They were ready even to recognize their government if they budged from their refusal to cooperate unconditionally. But the Islamophobic groups gained a considerable momentum of their own to the extent that the corporate group also had to rethink their strategies. They finally decided not to rely on the Taliban when they could have a better option in the form of a perfect puppet regime under the total control of Washington. Now they have it. The head of the municipality in Kabul, Hamid Karzai, cannot even live a day without the protective shield of the hundreds of U.S. bodyguards. When he cannot breathe without the United States protection, how would he refuse anything proposed by Washington? Thus, Rapheal's denial of U.S. interests in the region during the Taliban era stands in contrast to Amnesty International reports. According to Amnesty International:

> Many Afghanistan analysts believe that the United States has had close political links with the Taliban militia. They refer to visits by Taliban representatives to the United States in recent months and several visits by senior U.S. State Department officials to Kandahar including one immediately before the Taliban took over Jalalabad.[292]

Such denials on the part of the high-ranking U.S. officials kept the Taliban and the rest of the world in the dark about the real American motives that have now come to fruition.

The Amnesty International report refers to a comment by the *Guardian*: "Senior Taliban leaders attended a conference in

Washington in mid-1996 and U.S. diplomats regularly traveled to Taliban headquarters." The Taliban could hardly figure out the hidden motives behind such carrots. The *Guardian* pointed out: "[though such] visits can be explained [but] the timing raises doubts as does the generally approving line which U.S. officials take towards the Taliban."[293]

Reports and opinion pieces from the American corporate media during this crucial period are on public record. These reports are as much devoid of substance about the United States involvement at every stage towards ravaging and controlling Afghanistan as much as they are filled with details to present the Taliban as being the most barbaric creatures in human history. Since the two phenomenons, resulting from the initiatives of two groups (Crusaders and oil hungry corporate terrorists) confused many analysts, one has to note the resultant flawed judgments.

See how Ben C. Vidgen confused the corporate driven administration's propping the Taliban with the Islamophobes campaign of presenting them as terrorists and thugs. He writes:

> The corporate media have... remained silent in regard to America's involvement in the promotion of terrorism. On the issue of right-wing terrorism, little has been reported. On America's intelligence connection to 'Islamic' guerrillas (and their manipulation of Islam), nothing has been said. Yet, the truth is that amongst those who utilize religious faith to justify war, the majority are closer to Langley, Virginia, than they are to Tehran or Tripoli... In a move to recruit soldiers for the Afghanistan civil war, the CIA and Zia encouraged the region's Islamic people to think of the conflict in terms of a jihad (holy war).[294]

The above passage is a classic example of how truth has been clouded over by misperceptions, which the Islamophobes had developed over a period of time. Many could easily see the corporate terrorists and U.S. administration's propping and courting the Taliban, but they could hardly note the Islamophobic crusaders busy in the media demonizing them simply because of their unintelligent efforts to establish living by Islam.

CHAPTER 5

The Staged 9/11: Pre-planned Crusade Begins

They had a plan to go to war, and when 9/11 happened that's what they did. They went to war.

Max Cleland,
Former member of 9/11 Commission
and former Senator from Georgia.

THE OFFICIAL story of 9/11 is that it was planned by someone sitting in an Afghan cave and carried out by nineteen Arab fanatics because they hate our freedoms.[295] Attacks are successful because the concerned authorities were not aware that they were at war with terrorism;[296] intelligence agencies were hindered by an inability to share information and the attacks were so ambitious in scope that the United States defenses never caught up to what was unfolding. In short, the story is nothing more than a coincidence theory, since so many systems failed at once. If you believe this, you will be shocked to learn about the range and depth of countervailing information. This chapter can only touch on the available evidence that 9/11 was an "inside job," which was planned and executed to justify a pre-planned war of aggression on Afghanistan.

Looking at this information which proves that 9/11 was an "inside job" is necessary because any evidence that proves the official story wrong also proves that the occupation of Afghanistan was on the cards and the 9/11 operation was staged only to justify dislodging the Taliban. There are some other reasons internal to the United States political situation, which could be cited to have motivated the Bush administration into planning and facilitating 9/11. For instance, Bush had come to power illegally through the manipulation of the legal system in one State (Florida). He was object of ridicule. During war and other major emergencies, a country unites behind its leadership. When 9/11 happened, Bush gained stature. The wars against Afghanistan, and later Iraq, ensured his re-election because people do not vote out a president during a war. Other possible motivating factors include gas pipelines and energy needs. The question however is: Are these sufficient reasons to motivate "insiders" into committing the most heinous crime of 9/11? The motivational forces mentioned in chapter 1-4 overrule reasons limited to the United States internal political situation.

Here the focus is on presenting a glimpse of the mounting evidence against the official story and establishing that the 9/11 job was beyond the scope of "Al-Qaeda Network." Agreeing to the official story of 9/11 requires one to believe that the convenient timing of the attacks was just a coincidence. The evidence presented below suggests that the date for a mid-October invasion of Afghanistan was itself planned around the terrorist attacks in the United States, which the warlords in Washington knew were in hand. The available evidence leads many American analysts, mentioned in the following text, to conclude that there was not only "prior knowledge," but 9/11 was an "inside job." However, this realization is just the beginning, not a conclusion. We need to understand the wider game plan for which 9/11 was used as a launching pad.

Many books,[297] reports,[298] DVDs, videos and flash movies[299] are

available to expose the official lies concerning 9/11. The only missing link is the realization that the official lies about 9/11 were told with a purpose. It is naïve to conclude that it was an "inside job," and leave it there, assuming the perpetrators had no other motive than demolishing WTC in a controlled manner and killing 3000 innocent people.

According to Barrie Zwicker, a Canadian national TV show host and a media critic:

> It is next to impossible for any fair person to absorb even a fraction of the now-voluminous evidence about 9/11 and not become aware it was a false-flag operation planned and executed at the level of the White House, and that any Arabs involved were patsies.[300]

To counter the available evidence, which implicates the United States government in the 9/11 attacks, the usual defensive argument is: Americans just do not kill Americans. Perhaps the best antidote to this and other naïve beliefs is a book by Webster Griffin Tarpley.[301] Tarpley, an American historian, maintains four over-arching considerations throughout the 480-page book. One is the reality of the ongoing oligarchy, especially the Anglo-American alliance. The second is the influence of the bankers and their acolytes. Third is the historic, central and crucial role of cover agents, "cold technicians of death," who execute false-flag operations for their masters. Fourth is the "indispensable ingredient," the corporate media, "because without them you can't have anything. You have to have mass propaganda to accredit, spread and pound the official version of events into the minds of people, and to smooth over the inevitable absurdities, contradictions and impossibilities of the official story."[302]

A list of false flag-operations is contained in British researcher, Nafeez Ahmed's *The War on Truth: 9/11, Disinformation and the Anatomy of Terrorism*, published by Olive Branch Press in 2005. Two of the most respected books blowing the official 9/11 story out of the water are written by Californian philosopher and theologian David Ray Griffin: *The New Pearl Harbor: Disturbing*

Question about the Bush Administration and 9/11 (2004) and the 9/11 *Commission Report: Omissions and Distortions* (2005), both published by Olive Branch Press. New Society Publishers of Gabriola Island, BC, have published Michael Ruppert's *Crossing the Rubicon: The Decline of the American Empire at the End of the Age of Oil* (2004). Rupport was the first journalist to state publicly and uncompromisingly in his newsletter, *From the Wilderness,* that 9/11 was a false-flag operation. He names Dick Cheney as the mastermind of the actual operation (the author, for instance, of the United States Air Force being "paralyzed" that day).

Contrary to the emerging facts about the real perpetrators behind 9/11, Bush, Cheney and company are still trying to make the world believe that on the morning of 9/11, when the largest aviation crisis in the history of the world took place, all was normal. However, according to standard procedures, if an unauthorized or unidentified aircraft approaches, communication fails, or any other unscheduled aviation activity takes place —regardless of whether any immediate threat is perceived—the air force is alerted and jet fighters are put into the air immediately. What is unusual about 9/11 is that these normal air force procedures—activated automatically and without the need for high-level authority—simply did not take place. The routine procedures were waived for every one of the four planes involved. It is absolutely impossible for a few angry Muslims to jam the world's most advanced communication system to allow them to complete their deadly missions.

Four passenger planes were successfully hijacked on September 11, 2001. Flight 11 crashed into the WTC North; Flight 175 crashed into the WTC South; Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon; and Flight 93 crashed into the Pennsylvania countryside. While the hijacking and crashing of planes were underway, North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) was also running a real-world operation named Operation Northern Vigilance. NORAD was thus fully staffed and alert, and senior officers were

manning stations throughout the United States. The entire chain of command was in place and ready when the first hijacking was reported. An article later says, "In retrospect, the exercise would prove to be a serendipitous enabler of a rapid military response to terrorist attacks on September 11."[303]

The four "hijacked" planes were all being tracked on Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) radar, and air traffic controllers across the United States were in communication with each other. As we will see in the next section, the U.S. vice president was monitoring Flight 77 for many miles as it approached the Pentagon. Since no junior officer would have the authority to override the interception routines, the failure to activate them can only have come from orders to that effect, from the very highest levels and in totally secret ways.

The United States administration and "mainstream" media have sidelined every legitimate concern and relevant question regarding 9/11. However, here is something very straightforward: fighters from Andrews airbase, a mere 10 miles from the Pentagon, should have intercepted the United Airlines Flight 77. In fact, it should have been intercepted earlier than that. Since it did not happen, there is no choice but to doubt the official story.

Even if we believe in the official story, still there are many things that do not add up by any logic. For example, by 9:05 a.m. at the very latest, the Pentagon knew that two "hijacked" planes had struck the World Trade Centre and that at least one more "hijacked" plane was at large. It may not have been clear by this time, that Flight 77 was headed for Washington, but it was clear that an attack of massive proportions was taking place, and that at least one more plane had intentions to strike somewhere.

Interestingly, we see no conspiracy theory at play here. These are the "facts," which are partly described in the official story as well. The fighters at Andrews airbase stayed on the ground. By 9:25 a.m. at the very latest, it was clear that Flight 77 was headed for Washington. Not only the Andrews airbase fighters stayed

on the ground but whichever squadron was responsible for covering the area where the plane was originally "hijacked," had also failed to activate.

At 9:41, just two minutes before the plane struck the Pentagon, two F-16 fighters from Langley airbase were dispatched to intercept it. But Langley airbase is 130 miles away. These planes had no hope whatsoever of intercepting Flight 77. Meanwhile, the fighters at Andrews airbase remained grounded. The official story says, no fighters were available at Andrews that day, which the American researchers consider a lie because a page from the Andrews AFB web site was removed on September 12, 2001. It showed the base had F-16 fighters, which could have intercepted Flight 77.[304]

The specific mandate of the fighters at Andrews airbase is to protect Washington DC. And if none were available, how did they miraculously appear in the sky over Washington DC, a few minutes *after* the Pentagon was hit? The Commander-in-chief of the Russian Air Force also expressed serious doubts about this aspect of the official story of 9/11 the very next day (September 12, 2005). He said, "Generally, it is impossible to carry out an act of terror on the scenario which was used in the USA yesterday. As soon as something like that happens here, I am reported about that right away and in a minute we are all up."[305]

Michael Meacher, British MP, also expressed doubts in these words: "This is America, the most advanced military technologically capable country in the world, and it is just impossible to believe that they could have been that incompetent."[306]

Another part of the official story is that the authorities thought at the time that the plane was targeting the White House. This explanation is hardly enough because that should have been even more reason to have activated the United States Air Force. In addition, if that was what they thought, why was the White House not evacuated until two minutes after the Pentagon attack?

Overall, 44 minutes passed between the time that Flight 77's

transponder was turned off, (which is when automatic interception procedures should have begun, even on a normal day), and the time that it crashed into the Pentagon. That there was no interception is all the more incredible, given that at the time Flight 77's transponder was turned off (8:56 a.m.),[307] it was already 10 minutes since one hijacked airliner, United Airlines Flight 175, had crashed into the WTC and about 5 minutes since it had become known that a third plane, American Airlines Flight 11, had been hijacked. At 9:03 a.m., Flight 11 also hit the WTC and there was still no movement at Andrews. According to the September 18 timeline of the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD), the FAA did not notify NORAD that Flight 77 was a possible hijack until 9:24, thirty-four minutes after the loss of radio communications.[308] Press reports quoted the notification as of a "suspected hijacking" despite reports that the plane was flying toward Washington, DC with its transponder off twenty-one minutes after both towers had been hit.[309]

Going by the official story, by 9:25 a.m., there should have been no doubt that Flight 77 was headed toward Washington, and still there was no movement at Andrews, and no evacuation of either the Pentagon or the White House. The Andrews fighters got into the air and the evacuation of the White House took place, just for show it would seem, immediately after the Flight 77 had completed its mission. Interestingly, at a time when a security crisis of huge proportions was taking place, Flight 77 was able to turn off its transponder, change course and fly 300 miles, including through flight-restricted areas. It was being tracked by radar all the way and then reached its destination without being intercepted. In other words, it approached the nation's capital, flew past the White House, and crashed into the Pentagon, without being challenged!

It is difficult to say exactly what the official stories concerning the failure to intercept the two planes which hit the WTC are, because the stories keep changing. However, it has been admit-

ted by NORAD that it was alerted to a hijacking as early as 8.35 a.m., but did not activate any air force action until after the Pentagon was hit, while at the same time admitting that interception of civilian aircraft by jet fighters is a routine procedure.[310] According to NBC report:

> Pilots are supposed to hit each fix with pinpoint accuracy. If a plane deviates by 15 degrees, or two miles from that course, the flight controllers will hit the panic button. They'll call the plane, saying 'American 11, you're deviating from course.' It's considered a real emergency, like a police car screeching down a highway at 100 miles an hour. When golfer Payne Stewart's incapacitated Learjet missed a turn at a fix, heading north instead of west to Texas, F-16 interceptors were quickly dispatched.[311]

The story regarding Flight 93 is that the authorities could have shot it down if they had wanted to. If they "could have shot it down," then why had they not, at least, gone through the routine procedure of intercepting it and checking it out? They had 27 minutes to do so and by that time, there had already been three crashes. In response to questioning about this bizarre chain of events, Vice President Dick Cheney deliberately tried to confuse interception with shooting down, trying to create the impression that nothing was done because officials were agonizingly biting their nails over whether to take the dramatic step of shooting down a plane full of innocent civilians.

Dick Cheney knows very well that interception, while giving the opportunity to shoot down the plane, does not commit one to that action. And at the same time that Cheney is spinning this smokescreen, we are being told that the only reason interception did not happen in the case of Flight 77 was because no fighters were available at Andrews. Moreover, how does Cheney's statement reconcile with NORAD's admission that interception is a routine procedure or the fact that there were standard FAA interception procedures for hijacked aircraft before 9/11 due to which between September 2000 and June 2001, the US military launched fighter aircraft on 67 occasions to chase suspicious air-

craft?[312]

There is no possible explanation for these events, nor for the extraordinarily garbled confusion of unconvincing official stories for cover up, except to conclude that someone very high up in the United States Air Force or the Bush administration was determined to nobble the air force and make sure that the attacks were successful. The former US federal crimes prosecutor, John Loftus, has said: "The information provided by European intelligence services prior to 9/11 was so extensive that it is no longer possible for either the CIA or FBI to assert a defense of incompetence."[313]

On September 11, the United States government also happened to be running a simulation of a plane crashing into a building.[314] In addition, a December 9, 2001 article by Scott Simmie in the *Toronto Star* stated that "Operation Northern Vigilance is called off. Any simulated information, what's known as an 'inject,' is purged from the screens."[315] This indicates that there were false radar blips inserted onto air traffic controllers' screens as part of the war game exercises. Moreover, there are indications that some of the major war games previously scheduled for October 2001 were moved up to September 11 by unknown authorities.[316] Interestingly, the Vice President was apparently in charge of *all* of the war games and coordinated the government's "response" to the attacks on September 11.[317]

And while the government has consistently stated that it does not know, where the aircraft were before they struck, a short video clip of Norman Mineta, the Secretary of Transportation's testimony before the 9/11 Commission shows that vice president Dick Cheney monitored Flight 77 for many miles as it approached the Pentagon.[318] The relevant part of Norman Mineta's testimony before the 9/11 Commission is reproduced below:

> Lee Hamilton: I want to focus for a moment on [the] presidential emergency operating centre. You were there for [a] good part of the day. I think you were

> there with the Vice President and we had that order given, I think it was by the president, that authorized the shooting down of commercial aircraft that are suspected to be controlled by terrorists. Were you there when that order was given?
>
> Norman Mineta: No I was not. I wasn't made aware of it. During the time when the airplane coming in to the Pentagon, there was a young man, who would come in and say to the Vice President, 'the plane is 50 miles out, the plane is 30 miles out,' and when it got to the plane is 10 miles down, the young man also said to the Vice President, 'do the orders still stand,' and the Voice President turned and whipped his neck around and said, "of course the orders stand, have you heard anything to the contrary? At the time I didn't know what that all meant,' and
>
> Lee Hamilton: The flight you are referring to is…?
>
> Norman Mineta: The flight that came into the Pentagon
>
> Lee Hamilton: Pentagon[319]

How could one of the most heavily defended buildings in the world have been successfully attacked, when the Vice President of the United States, in charge of counter-terrorism on 9/11, watched it approaching from many miles away? Additionally, considering the facts that the hijacked planes flew over numerous military bases before crashing, that there were war games going on at the same time, that there were stand down orders to the military,[320] and that war game proposals revolving around Osama and including "live-fly exercises" involving real planes[321]—later confirmed by official Department of Defense website[322]—were prepared before September 11, which scenario is more likely from a strictly logistical perspective: (1) An outsider sitting in a cave defeating the air defense system of the sole military superpower, or (2) Someone like Cheney—who on 9/11 apparently had full

control over all defense, war game and counter-terrorism powers—rigging and gaming the system?

As far as the scenario of the outsider sitting in the cave is concerned, Osama bin Laden and Dr. Ayman Al-Zawahiri could not even communicate between Kabul and Kandahar because the Taliban had confiscated all their communication equipment, except their wireless radios which could operate only within the Qandahar area. Seymour M. Hersh explained the inability of Osama to carry out 9/11 operation in these words:

> [A] number of intelligence officials have raised questions about Osama bin Laden's capabilities. "This guy sits in a cave in Afghanistan and he's running this operation?" one C.I.A. official asked. "It's so huge. He couldn't have done it alone." A senior military officer told me that because of the visas and other documentation needed to infiltrate team members into the United States, a major foreign intelligence service might also have been involved.[323]

For the attacks to have succeeded, it was necessary that actions be taken in the middle of the war games so that they would be confused with simulated attacks. For example, Cheney watched Flight 77 approach the Pentagon from many miles out, but instructed the military to do nothing. Could Osama have done that? Could the Taliban assist Osama in restricting the United States Air Force from carrying out normal defensive operations? Osama and company could not send U.S. fighter planes far off-course over the Atlantic Ocean in the middle of the 9/11 attacks,[324]— which someone in the higher commanding positions actually did—to neutralize the fighter planes' ability to intercept the "Al-Qaeda-hijacked" airliners. It does not tax one's intelligence too much to conclude that Osama and his sent-from-the-cave band of followers could not execute this degree of control over the United States military.

Moreover, air traffic controllers claim they were still tracking what they thought were hijacked planes long after all four of the real planes had crashed. This implies that false radar blips remained on their screens after all four planes went down, long

after the United States military claims they purged the phantom war-game-related radar signals. Could Osama have interfered with the full purging of false radar blips inserted as part of the war games? In other words, could Osama have overridden the purging process so that some false blips remained and confused air traffic controllers? The answer is clear: Impossible.

American researchers, such as Michael Rupert and David Ray Griffin, conclude that it is more likely that Cheney and/or other high-level U.S. government and military officials pulled the 9/11 trigger than that Osama did it. At the very least, they took affirmative steps to guarantee that the attacks succeeded.[325]

Bush's involvement

Being the lead crusader, the words and deeds of Bush indicate that he was fully aware of what was happening. To see the obvious, one does not need to rely on the so-called conspiracy theories and speculations. Bush's words are enough for rejecting the official story of 9/11.

Bush was in his presidential limousine when the first plane hit the WTC. He has twice remarked about how he saw the first impact on TV. On December 4, 2001, Bush was asked: "How did you feel when you heard about the terrorist attack?" Bush replied, "I was sitting outside the classroom waiting to go in, and I saw an airplane hit the tower—the TV was obviously on. I said, it must have been a horrible accident."[326] In fact, there was no live TV coverage of the impact available at that time.[327] Principal of Booker Elementary has also stated that there was no TV in either the corridor Bush came through or anywhere near the classroom he visited.

Two American researchers, Allan Wood and Paul Thompson, point out: "It's doubly strange why his advisors didn't correct him or—at the very least—stop him from repeating the same story only four weeks later. On January 5, 2002, Bush stated: "Well, I was sitting in a schoolhouse in Florida. My Chief of

Staff—well, first of all, when we walked into the classroom, I had seen this plane fly into the first building. There was a TV set on."[328] This means one of two things: a) Bush is lying about how he learned of the first impact, or b) there was a closed-circuit TV feed, not in the school, but in his presidential limousine on which he received a progress report. Bush's lying is itself evidence of his concealing what he actually knows. Someone with nothing to hide does not rely on lies in the first place.

The widely available video clip of Bush telling a goat story to kids damns the Bush administration, not because of what is in this video, but what *should* be in the video and is not there. Ostensibly, Bush and his chief of staff, Andrew Card, were reacting to a surprise attack on the United States. Interestingly, Bush did not act surprised and Card did not act like a man delivering an unexpected piece of news. He did not even wait for the president's response. Instead, Card clearly seems to have merely delivered a progress report to which he already knew Bush would not have an immediate response.[329]

At that time, two planes had crashed into the WTC. Two more were flying around the country, destinations unknown. Airports surrounded Booker Elementary School, one of them only four miles away. How did the Secret Service *know* it was safe for Bush to stay in Booker Elementary and make his scheduled broadcast to the nation at 9:30 a.m.?

American researchers did in depth analyses of Bush's words and deeds on September 11 and concluded that Bush has been lying to hide his "prior knowledge" of the event. For example, analysis at *What Really Happened* website concludes:

> The many accounts of what happened to Bush on 9/11 are riddled with disinformation of false threats, omitted details, fudged timing, and more. But around September 11, 2002, the heavily publicized first anniversary of the attacks, there was an obvious attempt to further rewrite the story….Despite the contradictory reports, no one in the mainstream media has yet demanded clarification of the many obvious inconsistencies and problems of the official version. Anyone

> even asking questions has been quickly insulted as anti-American, accused of bashing the president in a time of war, or branded a conspiracy nut.[330]

Any "prior knowledge" is actually a proof of involvement in the planning for the horrible crime of 9/11. Letting such a crime take place is proof that all subsequent actions, particularly the invasion of Afghanistan, were already planned and part of the broader game. It makes no sense for the Administration to have knowingly allowed the attacks on the WTC and the Pentagon, and even less sense for them to have actively contrived in it, unless this outrage was to be an excuse for "striking back".

Analysts' Perspective of 9/11

A quick review is important to establish that 9/11 was part of the broader plan for the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan, just as lies about weapons of mass destruction were paraded to pave the way for the invasion of Iraq. To suggest that Bush's inaction, lies, contradictions and deceptions on 9/11 are all simply the result of incompetence and confusion does not make any sense. Ignoring the available facts leaves the perpetrators of the crimes of 9/11 at large.

Current and former high-level U.S. and allied government officials have recently and publicly stated that the 9/11 attacks were not as they seemed or officially presented. For example, John Daly of UPI press International reported in the *Washington Times* that former chief economist for the Department of Labor during George W. Bush's first term, Morgan Reynolds, was now voicing serious doubts about the collapse of the World Trade Center on 9/11. Reynolds believes, "the official story about the collapse of the WTC is 'bogus' and that it is more likely that a controlled demolition destroyed the Twin Towers and adjacent Building No. 7."[331] Reynolds, who also served as director of the Criminal Justice Center at the National Center for Policy Analysis in Dallas and is now professor emeritus at Texas A&M University, ex-

plains:

> If demolition destroyed three steel skyscrapers at the World Trade Center on 9/11, then the case for an 'inside job' and a government attack on America would be compelling…It is hard to exaggerate the importance of a scientific debate over the cause of the collapse of the twin towers and building 7. If the official wisdom on the collapses is wrong, as I believe it is, then policy based on such erroneous engineering analysis is not likely to be correct either. The government's collapse theory is highly vulnerable on its own terms. Only professional demolition appears to account for the full range of facts associated with the collapse of the three buildings.[332]

Detailed analysis of Reynolds report, which the very pro-Bush, conservative newspaper could not ignore, is available for review at Lew Rockwell's web site.[333]

Many influential conservatives and former officials have also expressed doubts over the official story. For example, former Assistant Secretary of Treasury under Reagan, Paul Craig Roberts, claims, "neo-con agenda is as 'insane as Hitler and the Nazi Party when they invaded Russia in the dead of winter'."[334] Paul Craig Roberts is not an ordinary man. He is listed by *Who's Who in America* as one of the 1,000 most influential political thinkers in the world.

Similarly, former Director of the United States Star Wars space defense program in both Republican and Democratic Administrations, Dr. Robert M. Bowman, expresses his doubts and asks some unanswered questions in a long statement on his web site.[335]

A former German cabinet minister, Mr. von Bulow, believes that the CIA staged 9/11 to justify the subsequent wars of aggression in Afghanistan and Iraq. His book, *The CIA and September 11*, has sold more than 100,000 copies, a vast print run for Germany. "If what I say is right, the whole U.S. government should end up behind bars," Mr. von Bulow told The *Daily Telegraph* at his home in Bonn. "They have hidden behind a veil of secrecy and destroyed the evidence—that they invented the story

of 19 Muslims working within Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda—in order to hide the truth of their own covert operation".[336] Mr. von Bulow concludes:

> What I saw on September 11 was a perfectly executed act that could have happened only with the support of intelligence services, and whoever controlled it must have known [it] could only bring harm to the Muslim world…I'm convinced that the U.S. apparatus must have played a role and my theory is backed up by the [Washington] government's refusal to present any proof whatsoever of what happened.[337]

Former MI5 agent David Shayler said that his suspicions about the official story of 9/11 were first aroused when the usual route of crime scene investigation was impeded with the immediate removal and shipping off all debris to China:

> It is in fact a criminal offence to interfere with a crime scene and yet in the case of 9/11 all the metal from the buildings is shipped out to China, there are no forensications done on that metal. Now that to me suggests they never wanted anybody to look at that metal because it was not going to provide the evidence they wanted to show people that it was Al-Qaeda.[338]

Besides many current and former high-level U.S. and allied government officials, numerous experts have stated that the collapse of the world trade centers looked like controlled demolition. For example, a professor of physics from Brigham Young University, Steven E. Jones, recently stated that the World Trade Centers were brought down by controlled demolition.[339]

In a 9,000-word article, which will be published in the book, *The Hidden History of 9/11*, by Elsevier Jones argues the three buildings collapsed nearly symmetrically, falling down into their footprints, a phenomenon associated with "controlled demolition," that no steel-frame building, before or after the WTC buildings, has ever collapsed due to fire; and the WTC 7, which was not hit by hijacked planes, collapsed in 6.6 seconds, just .6 of a second longer than it would take an object dropped from the roof to hit the ground. Being a physicist, Jones asks: "Where

is the delay that must be expected due to conservation of momentum, one of the foundational laws of physics?...That is, as falling upper floors strike lower floors—and intact steel support columns—the fall must be significantly impeded by the impacted mass. . . . How do the upper floors fall so quickly, then, and still conserve momentum in the collapsing buildings?" The paradox, he says, "is easily resolved by the explosive demolition hypothesis, whereby explosives quickly removed lower-floor material, including steel support columns, and allow near free-fall-speed collapses." "These observations were not analyzed by FEMA, NIST nor the 9/11 Commission," he says.[340]

Matthys Levy, co-author of *Why Buildings Fall Down* and an expert on buildings collapse, says controlled demolitions make buildings fall straight down (as opposed to falling over like a tree), because the vertical columns are destroyed simultaneously by explosives, and "that's exactly what it looked like and that's what happened" on 9/11.[341]

The head of a national demolition association, Mike Taylor of the National Association of Demolition Contractors in Doylestown, Pennsylvania stated that the collapse of the towers looked like a "classic controlled demolition."[342] Bill Manning, editor of Fire Engineering trade magazine, called investigation into collapse "a half-baked farce."[343]

Numerous firefighters, law enforcement officers, and other credible witnesses have also discredited the Administration's version of why the World Trade Center buildings collapsed on 9/11.[344] For example, a reporter for *USA Today*, Jack Kelley, told in a live interview to Laurin Ashbrun from the crime scene of 9/11 in New York that the FBI believed there were bombs in the basement of the buildings, which brought the Towers down.[345] The New York Fire Department Chief of Safety stated there were "bombs" and "secondary devices", which caused the explosions in the buildings.[346]

The New York City firefighters, who witnessed the attacks, stated

that it looked like there were bombs in the buildings.[347] Firefighter, Louie Cacchioli, 51, who was assigned to Engine 47 in Harlem, New York City, stated: "On the last trip up a bomb went off. We think there were bombs set in the building."[348] MSNBC reporter, Rick Francis, also reported that police had found a suspicious device "and they fear it could be something that might lead to another explosion" and the police officials believe "that one of the explosions at the World Trade Center . . . may have been caused by a van that was parked in the building that may have had some kind of explosive device in it, so their fear is that there may have been explosive devices planted either in the building or in the adjacent area."[349] Another New York City firefighter stated, "the south tower . . . exploded . . . At that point a debate began to rage because the perception was that the building looked like it had been taken out with charges . . . many people had felt that possibly explosives had taken out World Trade."[350]

A *Wall Street Journal* reporter is quoted in a 2002 book by Newseum, *Running Toward Danger: Stories Behind the Breaking News of 9/11*, as saying: "I heard this metallic roar, looked up and saw what I thought was just a peculiar sight of individual floors, one after the other exploding outward. I thought to myself, "My God, they're going to bring the building down." And they, whoever they are, had set charges . . . . I saw the explosions."[351]

Teresa Veliz, a facilities manager for a software development company in the north tower "was convinced that there were bombs planted all over the place and someone was sitting at a control panel pushing detonator buttons."[352]

Indeed, Larry Silverstein, the leaseholder of the World Trade Center, said in a PBS documentary that Building 7 was "pulled" on September 11.[353] "Pulling" is a construction industry term for "intentionally demolishing," as shown in this PBS interview discussing the demolition of the World Trade Center building six weeks after 9/11.[354] David Ray Griffin draws three major con-

clusions to prove complicity of the U.S. government in 9/11: 1) No forensic investigation and quick removal of evidence prove at least official complicity in cover-up; 2) If involved in demolition, even of just WTC-7, still it proves foreknowledge and active planning by intelligence agencies; and 3) Failure to intercept planes in direct contradiction of standing regulations points to involvement at least by the Pentagon in attacks.[355]

Bush Administration's Unusual Response

Instead of investigating mountains of facts, eye-witness statements and research reports, a fraction of which is mentioned above, the United States government concluded through its 9/11 Commission that it was Osama Bin Laden and his terrorists who had razed three buildings to the ground with just two planes.

A quick look at the government's investigations reveals that not only has there never been a real investigation, but that the behavior of government representatives in willfully obstructing all attempts at investigation comprises evidence of guilt. Specifically, in all criminal trials, evasiveness, obstruction, and destruction of evidence constitute strong circumstantial evidence that the accused is guilty or, at the very least, not to be believed. September 11 is no different. Indeed, there are even indications, as we will see below, that false evidence was planted to deflect attention from the real perpetrators.

Initially, Bush and Cheney took the rare step of personally requesting that the United States Congress limit all 9/11 investigation solely to "intelligence failures."[356] As a result, there has never been a congressional probe into any of the real issues involved. The administration also opposed the creation of a 9/11 commission.[357] Once widows of the 9/11 victims forced the administration to do a proper investigation of the 9/11 events, the administration formed a 9/11 Commission and appointed Philip Zelikow as its executive director. Zelikow is considered as an administration insider, who served on President Bush's transition team in

2000-2001. After George Bush took office, Zelikow was named to a position on the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, and worked on other task forces and commissions as well. He is also an old colleague of Condoleezza Rice.[358]

After appointing the Commission, the government starved it of funds (providing a fraction of the funds used to investigate Monica Lewinsky),[359] failed to provide crucial documents,[360] refused to require high-level officials to testify under oath and to allow Bush and Cheney to be questioned jointly.[361] A compromise was met such that George W. Bush did eventually meet with the Commission on April 29, 2004, but only under stringent conditions. Bush had to have Dick Cheney at his side, testifying at the same time; testimony was given in private and not under oath; no press coverage was allowed; and no recordings or transcripts were made of what they said.[362] A 9/11 family advocate was blunt in stating, "Bush has done everything in his power to squelch this [9/11] commission and prevent it from happening."[363]

More importantly, the 9/11 Commission virtually refused to examine any evidence that contradicted the official version of events. As just two of numerous examples, the 9/11 Commission report does not even mention the collapse of World Trade Center building 7 or any explosions in the buildings (the word "explosion" does not appear in the report). The Commission also refused to allow any firefighters to testify publicly.[364] These were the eye-witnesses at the crime scene.

Indeed, former 9/11 Commissioner Max Cleland resigned in disgust from the Commission. Cleland, the former Democratic Senator from Georgia, objected strenuously to the deal restricting access to White House documents. "Bush is scamming America," he declared. "Let's chase this rabbit into the ground here," Cleland said in an interview.[365] "They had a plan to go to war, and when 9/11 happened that's what they did. They went to war." He called this a "national scandal." The Commission was barely a blip on the mass-media radar. Aside from the *Salon* interview,

Cleland's revolt was treated to cursory coverage in a total of two other outlets: the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. In the midst of an apparent news black-out, followers of the Commission process were not even sure if Cleland had resigned.[366]

David Ray Griffin shows in his well-documented book, *The 9/11 Commission Report: Omissions And Distortions,* that the 9/11 Commission was a whitewash. According to law professor Richard Falk of Princeton, Ray Griffin "establishes himself, alongside Seymour Hersh, the Pulitzer prize-winning reporter, as America's number one bearer of unpleasant, yet necessary, public truths."[367]

Contrary to commonsense

Without waiting for any investigation or inquiry reports about 9/11, the United States administration decided to invade and occupy Afghanistan because of the Taliban's alleged crime of harboring the culprits of 9/11.

If we believe that the invisible United States investigations were so effective that they pinpointed the culprits within days and its military was so razor sharp as to implement preparations for the attack on Afghanistan in 25 days, how could we then simultaneously believe that the same country so miserably failed in instituting routine domestic security measures? Such a staggering and inconceivable level of inconsistency and incompetence is simply inexplicable.

The two scenarios are mutually exclusive. To give any credence whatsoever to the possibility that the highly successful and well-organized attack on Afghanistan was managed in just 25 days as a response to 9/11, we must then, on the balance of the evidence, accept the events of 9/11 as conclusive proof of an inside job. This creates the thorny problem of why there was a retaliatory military response to something in which the United States authorities were themselves involved. Or, alternatively, if we give credence to the possibility that the events of 9/11 were merely innocent incompetence on a staggering scale, and no in-

siders were involved, we must be highly suspicious that the attack on Afghanistan was already into a well-advanced stage of planning by 9/11. In this case, the United States expects the world to believe that the most spectacular terrorist attacks in history just happened—by co-incidence and without any inside logistical and technical support. The world is also expected to believe that these attacks took place at the best possible time from a propaganda point of view, to justify a war against Afghanistan.

If we wish to believe that United States authorities are innocent of any involvement in 9/11, and that the war on Afghanistan is a genuine response to the events of 9/11, we find ourselves, in every aspect so far examined, in the awkward position of having to continually choose, time after time, the story which common sense tells us is the least likely.

There appears to be no rational or objective basis for suggesting with any confidence that 9/11 was the work of just a few angry Arabs and that 9/11 was not part of a pre-planned war on Afghanistan. The only reason for refusing to do so seems to be based on preconceived bias rather than a genuine attempt to examine the facts objectively.

If it is claimed that the evidence about the involvement of insiders is over-ruled by a belief that no country would do that to its own citizens, then it must be pointed out that the contemplation of terrorist attacks on U.S. citizens by the CIA is a matter of public record. The previously classified "Northwoods" document demonstrates that in 1962 the United States military high command and the CIA seriously considered the possibility of carrying out terrorist attacks against U.S. citizens in order to blame them on Cuba and, thereby, justify the invasion of that country.[368]

The problem of the mutually exclusive scenarios regarding the competence, or lack of that, concerning the United States Air Force, repeats itself in relation to U.S. intelligence services. How could it be that the United States administration and the whole defensive mechanism had no warning whatsoever of the largest,

most difficult and complicated terrorist attack in the history of the world, yet they were able to nail the culprit, almost beyond doubt, in less than a day, and beyond *any* doubt in two days? If the authorities genuinely had no warning of the attack, we can only assume that they were lying when, within two days, they claimed to be so confident of Osama's crime that they started threatening to attack Afghanistan in response.

If we agree with the progressive left that the attacks were carried out by Muslim fanatics in response to the U.S. foreign policy but there was some forewarning of the attack—even if these were not specific—the inaction of the President and the United States Air Force on the morning of 9/11 is even a more conclusive confirmation of an inside job rather than incompetence.

Until a week before the attack, the location within the Pentagon that was hit housed many important senior staff. Apparently, by coincidence, a major reshuffle occurred and all the important personnel and operations were moved to the other side of the building. [369] This curious side to the Pentagon attack presents strong supporting evidence for the allegation of an inside job. Had the plane flown into the Pentagon a week earlier, it would have crashed into exactly the right spot to cripple the Pentagon's key operations. This is powerful evidence that someone very high up in the Pentagon knew that the attack was coming. Otherwise, it means choosing the least likely explanation based on a preconceived conclusion. How many times are we prepared to do that?

The unsubstantiated allegations against the Taliban

So far the United States government could not come up with even a shred of evidence about the Taliban's involvement in 9/11. The only justification the warlords in the United States have is that the Taliban harbored terrorists. We had, in fact, up until mid-December 2001, nothing but the continual repetition of Osama's name as if, by repeating something often enough, the neoconservatives and their allies can somehow make it true. As-

sociation with Al Qaeda established the Taliban's crime.

Then came the videotape on December 13, 2001. Besides being a complete joke, the tape proves that the United States administration was deliberately trying to pin the blame on Osama, so as to go after the Taliban. The quality of the video was very poor and the authenticity of the tape was questioned right away, which annoyed Bush to the extent that he made the following comment during a brief photo opportunity with the prime minister of Thailand: "It is preposterous for anybody to think that this tape is doctored. That's just a feeble excuse to provide weak support for an incredibly evil man."[370] He added: "Those who contend it's a farce or a fake are hoping for the best about an evil man. This is Bin Laden unedited. This is... the Bin Laden who murdered the people. This is a man who sent innocent people to their death." The foreign secretary, Jack Straw, insisted there was "no doubt it is the real thing."[371] Such a defense at the most high level further confirmed that the video was specifically produced to cover up the real culprits and pave the way for legitimizing the war to dislodge the Taliban.

To be honest, it is preposterous to suggest that this videotape could be authentic, but let us have a look at it anyway. This is an age of technology where film of crystal clear quality can show Forest Gump shaking hands with John F. Kennedy, where simulated cyclones can be animated into a movie set, where dinosaurs, extinct for 200 million years, can be shown so clearly that you would swear they were there. All this is done with such startling reality that the only way we know it is not true is that we have pre-existing knowledge that it is a fake. Here are five different pictures of Osama. Anyone can pick the odd one out.[372]

Even intelligent kids from elementary school would be able to tell that Osama 'E' stands out like a sore thumb, and this is the man confessing to committing 9/11 attacks on the "lucky find" tape. Between the nose and the cheeks, it is clear that this man is *not* Osama, let alone the visibly different eyebrow, eyes, mouth and beard.[373]

Interestingly, in the video released by the United States government, Osama 'E' appears to write notes with his right hand, yet the FBI's description of Osama[374] indicates he is left-handed. Osama 'E' wears a ring on his right hand, which does not appear on other confirmed photos of Osama (e.g. Osama 'B'). Another man is seen wearing a large gold ring in the video. Since Islam forbids the wearing of gold rings[375] it shows neither he, nor Osama 'E' have any devotion to Islam.

If the tape is real, did the United States authorities edit it? The US authorities have been forced to admit that the "translation" they have released is doctored. A spokesman of the United States Department of Defense said, "The tape is *not* a verbatim translation of every word spoken during the meeting, but it does convey the messages and the information flow." The Pentagon also added, "The translation is what it is. We made it very clear that it's not a literal translation."[376] However, the question is, did the Pentagon work at a more complete translation? Has a full transcript been released to the public? The answer to both these questions is obviously negative.

The timeline of when and where the tape released by the United States on December 13 was allegedly made, and where it was allegedly found is also somewhat perplexing, although possible. Allegedly, it was made in Kandahar on November 9, 2001—long after the United States bombing was in operation—and found in a house in Jalalabad, which fell to anti-Taliban forces on November 14, 2001. This means that there were only four days in which the newly made tape could have been taken from Kandahar to

Jalalabad, which was already under fierce siege and serious threat. So, we are asked to believe that upon making the tape, someone almost immediately, for no apparent reason, took it to Jalalabad, which was about to fall, and then conveniently left it there, to be found by anti-Taliban forces. It is not impossible, but it does have the strong smell of another setup to pin the blame of 9/11 on the Taliban: Osama was a convenient scapegoat, thanks to his stay in Afghanistan and his calls for *Jihad* against the United States.

On December 27, 2001, a second video containing the pale skinned and very real Osama 'C' was broadcast on Al Jazeera.[377] The tape was reportedly made on November 19, 2001[378]—that is ten days after the "lucky find" tape was reportedly made. Are we supposed to believe that Osama lost weight and that his skin, hair and beard changed in ten days?

The broadcast of the tape caught the United States government completely off-guard. The Bush administration dismissed the recording as sick propaganda. One White House aide said, "He could have made the video and then ordered that it be released in the event of his death."[379] This was a very telling response in view of those analysts who believe that Osama is dead and the United States government is perpetuating "a dead nemesis."[380]

Furthermore, Osama's comments on the November 19 tape, aired by Al Jazeera,[381] caused quite a stir because they contradicted the "confession" video. According to Toby Harnden of the *Telegraph*, "American officials argued that bin Laden's frequent references to U.S. support for Israel were a bogus justification for his terrorism because in the 'dinner party' tape of a private conversation there was no mention of the Middle East."[382]

This is very odd indeed because in Osama's September 28, 2001 denial of involvement in the 9/11 attacks, he had plenty to say about the United States and Israel:

> This system is totally in control of the American-Jews, whose first priority is Israel, not the United States. It is clear that the American

> people are themselves the slaves of the Jews and are forced to live according to the principles and laws laid by them. So, the punishment should reach Israel. In fact, it is Israel, which is giving a blood bath to innocent Muslims and the U.S. is not uttering a single word.[383]

Moreover, Osama's views have been consistent about the problems caused by Israel since 1998:

> We say to the Americans as people and to American mothers, if they cherish their lives and if they cherish their sons, they must elect an American patriotic government that caters to their interests, not the interests of the Jews.[384]

Not only do the real Osama and Osama on the "lucky find" tape look totally different, they also write with different hands, have different levels of devotion to faith and have different political views and motivations. The deception and lies do not get any more obvious than this.

There is clearly a good reason to doubt the "lucky find" tape. There is excessive noise on the audio track, making it impossible to properly hear what is being said. Given that the tape was recorded in an area supposedly devoid of audio urban signature, there should have been little ambient noise, yet the speech is masked with a great deal of noise.

There are very good reasons to suspect that the tape released by the United States on December 13, 2001 is not what the United States Government claims it to be. The translation of Osama's statements has him stating that the hijackers did not know they were about to die, yet letters, which the FBI claim to have found written by the hijackers, indicate the exact opposite.[385]

Even hard line secular Pakistanis were unconvinced by the "lucky find" tape of Osama bin Laden. Iqbal Haider, a former senator from former prime minister Benazir Bhutto's government, said he found it hard to believe that Osama would allow himself to be filmed confessing to the crime in the middle of the United States bombing, particularly after his public denials of any involvement. "It is hard to believe that a man who masterminds

the September attacks with such secrecy and finesse could be that stupid and imprudent," he said. "I hate Osama and the Taliban because they inflicted incalculable damage on Muslims, but it is hard to digest that he can be such a fool."[386]

Even those who considered the December 13, 2001 tape as genuine, started to doubt release of such tapes when they started to pour out at strategic timing. One of the Osama audiotapes was released just two days before the first anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. Its message actually preceded Bush's first U.N. appeals on Iraq by a few days, as well as similar lobbying before the U.S. Congress. An audiotape, which was claimed to be from Osama, helped to cement U.S. claims of links between Al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein. This tape was released in February 2003, while the U.S. lobbied heavily for a second U.N. resolution on IRAQ, and just a month before the war began. Another tape emerged later the same year while Bush tried to win financial aid from Asian countries for Iraq's reconstruction. This one also came before a donors' conference in Madrid just the following week. Another tape was released in October 2004, just three days before elections in the United States. Yet another tape was released on January 19, 2005 with the content that clearly supports Bush's argument. Hours after the tape's release, CIA officials said it is a "genuine message" from Osama bin Laden. Some analysts, including those at BBC, were quick to point to the perfect timing and content of the latest tape.

> The commander-in-chief has been under intense pressure in recent weeks, accused of trampling on civil liberties in pursuit of terror suspects. His defence has been that America is a nation at war. So Bin Laden's latest threats to launch new attacks on the US will only serve to underline this argument. The White House will also cite the tape when trying to convince allies abroad that the use of tough tactics is justified - even when civilians are killed, as in last week's air raid in Pakistan. [387]

"It was like a voice from the grave", said Bruce Lawrence, a Duke professor, who analyzed more than 20 complete speeches

and interviews of the Al Qaeda chief for his recent book *Messages to the World: The Statements of Osama bin Laden*.[388] Lawrence believes faulty Pakistani intelligence led to the strike and the civilian deaths, and the tape was leaked by Pakistani authorities to divert attention from their mistake.[389] Pakistani authorities are working hand in glove with the CIA. That is why even Al-Jazeera now believes tape was faked by CIA.[390]

Let us assume for a moment that the December 13, 2001 tape is genuine. In that case, the war was launched more than two months before presenting the world with such evidence, which had absolutely nothing to do with the Taliban or their government. There is no mention to the Taliban or their support in planning the attack.

Even if the December 13, 2001 tape is genuine, it only serves to prove that Osama was not the mastermind behind the attacks. It would merely indicate that he had some prior knowledge of it, which does not make him responsible for the attacks. He states (if we accept the tape as stating anything) that he was told about the impending attack five days before it happened.

Although Osama told this scribe, during an interview in mid-August 2001 that, "We are about to do something," his immediate reaction after the 9/11 attacks—that he supports the attack but he did not do it[391]—shows that he was clearly setup. He was told through Arabs, who were knowingly or unknowingly working with the U.S. authorities involved in the 9/11 operation that they were "about to do something." The objective was to force the loudmouthed Osama into talking about the attacks before time so that implicating him would not be a problem after the planned 9/11 events.

The set-up to implicate Osama seems to span a long period of time because, according to Ayman Al-Zawahiri, Osama made the same statement of "we are about to do something," to a journalist from a Scandinavian country. That is what prompted Taliban authorities to restrict journalists from taking cameras or other

recording devices with them while interviewing Osama because such statements were creating problems for them at a time when they looked forward to international legitimacy.

The set up theory is further supported by the fact that back in 1999 a US national intelligence council report noted that "al-Qaida suicide bombers could crash-land an aircraft packed with high explosives into the Pentagon, the headquarters of the CIA, or the White House".[392] Furthermore, at least 11 countries provided advance warning to the US of the 9/11 attacks. Two senior Mossad experts were sent to Washington in August 2001 to alert the CIA and FBI to a cell of 200 terrorists said to be preparing a big operation.[393] The list they provided included the names of four of the 9/11 hijackers, none of whom was arrested. This is not a sign of incompetence. It only proves that the initial propagation of information was done to set up a trap and convincingly hold Osama and company responsible for the attacks planned by the insiders. Actually those who within the U.S. intelligence community were responsible for receiving and acting on the many foreign warnings received prior to 9-11, were most probably the ones who planted the information about the possible attacks to prepare a mindset for holding Osama responsible for the pre-planned attacks. The proof of this lies in the United States' government hiding behind the façade of incompetence and the total lack of action before 9/11 and during the period while 9/11 events were unfolding.

Dr. Zawahiri's sharing information about Osama's statements (and statements of Osama on the "lucky find" tape, if we assume that the tape is genuine) suggest that Osama came to know about the impending attack days or weeks before it actually happened. It shows, neither Osama nor the Taliban could possibly have been the main organizers. Instead, the relationship between the Taliban and their Arab guests were not as friendly and deep as presented by the Western media. The Taliban had actually confiscated communication equipment from Osama and his fellows,

as mentioned earlier. This is further confirmed by Mullah Omar's statement reported by Reuters on September 19, 2001:

> We have told America that we have taken all resources from Osama and he cannot contact the outside world. And we have told America that neither the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan or Osama are involved in the American events. But it is sad that America does not listen to our word.[394]

This is further confirmed by Dr. Zawahiri's statements. He was not satisfied with the Taliban's attitude at all. He told this scribe at the time of interview with Osama a few weeks before 9/11 that the Taliban do not listen to him and Osama at all. In his words: "When we give them [the Taliban] any suggestion, they simply give us a smile as if we don't know anything."

Assuming that the "lucky find" tape is genuine, we must note that it shows that Osama was informed five days before the attack. The question is: Who told him about it? Presumably, the real culprits behind 9/11 used Arabic speaking agents, or double agents, to send Osama these messages to implicate him like the thousands of drug-related conspiracy cases in the US in which innocent people are implicated and punished. For example, note what Arnold S. Trebach states in his book, *The Great Drug War*:

> In many of these cases, the DEA allowed some of its informants to traffic in drugs in exchange for turning in their friends and supplying other information. In too many cases, Gieringer claimed, DEA agents themselves directly engaged in trafficking.[395]

This is a routine in the United States, which is not limited to drug cases. James Bovard gives numerous examples in his famous book: *Lost Rights*.

> During the past fifteen years, law enforcement officials have set up thousands of elaborate schemes to entrap people for "crimes" such as buying plant supplies, asking for a job or shooting a deer. Dozens of private accountants have become double agents, receiving government kickbacks for betraying their clients to IRS.[396]

That is how Bank of Credit Commerce and International (BCCI) was trapped[397] and that is how the trap was set up to im-

plicate Osama bin Laden and to dislodge the Taliban. There was no dearth of such agents. For example, Canadian police arrested Ali Mohamed, a high-ranking al-Qaeda figure. However, they released him when the FBI confirmed he was a US agent.[398] Even Saeed Sheikh, who is alleged to have sent money to the alleged lead hijacker, Mohamed Atta, was reported to be a CIA agent. The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review suggested that not only was Saeed closely tied to both the ISI and al-Qaeda, but he could be working for the CIA: "There are many in Musharraf's government who believe that Saeed Sheikh's power comes not from the ISI, but from his connections with our own CIA. The theory is that ... Saeed Sheikh was bought and paid for."[399]

There is evidence, which shows that the Arabs used in the 9/11 operation were working with the U.S. government. A series of articles suggest that at least seven of the so-called 9/11 hijackers were trained in US military bases.[400] The *New York Times* reported: "The Defense Department said Mr. Atta had gone to the International Officers School at Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama; Mr. al-Omari to the Aerospace Medical School at Brooks Air Force Base in Texas; and Mr. al-Ghamdi to the Defense Language Institute at the Presidio in Monterey, Calif."[401]

Ahmed Alnami, Ahmed Alghamdi, and Saeed Alghamdi even listed the Naval Air Station in Pensacola, Florida as their permanent address on their driver's licenses.[402] Hamza Alghamdi was also connected to the Pensacola base.[403] According to Guy Gugliotta and David S. Fallis, *Washington Post* Staff Writers:

> Two of 19 suspects named by the FBI, Saeed Alghamdi and Ahmed Alghamdi, have the same names as men listed at a housing facility for foreign military trainees at Pensacola. Two others, Hamza Alghamdi and Ahmed Alnami, have names similar to individuals listed in public records as using the same address inside the base. In addition, a man named Saeed Alghamdi graduated from the Defense Language Institute at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, while men with the same names as two other hijackers, Mohamed Atta and Abdulaziz Alomari, appear as graduates of the U.S. International Officers School

at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., and the Aerospace Medical School at Brooks Air Force Base in San Antonio, respectively.[404]

A defense official further confirmed that Saeed Alghamdi was a former Saudi fighter pilot who attended the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California.[405] Abdulaziz Alomari attended Brooks Air Force Base Aerospace Medical School in San Antonio, Texas.[406] A defense official confirmed Atta is a former Saudi fighter pilot who graduated from the US International Officers School at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama.[407] The media drops the story after the Air Force makes a not-very-definitive statement, saying that while the names are similar, "we are probably not talking about the same people."[408] However, the military fails to provide any information about the individuals whose names supposedly match those of the alleged hijackers, making it impossible to confirm or refute the story. In Daniel Hopsicker's view: "How easy was it to tell the Pentagon was lying? Think about it. It is neither plausible nor logical that the reports were false because of seven separate cases of mistaken identity. One or two, maybe. But seven? No way."[409]

Using Arabs as agents to entrap Osama bin Laden and force him into making rash statements of attacks on the United States before 9/11 is further confirmed by the 9/11 researchers. Daniel Hopsicker concludes in his book *Welcome to Terrorland* that rather than being a fundamentalist Muslim, Mohamed Atta better fits the profile of a member of Arab society's privileged elite and also a spy. Amongst many oddities contradicting the 'fundamentalist' label and the description of a person determined to destroy the United States is the fact that his e-mail list included the names of several employees of U.S. defense contractors.[410]

Deciding to investigate for himself, Hopsicker phoned the Pentagon and spoke with the public information officer who helped write and disseminate their original denial of the story of hijacker identities. From the interaction with the officer, Hopsicker concludes that somewhere in the Defense Department a list exists

with the names of September 11 terrorists who received training at U.S. military facilities. The officer "just didn't [had] the authority to release it."[411] Furthermore, Hopsicker spoke to a woman who works at the Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama:

"I have a girlfriend who recognized Mohamed Atta. She met him at a party at the Officer's Club," she told us. "The reason she swears it was him here is because she didn't just meet him and say hello. After she met him she went around and introduced him to the people that were with her. So she knows it was him." Saudis were a highly visible presence at Maxwell Air Force Base, she said. "There were a lot of them living in an upscale complex in Montgomery. They had to get all of them out of here. "They were all gone the day after the attack."[412] Despite it being a key 9/11 crime scene, there has been a surprising absence of investigations into the goings on in Venice, Florida. In fact, to the contrary, "the FBI's full attention seemed to have been engaged—not in investigating what had happened—but in suppressing evidence and even intimidating the witnesses who had seen and heard things that fly in the face of the 'official story.'"[413] For example, Mohamed Atta's former girlfriend Amanda Keller says that even after she left Venice, the FBI called on her every other day for several months, telling her not to talk to anybody. Similarly, a woman called Stephanie Frederickson who lived next-door to Atta and Keller in Venice reported how she and other residents at the same apartment building were harassed and intimidated by FBI agents, to prevent them from talking to reporters.

The FBI arrived in Venice just hours after the 9/11 attacks. A former manager from Huffman Aviation said: "They were outside my house four hours after the attack." He added: "My phones have been bugged, they still are. How did the FBI get here so soon? Ask yourself: How'd they got here so soon?"[414] Within 24 hours of the attacks, records from Huffman Aviation, where Atta and al-Shehhi attended, were escorted aboard a C-130 cargo plane to Washington by Florida governor and brother of the

president Jeb Bush. Similarly, according to a sergeant with the Venice police, the FBI took all their files and flew them to Washington with Jeb Bush aboard. (Presumably this was on the same flight as the Huffman records.) Hopsicker notes: "The important point was that taking files was a lot different than copying them. The FBI wasn't taking any chances."[415] He concludes: "There is a demonstrable, provable, and massive federally-supervised cover-up in place in Florida."[416]

Lifestyle of the alleged hijackers—actually agents working with the U.S. authorities—also prove that they were not religious fanatics or radicals, bent upon sacrificing their lives for Islam. Just days before 9/11, Atta and Marwan al-Shehhi (another of the alleged suicide-pilots) spent the evening drinking heavily at a bar in Fort Lauderdale. The bar's manager later told reporters that the men "got wasted," drinking "Stolichnaya and orange juice, and Captain Morgan's spiced rum and Coke." Bartender Patricia Idrissi concurred, saying: "Atta drank Stoli vodka for three straight hours. They were wasted."[417] Amanda Keller describes a typical night out at a club with Atta: "Marwan [al-Shehhi] was in the reggae room drinking with a bunch of women at the bar, there were a lot of women around him, and he was just flaunting money." As Hopsicker points out: "It's one thing to hear Atta described as living it up with wine, women and song. But Marwan flaunting money at the bar pretty much puts the lie to the 'Islamic fundamentalist' tag."[418] So much for the "Islamic fundamentalists" who hated American "way of life" and were ready to give their life in a global *Jihad* against the United States.

The December 13 "lucky find" tape was as much part of the entrapment process as could be one or more of the hijackers because according to the *Newsweek*, five of the hijackers received training at secure US military installations in the 1990s.[419] In all the frenzied outrage against Osama and his Al-Qaeda "network" that this convenient tape has engendered, it seems that very few people have actually viewed the tape carefully enough to ask the

important question that flows from Osama's "admission" of having been told about the attack five days in advance. Then who did actually organize 9/11 attacks?

Irrespective of the existence of this tape, if we think clearly and logically about the likelihood of Osama being involved, we actually find that it is impossible. If sending information to Osama about the impending attacks—which he shared with journalists well before 9/11—was not an attempt to trap him like the thousands of drug entrapment cases in the United States, then the possibilities left are: a) he was involved in the capacity of collusion with the United States authorities or, b) at best, he was involved in the context of the United States knowing all along what he was up to and deliberately allowing him to do it, so as to reap benefits of such attacks and achieve greater objectives rather than undermining the terrorist plan. That is why no other suspect for 9/11 was ever even contemplated, however briefly (even though the United States has plenty of enemies). An impartial, real inquiry would have considered a list of suspects, such as Saddam Hussein, Kaddafi, Castro, a Palestinian group, Russia, China, local right-wing militias, anti-globalization activists, Syria or someone completely unknown and unexpected? The list of possibilities that would spring to mind would be huge. Osama would have only been one of these. This becomes downright suspicious if we think clearly about the logistics of actually setting up a real inquiry into the events of 9/11.

Let us put it in context. It took the US authorities 18 years to catch the Unabomber[420] and the persons who allegedly masterminded the 9/11 operation along with the 19 "hijackers" became known to the United States government and media within a few hours. Similarly, they identified Afghanistan as the target within days. Later on, a CIA official, AB Krongard, said, catching Osama was not even important.[421] Krongard was the CIA's third most senior executive. It confirms that the objective of the 9/11 operation was none other than invading Afghanistan and

dislodging the Taliban.

Preconceived conclusions

The Taliban were the target, Osama was the ruse. Osama's statements against the United States were the perfect excuse. September 11 was an excellent opportunity. The public was already brainwashed with years of anti-Taliban propaganda. Of course, the Taliban were not angels. They definitely had weaknesses both in their approach and in practice. Undoubtedly, they made mistakes and the junior officials of the Taliban government went to some extremes in implementing some provisions of the law. However, this is not something that could ever justify a war of aggression and occupation of Afghanistan. Even today, if we compare the crimes of the Taliban with those of the Zionists in Israel and the modern day fascists in the United States, the Taliban's crimes would definitely mean nothing. Does this give the rest of the world justification to declare wars of aggression on the US and Israel to remove the sitting governments and transform the governing system to avoid such crimes against humanity in the future?

On the other hand, the years' long propaganda against the Taliban played a key role in convincing the public soon after the 9/11 attacks that the Taliban's guilt by association is good enough to justify a war of aggression on Afghanistan. Even in the crucial 25 days between 9/11 and October 7, 2001, the Taliban were not blamed for masterminding or carrying out attacks on the United States. Yet without any formal inquiry of the crime, a devastating war was launched on a sovereign state.

A real inquiry would not begin and end in the CNN or ABC chambers of biased commentators. It would require people with investigative, or at least aviation expertise, people with appropriate security clearances, people who might be useful in this context, and people with expertise in engineering to examine the exact nature of the collapse of three WTC buildings, which col-

lapsed straight down in just 6.6 seconds.[422] As discussed earlier, for the building to collapse in this fashion, all of the load bearing supports would have had to fail at exactly the same time, which is not possible with any number of planes hitting the top floors.

No official inquiry has been conducted into the collapse aspect of three WTC buildings. The claim that the collapse was the result of a fire requires the fire be equally distributed throughout the entire floor of the building, providing equal heat for an equal amount of time, so that all the load bearings portions would fail at the exact same moment. No one can find this plausible.

Larry Silverstein, the controller of the destroyed WTC complex, stated in a PBS documentary that he and the New York Fire Department decided jointly to demolish WTC 7 late in the afternoon of 9/11, 2001. Silverstein makes the following statement in the documentary "America Rebuilds," which was originally aired on September 10, 2002:

> I remember getting a call from the fire department commander, telling me that they were not sure they were gonna be able to contain the fire, and I said, 'We've had such terrible loss of life, maybe the smartest thing to do is pull it.' And they made that decision to pull and we watched the building collapse.[423]

The above statement demonstrates that WTC 7 was indeed demolished. In the circumstances surrounding 9/11 in New York, pulling a building cannot have any meaning other than demolishing it. However, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), spent many hours dreaming up a report, which claims the building collapsed through fire.[424]

The public has stepped in and many ordinary Americans are piecing the available facts together to reach an answer to their legitimate questions. The only answer to these questions that comes from the official circles is: "conspiracy theories." The reason for public stepping in to reach the truth is that the government did not even try to conduct an impartial and comprehensive inquiry to address all the pressing questions.

For a real inquiry, a list of possible questions would be drawn such as: Did only planes and fire cause the collapse of North and South towers of WTC? What caused the collapse of WTC 7? Why is information about five dancing Israelis, who were arrested on 9/11, kept classified?[425] How did two employees of Odigo, Inc., an Israeli company, receive warnings of an imminent attack in New York City about two hours before the first plane hits the WTC?[426] Why did the United States Air Force not respond to four hijackings on 9/11? Why did the secret service remain inactive at Booker Elementary School? What kind of technical expertise was required for this operation? Could the hijackers alone put together all the required external and internal elements which made the operation a success? Who could provide the much needed inside technical support?

It is quite a task simply to start drawing up the lists of possible suspects, possible personnel for the inquiry, and the main angles of investigation for the inquiry. In the case of 9/11, however, the conclusions were pre-determined and the pre-conceived results were announced without any real inquiry at all. Framing the Taliban began without setting up an inquiry into the most horrible terrorist attack in human history. Without setting up any inquiry team, without any inquiry, and without any reports and summaries for the President and others, without an investigation panel, the pre-determined verdict was announced in less than 12 hours, in a country that was in chaos and confusion at the time.

This is one of the most preposterous aspects of the whole 9/11 affair. Did all the inquiry miraculously happen? To actually hold a meeting of the senior officials needed to coordinate the inquiry within less than three days in such a chaotic situation would probably have been impossible. Yet, by this time, the United States had already claimed to have held its "inquiry" and established the Taliban's guilt by association with Osama as the main culprit whose fingerprints were everywhere with copious quantities of evidence lying around to the extent that guilt was obvious

within a few hours. How? Was anything ever more obviously a set up? It is simply not possible.

An important question remains to be cleared up about the pilots. If they were not remote controlled, as some theories suggest, then pilots were obviously on a suicide mission. It is difficult to believe that Americans, or those loyal to the United States, would knowingly participate in a suicide mission. The obvious explanation is that some of the hijackers were genuinely hostile to the United States and were either participating in an attack that they thought would damage it, or they did not even know the scope of the operation, that it would end up in their death and such devastation. Albert D. Pastore, who carefully studied, painstakingly researched and analyzed in detail all the sources and events of 9/11, also reaches the same conclusion in his book, *Stranger Than Fiction*. His logical deduction is that perhaps, "the hijackers were another group of angry Arab patsies who were not even aware of who their true handlers were or what the broader strategic aim of the mission actually was."[427]

These individuals were under the impression that their plan was secret from the United States government. They were the ones who were possibly used to send a message to Osama that they were "about to do something." That is why Osama started bragging to journalists, telling them that the myth of American might needs to be shattered. However, Osama did not know what the real perpetrators of 9/11 had actually planned for the few Arabs used as pawns in the 9/11 operation. That is why soon after the 9/11 attacks, Osama approved the attacks on United States interests but categorically denied his involvement.[428]

What puts the hijacking part of the official story of 9/11 in serious doubt is the revelation that at least seven of the alleged hijackers are still alive. Wail and Waleed al Shehri are brothers and both are alive.[429] Others who are still alive are Satam al Suqami, Abdul Aziz al Omari, Fayez Banihammad (from the UAE), Ahmed al Ghamdi, Hamza al Ghamdi, Mohand al Shehri,

Saeed al Ghamdi, Ahmad al Haznawi, Ahmed al Nami, Majed Moqed, and Salem al Hazmi (the brother of Nawaf al Hazmi).[430] The FBI, however, is silent as if it did not even release the list of the alleged hijackers. How can the 9/11 Commission be taken seriously when they refer to 9/11 'hijackers' who are still alive?

Stolen identities of at least five Saudis were used who worked in the airline industry as pilots, mechanics and flight attendants—people who would have had increased access in airports, a Saudi government official told the Sun-Sentinel.[431] In his book, *Stranger than Fiction*, Albert Pastore concludes, "We have established that at least 7 of the 19 hijackers are alive and well,"[432] and that "identities of 9 hijackers are in question due to identity theft."[433]

Afghans were not even on the list of alleged hijackers. Their country has, however, been made to pay the price. The pre-determination of attacking Afghanistan is evident from the fact that Pakistan and Afghanistan were treated in different ways after 9/11 despite the fact that there was no evidence of the Taliban involvement whereas Pakistan ISI seems to have known some details of the inside job. A Pakistani, Umar Sheikh, is said to have transferred $100,000 to the alleged "ring-leader" of the 9/11 hijackers[434] at the instance of Lt. General Mahmud Ahmed of Pakistan Intelligence Services (ISI) shortly before 9/11.[435]

According to the *Wall Street Journal* (October 9, 2001), the Pakistani newspaper *Dawn* reported on October 9, 2001 that Islamabad has replaced the head of its Inter-Services Intelligence agency, Lt. Gen. Mahmud Ahmed, "after the FBI investigators established credible links between him and Umar Sheikh, one of the three militants released in exchange for passengers of the hijacked Indian Airlines plane in 1999."[436] One can imagine the promotion of this story by the co-opted media in case these persons were from Afghanistan or if he were the Taliban.

Although Lt. General Mahmud Ahmed's link to Umar Sheikh and Umar Sheikh's link to Mohammed Atta are well-known

"facts" from the perspective of the United States government, U.S. authorities are quite uninterested in pursuing any action against these persons in spite of President Bush's huffing and puffing that "if you fund a terrorist, you are a terrorist." Not really so in the case of its allies in invasion and occupation of the target country. Or may be these "facts" from the United States are also lies crafted only to give General Musharraf a chance to purge Pakistan army of the perceived "Islamic fundamentalists."

Lt. Gen. Mahmud Ahmed was forced to resign his position once his alleged involvement in 9/11 became known. There was, however, no retaliatory bombing or invasion of Pakistan to force it to hand accomplices of the 9/11 hijackers over to the United States. There was no labeling of Pakistan as a terrorist state or a state supporting and financing terrorists. May be there is more to this story than meets the eye because Lt. Gen. Mahmud Ahmed had a breakfast meeting on 9/11 at the Capitol with the chairmen of the House and Senate Intelligence Committees, Senator Bob Graham (D) and Representative Porter Goss (R) (a 10-year veteran of the CIA's clandestine operations wing). The meeting is said to last at least until the second plane hits the WTC.[437]

A report to Senator Graham's staff in August 2001 stated that one of Mahmud's subordinates had told a US undercover agent that the WTC would be destroyed. Randy Glass, a former con artist turned government informant, later claimed that he contacted the staff of Senator Bob Graham and Representative Robert Wexler and warned them of a plan to attack the WTC, but his warnings were ignored.[438] Also present at the meeting were Senator John Kyl (R) and the Pakistani ambassador to the US, Maleeha Lodhi (almost all of the people in this meeting also met in Pakistan a few weeks earlier).[439] Senator Graham says of the meeting: "We were talking about terrorism, specifically terrorism generated from Afghanistan." The *New York Times* mentioned bin Laden specifically was being discussed.[440] The fact that these people are meeting at the time of the attacks is a strange coinci-

dence at the very least. Was the topic of conversation just more coincidence? So ISI was sending funds to the alleged mastermind of 9/11. Yet the head of ISI was having meeting with the top U.S. officials with extensive experience in clandestine operations.

In the case of Afghanistan, the United States was not ready to listen to any proposal from the Taliban government at all, as if it had decided once and for all that occupation of Afghanistan was the only solution. The numerous, almost daily Taliban appeals to the United States for showing patience and exercising restraint, were dismissed. In Mullah Omar words:

> America always repeats threats and makes various accusations and now it is threatening military attack. This is being done in circumstances in which we have offered alternatives on the Osama issue. We have said, if you have evidence against Osama, give it to the Afghan Supreme Court or the Ulema (clerics) of three Islamic countries, or have OIC (Organization of Islamic Countries) observers keep an eye on Osama. But America rejected these, one by one. If America had considered these suggestions there would not have been a chance of such a great misunderstanding. We appeal to the American government to exercise complete patience, and we want America to gather complete information and find the actual culprits. We assure the whole world that neither Osama nor anyone else can use the Afghan land against anyone else.[441]

These words from the Taliban leadership fell on deaf ears because the United States did not want to lose the opportunity it created by engineering the 9/11 attacks after years of anti-Taliban propaganda. The real culprits, who are blamed by the American analysts for having done an "inside job," killed 3000 innocent people, demolished three WTC buildings and hit the Pentagon to take the war on Afghanistan to its climax. How could these modern-day crusaders back off at these simple words from Mullah Omar, backed by no military might or support from the rest of the brainwashed world that could deter the aggressors?

"Inside job" was not without a reason

Given the above-mentioned facts and analysis, it is not surpris-

ing that some analysts have seen the US failure to avert the 9/11 attacks as creating an invaluable pretext for war and others have seen it as an "inside job" for attacking Afghanistan in a war that had clearly been well planned in advance. Researchers have cited possible precedents for the false flag operations.

This catalogue of evidence does, however, fall into place when set against the Evangelicals and Christian Zionists blueprint and their influence discussed in earlier chapters. From this it seems that the so-called "war on terrorism" is being used largely as bogus cover for achieving wider religious, strategic and geopolitical objectives through manipulating political and military leadership. The public inquiries in the United States now need to go one step further to realize that the main objective behind 9/11 was to dislodge the Taliban, the reasons for which are outlined in chapter 1-4. Bush's phone call to General Musharraf, asking him to be "with us or against us" is as much part of the deliberate lies as anything else that we have heard from the Bush administration. The reason is that some prior-to-9/11-reports have revealed the US plans to attack Afghanistan and dislodge the Taliban.[442] In this case, it is out of the question that Musharraf was not part of the consultations and planning process for the imminent invasion. After all, the US ultimatum about carpet-bombing the Taliban was conveyed to the Afghan government through the Pakistani delegation, just a couple of months before 9/11.[443]

Irrespective of the question of whether the United States government planned the 9/11 attack or not, a closer look at the events of the morning of 9/11 reveals that U.S. authorities at the highest level deliberately allowed the attacks to take place. It is understandable that no one will deliberately allow such heinous crimes to take place without a serious motive. The U.S. authorities, who took part in the 9/11 operation, were fully convinced that the perceived advantages of these horrible crimes far outweighed the associated loss of the WTC Towers, a portion of the Pentagon and three thousand lives. They were prepared to take

this loss for achieving "greater" objectives.

From the perspective of the perpetrators of 9/11, the main advantage was taking a huge lead in the ideological war with Islam. The advantage was to put Muslims' struggle towards self-determination and self-rule on hold. The advantage was to show Muslims that any attempt to live by Islam will not be tolerated. Muslims have to accept that the only permissible way to govern their lives is by secular democracy in nation states as envisioned by the religiously motivated totalitarians, in particular in the United States—a premise discussed in detail in chapter 1-4.

The above-stated motive is evident from the dubious assertion of Bush and company about the cause of "Islamic" terrorism. For instance, Bush said, "our enemies murder because they despise our freedom and our way of life," though intelligence experts have long concluded that the dominant goal of the forces pitted against pro-U.S. puppet regimes in the Muslim world is to drive Western forces and influence out to restore their freedom and way of life. Iran is a notable example in this regard, where the United States supported Shah was thrown out and the situation deteriorated to the extent that instead of a close friend, the United States became "The great *Shatan*" for a majority of the Iranians.

It is not hatred of Bush and Blair's "way of life" that motivates most anti-puppet regimes' forces, but rather a reality that the totalitarians in the West are threatening the Muslim way of life. While there have been violent strikes against the Western interests in the Muslim world, such as random attacks on tourists, Islamic movements generally see their struggle as defensive. Some of those who are pushed against the wall by the United States-protected puppet regimes and their oppressive apparatus, and who do not see any light at the end of the tunnel, believe that attacks against all Western interests are part of this resistance movement rather than an aberration. The February 1998 fatwa by Osama bin Laden and four other leaders of Islamic groups

in various countries is an example in this regard. Irrespective of their minority or majority, it is hard to convince them against their beliefs as long as direct and indirect occupation and different forms of puppet regimes are in place in the Muslim world.

So, when Bush prescribes an offensive strategy—"to go after the terrorists where they live … until the terrorists have nowhere to run and nowhere to hide"—his projection of U.S. power into the Muslim world portends a virtually endless war until the religiously motivated totalitarians from the West impose their way of life on the Muslim world.

So far, the United States has clearly benefited from the occupation of Afghanistan. Even a country like Saudi Arabia is holding sham elections to please its masters. The fifty-seven Muslim states are silent and none can muster enough courage to ask the United States to end its occupations, let alone threatening the United States with cutting all diplomatic relations and total commercial boycott, at least until it makes substantial changes to its unjust policies of intervention, occupation, repression and human rights violations in the Muslim world.

The conclusion of all this analysis must surely be that the "global war on terrorism" has the hallmarks of a political myth propagated to pave the way for a wholly different agenda—the Evangelicals and Christian Zionists goal of religious domination to pave the way for establishing the dominion of God.

CHAPTER 6

Legitimacy of the War and Occupation

THE TALIBAN have been singled out as a primary as well as ultimate reason for justifying the ongoing aggression in Afghanistan, imposing one puppet regime in Kabul and consolidating another in Islamabad.

It is necessary to keep the facts straight for the simple reason that evidence exists for the United States motives behind its supporting and then undermining the Taliban through Pakistan. Unlike Karzai and Allawi, who were the former paid servants of the CIA and MI16, respectively, the Taliban knew little about their manipulation by the United States. The Taliban had assumed that it was the same "Islamic" Republic of Pakistan, which had helped them in *Jihad* against the Soviet Union, that was assisting them in good faith to get rid of the power hungry warlords for bringing peace and stability to Afghanistan.

The Taliban knew little of the facts revealed later by organizations, such as Amnesty International (AI) about the US push behind the Taliban's coming to power. In an interview broadcast by the BBC World Service on October 04, 1996, Pakistan's then Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto affirmed that specific *madrasas*

(religious schools) had been set up by Britain, the United States, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan for grooming the Taliban.[444] In one of its reports, AI confirms that "accounts of the *madrasas* which the Taliban attended in Pakistan indicate that these [American] links [to indirectly support the Taliban] may have been established at the very inception of the Taliban movement."[445]

Former Pakistani Interior Minister, Major General (Retired) Naseerullah Babar, stated: "[The] CIA itself introduced terrorism in the region and is only shedding crocodile's tears to absolve itself of the responsibility."[446] Actually, what people like Mr. Baber do not realize is that irrespective of the covert support, the United States had no idea that the Taliban leadership would prefer death to selling their soul.

The covert support to the Taliban was planned during the period when the addicted-to-dollars-and-power *Mujahideen* leaders turned to become warlords for their self-interest. They had been taught of *Jihad* as merely a war against a perceived enemy, not from the pure Islamic perspective of struggling at different levels with the ultimate objective to establish the *Deen* (the way of life of Islam).[447] From an American perspective, however, *Jihad* was merely a Muslim war employed to serve the United States interests such as to end the Soviet Union occupation of Afghanistan. Even those who were fighting the Taliban after the United States invasion in 2001 were called *Mujahideen*.[448] That is why the United States morbid dread of *Jihad* intensifies with each new occupation of its own.

Indoctrinated with the American interpretation of *Jihad*, at the end of the day, Afghan *Mujahideen* had no idea or planning to proceed towards the higher objective of the real *Jihad*—the establishment of a just order and a society based on the principles of Islam. Seeing no prospects of the warlords' coming to terms with each other and creating an environment that would give the United States a firm hold in the region, Washington had to introduce another force: the Taliban.

The United States could hardly imagine that the covertly trained and indirectly supported Taliban would never bend to the United States dictates and would never sell themselves to work for achieving American strategic objectives. In the end, this was conclusively proved when the United States could not bend them even under the threats of an invasion and occupation after 9/11. The drop scene proved that the United States fears about the Taliban's determination were right. However, its conclusions that Muslims collectively living by Islam would be a threat to its security were wrong. Such conclusions were drawn from the perceptions of the crusaders of the modern age.

Reports in the United States media during the early victories of the Taliban are a clear evidence of the covert support from the United States. The *U.S. News and World Report* and other media in the United States portrayed initial victories of the Taliban in the form of a fairy tale as if the Taliban had just come out from madrassas and in a few days were able to defeat all the seasoned and resourceful Afghan warlords together without any external support.

The Taliban were not opportunist, nor did they intentionally, knowingly or purposely serve the CIA, ISI, the United States, or Pakistan. The destruction and carnage carried out by the *Mujahideen* leaders-turned-war-lords was before the Taliban took over leadership. In fact, the Taliban were acting in good faith to bring peace to Afghanistan. They were also under the impression that a friendly "Islamic" state, Pakistan, was supporting them with good intentions.

Those who are in power in Afghanistan today, fully knew that the crimes of the Taliban had been blown out of proportion for other hidden motives. It was opportunism on their part that led them into serving the CIA all along. The CIA officer Gary Schroen's account of how he used to hand over millions of dollars to the Northern Alliance Commanders in his book, *First in Afghanistan*, is really stunning. Schroen has given exact names and

the amount of dollars he had personally handed to the Northern Alliance puppets soon after 9/11. Schroen recounts meeting with Aref Sarwari, head of Masood's intelligence service, in which $500,000 was passed to him just as a token, in these words:

> I knew from experience that no senior Afghan wanted to be passed money directly—cash from my hand to his. I would need to have it packaged, wrapped in paper or otherwise disguised, and have it placed in a bag for easy handling. The money would not be counted at the meeting, and I knew Aref would work hard at showing no reaction to the pAymant of funds.[449]

Within 24 hours of paying Engineer Aref, Schroen was ready to pay one million dollars to General Fahim. Schroen writes: "Although I had passed Aref $500,000 the night before, I wanted to pass a second, large cash pAymant to General Fahim…Rick and I went back to the black suitcase and got $1million wrapped and ready."[450] The extent of bribing before the bombing is evident from the fact that, according to Schroen: "In the forty days I was in the Panjshir Valley, I spent $5 million."[451] This is the story of showering dollars after 9/11 in buying support of the opportunists in one little area of Afghanistan, not to speak of the sums spent in the rest of the country and particularly the money spent on buying the Taliban commanders. Promotion of those who played a key role in demonizing the Taliban before 9/11 was a normal feature of the time when the Taliban remained in power.

We cannot ignore the power of bribing and the element of opportunism in human nature. Even those religious personalities, which were described as anti-American, never hesitated in accepting bribes from the United States before and after 9/11. Ustad Abdul Rasul Sayyaf is described as conservative, "anti-West," "anti-American" and a hard line Islamic fundamentalist. He holds a degree in religion from Kabul University and a Masters from Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt. He was also a member of the "radical group" Akhwan-ul-Muslimeen (Muslim Brother-

hood) founded in 1969 by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Dr. Syed Burhanuddin Rabbani.[452] The story of his reaction while accepting a bribe to work against the Taliban is even more interesting:

> I produced a $100,000 bundle of cash from my backpack and handed it across the table to Sayyaf, who instinctively took the package. Unlike the money I had passed to the Northern Alliance, I had left this bundle in its original clear plastic wrapping so that Sayyaf could see what it was. Sayyaf held the bundle for a second or two, looking at it, seeming somewhat confused by what he was holding in his hands. Then his eyes widened and he turned toward his hulking side. He literally threw the bundle of cash at the man, as if he had been handed a hot potato. Sayyaf looked at me and his eyes narrowed. "This is the first time I have ever accepted cash directly from anyone." He shook his head as if he had been tricked, eyeing me carefully, a slight smile on his lips.[453]

Selfishness and greed of such individuals never left Afghanistan a chance to capitalize on the unprecedented opportunities which the improved law and order situation had brought during the Taliban reign. The benighted opportunism of the same individuals is leading them now into consolidating an illegitimate occupation of Afghanistan.[454]

Building on the crusaders' and corporate terrorists' agenda

William O. Beeman, an anthropologist, who has conducted extensive research into Central Asia, and who specializes in the Middle East at Brown University points out:

> It is no secret, especially in the region, that the United States, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have been supporting the fundamentalist Taliban in their war for control of Afghanistan for some time. The U.S. has never openly acknowledged this connection, but it has been confirmed by both intelligence sources and charitable institutions in Pakistan.[455]

Professor Beeman notes that the Taliban had "nothing to do with religion or ethnicity—but only with the economics of oil." To the north of Afghanistan is one of the world's wealthiest oil fields, on the Eastern Shore of the Caspian Sea in republics

formed since the breakup of the Soviet Union. Caspian oil needs to be shipped out of the landlocked region through a warm water port for the desired profits to be accumulated. The "simplest and cheapest" pipeline route is through Iran—but Iran is essentially an 'enemy' of the United States, due to being overtly independent of the Western influence.

As Beeman noted: "The U.S. government has such antipathy to Iran that it is willing to do anything to prevent this." The alternative route is one that passes through Afghanistan and Pakistan, which "would require securing the agreement of the powers-that-be in Afghanistan"—the Taliban. Such an arrangement would also benefit Pakistani elites, "which is why they are willing to defy the Iranians." Therefore, as far as the United States was concerned, the solution was "for the anti-Iranian Taliban to win in Afghanistan and agree to the pipeline through their territory."[456]

Apart from the oil stakes, Afghanistan remained a strategic country for the United States in another related respect. The establishment of a strong client state (whether that be in the form of the then Taliban government or the present Karzai municipality) would strengthen U.S. influence in this crucial region, partly by strengthening Pakistan under a strong dictatorship, which is the region's main American base.

Of course, this also advanced the cause of the corporate terrorists to establish the required oil and gas pipelines to the Caspian Sea, while bypassing Russia and opening up the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) bordering Russia to the United States dominated global market. The arrival of a self-perpetuating puppet regime in Kabul and the rush to signing pipeline agreements after the fall of the Taliban are undeniable pieces of evidence in this regard.

In December 2002, a year after the occupation, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Turkmenistan signed a framework agreement for a U.S. $3.2 billion 1,460 km gas pipeline project passing through the three countries.[457] The three countries had earlier signed a tri-

lateral agreement to develop a natural gas and oil pipeline from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan into Pakistan in May the same year, during the first trilateral summit in Islamabad. One needs to note the speedy progress in this regard. Occupation of Afghanistan toward the end of 2001 and pipeline agreements less than half way through the next year: 2002.

To further understand the urgency regarding access to natural resources one has to note that less than a month after 9/11, operation "enduring Freedom" (bombing campaign) started in Afghanistan on October 7, 2001.

Just one day later, on October 08, 2001, U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan, Wendy Chamberlain, met with the Pakistani oil minister to discuss reviving trans-Afghan pipeline. On December 24, former Unocal consultant Hamid Karzai was appointed interim Afghan president. Six days later, former UNOCAL consultant/ National Security Council member Zalmay Khalilzad was initially named U.S. Special Envoy to Afghanistan and then U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan.

Zalmay Khalilzad was a member of the organization called the Project for the New American Century (PNAC).[458] This organization published a document entitled *Rebuilding America's Defenses* in the fall of 2000, a year before 9/11. Other than Khalilzad, this organization was formed by individuals who were members, or at least supporters, of the Reagan and Bush I administrations, and some of whom would go on to be central figures in the Bush II administration. These individuals include Richard Armitage, John Bolton, Dick Cheney, Zalmay Khalilzad (closely associated with Paul Wolfowitz[459]), Lewis "Scooter" Libby, Richard Perle, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, and James Woolsey. Libby (now Cheney's chief of staff) and Wolfowitz (now Rumsfeld's deputy) are listed as having participated directly in the project to produce *Rebuilding America's Defenses*. Interestingly, John Lehman, a member of the 9/11 Commission, has been a member of the PNAC or at least publicly aligned with it.[460]

This PNAC document suggested that the process towards U.S. supremacy could occur more quickly if America suffered "some catastrophic and catalyzing event "like a new Pearl Harbor."[461] September 11 provided that opportunity to Bush and his fellow totalitarians. Zalmay Khalilzad and Karzai were there to help the United States government in its plans after the invasion and occupation. Both these persons were previously on Unocal's payroll.[462]

Less than forty days into his job, (February 8, 2002) Khalilzad signed an intent letter with Turkmenistan President Sapamurat Niyazov for the Turkmen-Afghan section of pipeline in Ashkhabat, Turkmenistan. On March 07, 2002, less than a month after this exchange, Karzai signed a similar intent letter with Pakistani dictator General Musharraf in Islamabad.

Within three months, on May 31, 2002, Karzai, Musharraf and Niyazov signed a memorandum of understanding in Islamabad seeking corporate investment in the trans-Afghan pipeline. On June 10, 2002, the rubber stamp Loya Jirga bypassed King Zahir Shah, who was touted all along during the Taliban period and instead named Karzai as transitional Afghan president for two years.

The events that followed show the motives and focus of the occupation: On July 19, 2002 the Japanese Senior Vice Minister announced Japanese government interest in financing trans-Afghan pipeline. On August 9, Russian energy company Gazprom announced a one-month agreement to analyze Afghan oil and natural gas reserves. August 12, Asian Development Bank committed $1.5 million for feasibility study and on September 20, ADB met in Manila to discuss trans-Afghan pipeline funding.

This brief timeline of one year after the Taliban shows the main objective of one stakeholder that was hell bent on initially courting, and then destroying, the Taliban when it could not stand the pressure from Islamophobes in the media, neo-conservatives in the policy making circles, and warlords, such as Samuel Hun-

tington and Bernard Lewis, in academia and other fronts.

Lost between the fact and fiction

The Western world remained lost between the fact and fiction about the Taliban. Strategic interests clearly seem to have motivated what the *Guardian* referred to as "the generally approving line that U.S. officials take towards the Taliban." CNN reported that the "United States wants good ties [with the Taliban] but can't openly seek them while women are being repressed"—hence they can be sought covertly.[463]

The corporate world's dilemma of wanting to control the Taliban and not being able to proceed due to fear of public backlash as a result of the extensive demonization of the Taliban is consistent with the already mentioned phenomenon under which Islamophobes hijacked the corporate world's obsession with controlling natural resources around the world.

The Taliban demonization campaign by Islamophobes was so strong that few could stay neutral or objective. Before elaborating on how most observers were lost between the fact and fiction about the Taliban, we need to see how the corporate world was strictly neutral and how the anti-Taliban propaganda forced it to change its approach.

An article, which appeared in the prestigious German daily *Frankfurter Rundschau* in early October 1996, reported that UNOCAL "has been given the go-ahead from the new holders of power in Kabul to build a pipeline from Turkmenistan via Afghanistan to Pakistan. It would lead from Krasnovodsk on the Caspian Sea to Karachi on the Indian Ocean coast." [464] The same article noted that U.N. diplomats in Geneva believed that the war in Afghanistan was the result of a struggle between Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Russia and the United States "to secure access to the rich oil and natural gas of the Caspian Sea."[465] Other than UNOCAL, companies that were jubilantly interested in exploiting Caspian oil, apparently at any human expense, include AMOCO, BP, Chevron, EXXON, and Mobile.[466] The *Wall Street Jour-*

nal—the promoter of corporate interests—reported that the main interests of American and other Western elites lie in making Afghanistan "a prime transhipment route for the export of Central Asia's vast oil, gas and other natural resources." [467] The *Journal* continued without any fear of the Islamophobes' hot anti-Taliban propaganda: "Like them or not, the Taliban are the players most capable of achieving peace in Afghanistan at this moment in history."[468]

Joining the chorus of corporate terrorists, the *New York Times* voiced views of the administration backed by the same corporations: "The Clinton Administration has taken the view that a Taliban victory... would act as a counterweight to Iran... and would offer the possibility of new trade routes that could weaken Russian and Iranian influence in the region."[469]

Franz Schurmann, Professor Emeritus of History and Sociology at the University of California, commented on the alliance of the administration and corporate fronts and on "Washington's discreet backing of the Taliban." He highlighted the announcement in May 1996 "by UNOCAL that it was preparing to build a pipeline to transport natural gas from Turkmenistan to Pakistan through Western Afghanistan... UNOCAL's announcement was premised on an imminent Taliban victory."[470]

Steve Coll writes in his book, *Ghost Wars*, that "Marty Miller [in charge of the pipeline project for UNOCAL] insisted publicly that Unocal remained 'fanatically neutral' about Afghan politics." In reality, "Marty Miller and his colleagues hoped the Taliban takeover of Kabul would speed their pipeline negotiations."[471] Coll is referring to September 1996, when the Taliban, heavily financed by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, took over Kabul, the capital, by forcing Masood to flee. As soon as this occurred, Ahmed Rashid reports, a Unocal executive "told wire agencies that the pipeline project would be easier to implement now that the Taliban had captured Kabul."[472]

The *International Herald Tribune* reported that in the sum-

mer of 1998, even "the Clinton administration was talking with the Taliban about potential pipeline routes to carry oil and natural gas out of Turkmenistan to the Indian Ocean by crossing Afghanistan and Pakistan,"[473] clarifying why the United States would be interested in ensuring that the region is destabilized enough to prevent the population from being able to mobilize domestic resources, or utilize the region's strategic position, for their own benefit. The former *Mujahideen* commanders and anti-Taliban Northern Alliance could hardly realize what they were sacrificing for the cash they were receiving from their respective sponsors.

The Taliban's basic crime remained their commitment to establishing Islam and their inability to serve American interests the way oppressive Saudi Kings or Kuwaiti Sheikhs were serving. Saudis also have been chopping hands and heads of criminals according to the Shari'ah Law since decades. However, their brand of *Shari'ah* is acceptable to Islamophobes because that brand of Islam does not have the capacity to bring a revolutionary spirit to life among Muslims for establishing an entity where Muslims have the opportunity to live by Islam—free from all kinds of external interference. In comparison, the Taliban government was more broad-based than the Saudi Kingdom or the Kuwaiti regime for which the United States spent billions of dollars to restore after Iraqi invasion. The corporate terrorists' eyes remained fixed on the strategic position of Afghanistan during this period. Therefore, they had to support the Islamophobes' campaign to whatever extent possible to expedite the Taliban's departure.

At the same time the outside world remained lost between the world of fact (in which the United States government was trying its best to buy off the Taliban and have good control of Afghanistan), and the world of fiction which the Islamophobes invented with exaggerated "crimes" of the Taliban.

Occupation is not for humanitarian reasons

Many analysts have confirmed that a "humanitarian crisis" in Afghanistan was not the reason for the United States' over-throwing the Taliban and occupation of Afghanistan.

Unlike the stated objective of going after weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, capturing Osama was not a top priority for going into Afghanistan as the CIA officials later revealed.[474] After occupying Afghanistan on the pretext of capturing Osama, the logic in favor of not capturing him has turned to the argument that the United States is better off with Osama at large. AB Krongard, the Central Intelligence Agency's former executive director, said, "You can make the argument that we're better off with him (at large) because if something happens to Bin Laden, you might find a lot of people vying for his position and demonstrating how macho they are by unleashing a stream of terror."[475]

Since the objective of controlling Afghanistan has been achieved, several U.S. officials have privately admitted that it may be better to keep Osama pinned down on the border of Afghanistan and Pakistan rather than make him a martyr or put him on trial. But Krongard is the most senior figure to acknowledge the official view publicly. The myth that Osama is alive and is at large serves the United States interest more than a dead or captured Osama.

Before rejecting Taliban offers for resolving the Osama issue, before starting indiscriminate bombing of Afghanistan and before invading and imposing a puppet regime, the United States officials and analysts did not think in AB Krongard's terms. At that time, occupation was necessary to capture Osama "dead or alive." Michael Swetnam, a counter-terrorism specialist at the Washington-based Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, expressed his views long before Krongard in a similar way: "It's a tremendous debate. If you kill him you create a martyr, but if you capture him you have to go through a tribunal or a trial."[476]

All this goes hand in hand with the views of many analysts who believe that Osama is dead and that Al-Qaeda does not ex-

ist at all. Threat of Al-Qaeda was "blown out of proportions" to pave the way for occupation of Afghanistan.[477]

Many analysts strongly believe that Al-Qaeda is not an organization and nobody knew it by this name before 9/11. Al-Qaeda is a "fictitious organization," like the fictitious Al-Zarqawee, and other weapons of mass hysteria to create an illusion and justify the occupation of Afghanistan as well as crimes against humanity committed by the United States and Britain.[478]

Robert Sheer writes in the *Los Angeles Times*:

> Is it conceivable that Al-Qaeda, as defined by President Bush as the center of a vast and well-organized international terrorist conspiracy, does not exist? To even raise the question amid all the officially inspired hysteria is heretical, especially in the context of the U.S. media's supine acceptance of administration claims relating to national security.[479]

Al-Qaeda is now considered as one of the biggest lies of the 21st century.[480] There is no real organization called "Al-Qaeda" other than the "fake videos" about it.[481] There is no evidence that Osama used the word Al-Qaeda. Al-Qaeda does not exist and never has.[482] In many cases, the CIA and Mossad have been caught posing as Al-Qaeda. [483] Even BBC reported that Israel, in particular, has been "faking Al-Qaeda presence."[484] In short, impartial analysts with no sympathies with the Taliban or Osama have concluded that Al-Qaeda "is a manufactured intelligence front."[485]

Amid the ever-mounting evidence that proves that 9/11 was an inside job, it has become clear that Al-Qaeda was just a ruse to invade and occupy Afghanistan. As far the Taliban crimes, these are still touted just the way the continued occupation of Iraq is presented as an operation for freedom and democracy. Although the basic justification was the threat posed by WMD, but everything has now boiled down to the establishment of democracy—a pretext based on which no law and no authority would even approve a war of aggression. Similarly in Afghanistan, all

the tall claims of "smoking out" Osama, capturing him "dead or alive" and war on terrorism have reduced only to dislodging the "Taliban thugs." If the United States could invade and occupy a sovereign state to get Osama, why can't it take care of the small tribal belt along the Pak-Afghan border in Pakistan to get rid of Osama once and for all.

Not all these fig leaves of war on terrorism, war to neutralize weapons of mass destruction, or the war for democracy together can cover the real American motives for the occupation of Afghanistan. The more the United States authorities cover the actual motives, the more the illegitimacy of its occupation becomes evident to the world.

Islamophobic and strategic concerns have evidently far outweighed America's professed humanitarian benevolence. In 1999, the plans to cajole, purchase or persuade the Taliban for laying the oil and gas pipelines were put on hold, not because of the humanitarian concerns but because of the fear of attacks on American interests in Afghanistan, which resulted after Osama's *fatwa* of *Jihad* against the United States.

Control of Afghanistan on the ideological (religious) grounds remained a top priority without any concern of human rights abuses and irrespective of who was in power in Kabul. In this regard, the authoritative testimony of U.S. Congressman Dana Rohrabacher concerning American policy toward Afghanistan makes much sense. Rohrabacher has been involved with Afghanistan since the early 1980s when he worked in the White House as Special Assistant to then U.S. President Ronald Reagan, and as a Senior Member of the United States House International Relations Committee in the Bush-II administration. Since 1988, he traveled to Afghanistan as a member of the United States Congress with *Mujahideen* fighters and participated in the battle of Jalalabad against the Soviets.

Dana Rohrabacher has testified as follows: "Having been closely involved in U.S. policy toward Afghanistan for some twenty

years, I have called into question whether or not this administration has a covert policy that has empowered the Taliban." [486] After documenting a large number of factors indicating tacit U.S. support of the Taliban, Rohrabacher concludes:

> I am making the claim that there is and has been a covert policy by this administration to support the Taliban movement's control of Afghanistan...There can only be two explanations. Either the State Department is totally incompetent, or there is an ongoing cover-up of the State Department's true fundamental policy toward Afghanistan.[487]

It is correct to conclude that by its covert policy the United States was making an all out effort to make Afghanistan a satellite state like Egypt and Pakistan where even dreaming about establishing Islam was gradually becoming a crime. However, it is naïve to assume that the United States was attempting to make Afghanistan a protectorate like the unpredictable Pakistan. In the end, the United States realized that it can never achieve its aim without a direct occupation and that is why the United States is there busy in consolidating a long lasting puppet regime.

Of course, the United States administration has, as usual, ignored the very objectives of the Afghans themselves. Even today, the United States has disregarded the aspirations of the Afghan masses just the way it did during the Soviet occupation, during the civil war after the Soviet withdrawal, as well as during the Taliban's rule.

Some Afghans are supporting the Karzai regime for the reason that they believe Pakistan has exploited Afghanistan for its advantage during the rule of the Taliban. Pakistan initially supported the Taliban for the United States and later on considered them the only legitimate alternative to the warlord and anti-Pakistan elements in the form of Northern alliance.

It, however, does not mean that the United States also wanted to reward Pakistan in authorizing it to control Afghanistan with the help of warlords. There is no basis to such claims. After

failure in turning the Taliban into a puppet regime, the United States forced Pakistan in many ways to discontinue a policy that initially came from Washington. Musharraf started following the United States dictates early on after his coup. In October 1999, he overthrew an elected government and four months later he was lecturing the Taliban to form a broad-based government.[488]

The ties, nevertheless, were gone so deep that Pakistan could not extricate itself until the United States government could come up with a staged event like 9/11. At this time, the timid "commando" in Islamabad had no option but to follow the script and toe the Washington's line already drawn for him. He joined hands in the already planned invasion and occupation of Afghanistan.

Afghan analyst, Dr. Ali Noor's assessment and prediction have proved right. He wrote in 1998:

> The U.S. Government, in complicity with its regional allies, and for want of anything better, is trying to put therein a servile government of its own choice so as to possess the necessary leverage to influence the overall politics and economics of the region in accordance with its imperialistic objectives. Pending the identification and installation of such a government the country has to endure the state of anarchy and instability accordingly.[489]

Today, we see that a servile government is in place, effectively controlling only parts of Kabul. This arrangement will last at least as long as the American troops guard its President—hardly more than a Mayor—in his Kabul municipality.

To make the waters muddy for the Taliban, the bombings in Africa and Yemen were blamed on Osama, despite his clear statements that he had nothing to do with any of these terrorist acts.[490] In preparation for dislodging the Taliban, the United States pressed the United Nations into imposing sanctions on the Taliban government. It prevented Western firms from investing in Afghanistan. Crusaders of the modern age won their campaign and the corporate terrorists had to abandon their hopes of succeeding in courting the Taliban.

In Afghanistan, the United States administration failed in

bringing into being another Saudi Arabia or Kuwait where it has unfettered access to policies and resources without fear of exporting Islamic revolution for liberation of Muslim masses from the continued colonialism. As Ahmed Rashid points out:

> The UNOCAL project was based on the premise that the Taliban were going to conquer Afghanistan. This premise was fed to them by various countries like Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and elements within the U.S. administration. Essentially it was a premise that was very wrong, because it was based on conquest, and would therefore make it absolutely certain that not only would they not be able to build the pipeline, but they would never be able to have that kind of security in order to build the pipeline.[491]

This is more true today than at the time of the Taliban. The United States believes to have conquered Afghanistan and the situation is favorable to launching the projects in waiting for years. In fact, the question is: For how long can the United States protect an imposed regime and for how long can it stay to protect its puppets in Afghanistan?

Compared to the Karzai's puppet regime, the Taliban proved very good at maintaining law and order in the country and providing security. However, four factors made them "untouchables" in the end:

1. Their refusal to act like the subservient Karzai, Musharraf or many other Arab sheiks and kings;
2. The Taliban's commitment to transforming Afghanistan into an Islamic State and the Islamophobes obsession with bringing that government down;
3. The fear which Osama's *fatwa* of *Jihad* against the United States had created in the hearts and minds of the terrorists in Washington, and put all plans of the oil-mafia and corporate terrorists on hold; and
4. The debate in the Muslim world about Muslims obligation to live by Islam in total freedom from outside interference.

The Taliban had no plans of getting involved in terrorism, nor

did they help their guests in planning any kind of terrorist attacks abroad. In the later days, the Taliban went to the extent of keeping Osama and his colleagues under tight surveillance. The Taliban took all communication equipments from Arabs and they were the ones who banned journalists from seeing Osama—particularly if they had equipment for recording his statements. Contrary to the common perception that Arabs were directing the Taliban, according to Ayman Al-Zawaheri, the Taliban would not respond to any of their suggestions, let alone obeying them.

All these friendly overtures on the part of the Taliban did in no way mean total surrender like any other Middle Eastern Kingdoms and sheikhdoms or the "democratic" regime in Pakistan. Nor did these gestures reduce their commitment to establishing Islam as a way of life. That is why the crusaders had to take the anti-Taliban campaign to new limits. The religiously motivated U.S. administration had thus no option but to begin considering the Taliban as a fundamental obstacle to U.S. interests as early as 1999. Due to these developments, the United States policy toward the Taliban took an about-face turn.

Paving the way for dislodging the Taliban

In December 2000, the *Washington Post* noted the change of heart in Washington, which shows that earlier the Administration had a relatively warm approach towards the Taliban. The *Post's* write up complained that this shift was "without public discussion, without consultation with Congress and without even informing those who are likely to make foreign policy in the next administration."[492]

The *Toronto Sun* observed that the United States took a start with "a punishing Iraq-style embargo on the war-ravaged Afghanistan at a time when many of its 18 million people were starving and homeless."[493] Just like Iraq, this measure was directed at fueling a rebellion inside Afghanistan and to force those who were earning about $4 a month, scarcely enough to live on, to rise

against the Taliban.

Consequences of further starving the already starved Afghans were totally ignored and propaganda about the "humanitarian disaster" due to Taliban's presence in power was intensified. The Taliban were blamed even for the shortage of rainfall. For example, Luke Harding of the *Guardian* was reporting from Qandahar, giving the impression that it is the Taliban who were responsible for some three million Afghans who were close to starvation."[494] No one, however, took notice of the World Food Program's (WFP) using bread distribution as a tool for imposing the United States and its allies' agenda (See Chapter 4 for details).

Meanwhile, the United States desire to eliminate the Taliban, who would not bend to the United States undue demands and dictates, led to the formation of a joint U.S.-Russian military project to undermine the Taliban and pave the way for a new, more subservient regime well before 9/11.

Besides the evidence discussed in the introduction to this book, Frederick Starr, Chairman of the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute at Johns Hopkins's Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, reported in 2000:

> The United States has quietly begun to align itself with those in the Russian government calling for military action against Afghanistan… Until it backed off under local pressure, it went so far as to explore whether a Central Asian country would permit the use of its territory for such a purpose.[495]

Meetings between American, Russian and Indian government officials took place at the end of 2000 "to discuss what kind of government should replace the Taliban... [T]he United States is now talking about the overthrow of a regime that controls nearly the entire country, in the hope it can be replaced with a hypothetical government that does not exist even on paper."[496]

The fact that the United States was strengthening sanctions against foreign military aid to the Taliban, without including an

embargo on the other armed factions in the country, confirmed clearly that the shift in policy had no humanitarian basis behind it. In the words of Central Asia specialist Frederick Starr:

> [the other factions] when they ruled in key areas, showed a brutal disregard for human rights and for other minorities that was comparable to the Taliban at its worst… Yet the fragment of a government they support limps on and, with U.S. backing, occupies Afghanistan's seat in the United Nations.[497]

Human Rights Watch (HRW) criticized the United Nations' sanctions against the Taliban, urging "the adoption of an arms embargo against all combatants, not only the Taliban." Indeed, a joint U.S.-Russia draft resolution ignored the ongoing efforts of a fraction of the former warlords to undermine peace and security in Afghanistan and was responsible for the humanitarian crisis, focusing instead "on the Taliban's harboring of Osama bin Laden... [The resolution] would impose new sanctions only on the Taliban until it gives up bin Laden for extradition and closes camps allegedly used to plan criminal activities overseas. But the draft resolution does not directly address the ongoing civil war in Afghanistan, which has been accompanied by a severe humanitarian crisis."[498]

Executive Director of HRW, Kenneth Roth, pointed out that the international community's failure to "address abuses by the warring parties now because they are an important cause of the continuing humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan," signifies that they are "inexcusably abandoning the Afghan people to suffer atrocities at home while focusing exclusively on the Afghan government's role in attacks on foreigners."[499]

A Canadian journalist, Eric Margolis, reported in 2000:

> The United States and Russia may soon launch a joint military assault against Islamic militant, Osama Bin Laden, and against the leadership of Taliban, Afghanistan's de facto ruling movement. Such an attack would probably include U.S. Delta Force and Navy Seals, who would join up with Russia's elite Spetsnaz and Alpha commandos in Tajikistan, the Central Asian state where Russian has military

> bases and 25,000 troops. The combined forces would be lifted by helicopters, and backed by air support, deep into neighboring Afghanistan to attack Bin Laden's fortified base in the Hindu Kush mountains.[500]

The plans had little to do with helping the Afghan people, and more to do with eliminating the hurdles to U.S. interests in the region. As the *Guardian* rightly observed in November 2000, "Another missile attack will merely add to Afghanistan's misery,"[501] not knowing that it would not be just a missile attack, but a full-scale invasion and prolonged occupation.

These facts lead us to the conclusion that human rights violation, lack of broad-based government under the Taliban and terrorism were mere ruses for paving the way for dislodging their government. In fact, democracy and egalitarian social development are directly opposed by deliberate American policies to further the economic interests of its corporate elites. At the same time, the crusaders and their sympathizers are in total control on all fronts in the war on Islam. No government, which claims to be establishing a complete Islamic model for the rest of the world, will be spared to prove the crusaders' allegations regarding lack of freedom and democracy under an Islamic government as wrong.

Evidently, the human rights of the Afghan people are not a very significant factor in the formulation of American policy toward Afghanistan. More Afghans have suffered far more systematic abuse at the hands of the United States and its puppet regime in Kabul since October 07, 2001 than they suffered under the Taliban.

All these facts clearly prove that the United States occupation is not only as illegitimate as is the United States occupation of Iraq, but also it is the first occupation of a new crusade. Researches, analysts, anti-war activists and peace groups need to realize the situation and try to see the hidden forces behind the invasion of Afghanistan. They need to condemn, consider and ad-

dress Afghanistan occupation exactly the way they address Iraq's occupation. Both are based on lies and deliberate deceptions with no concern for democracy or human rights at all. In fact, the war on Afghanistan is based on far more sinister lies than the lies about Saddam's weapons of mass destruction.

Illegality of the war

Right after the staged 9/11 attacks, in a statement from Florida Bush called the events an act of terrorism. However, there is no generally accepted definition of an act of terrorism under international law, mainly for the reason that state actors, such as the United States, Israel, India, Russia and other become more guilty of terrorism than any individual involved in isolated acts of terrorism. Soon thereafter, however, and apparently after consultations with his warlords, Bush proceeded to call the staged 9/11 as an act of war, ratcheting up the rhetoric and the legal and constitutional issues at stake here. According to Francis A. Boyle, Professor of Law, University of Illinois:

> They were not an act of war as traditionally defined. An act of war is a military attack by one state against another state. There is so far no evidence produced that the state of Afghanistan, at the time, either attacked the United States or authorized or approved such an attack. Indeed, just recently FBI Director Mueller and the deputy director of the CIA publicly admitted that they have found no evidence in Afghanistan linked to the September 11 attacks. If you believe the government's account of what happened, which I think is highly questionable, 15 of these 19 people alleged to have committed these attacks were from Saudi Arabia and yet we went to war against Afghanistan. It does not really add up in my opinion.[502]

By any definition of war, the staged 9/11 was not an act of war. Bush and his war-administration started calling it a war to justify invasion and occupation of Afghanistan through engaging in state terrorism. The attack on Afghanistan was a wholesale terrorist act. As indicated in the Bush's threat,[503] Bush was aiming his attack not just at Afghanistan but at anyone who

dared to not join his holy crusade.[504] According to Garda Ghista, a freelance journalist based in Kentucky, USA, who lived and worked in the Middle East for four years, writes:

> The US deliberately sought war and manufactured illegal reasons, and most of all spoke crazy, nonsensical rhetoric in the American media to put so much fear into the hearts of the people that the American populace gave blind support to the illegal invasion of Afghanistan. The people did not think of the horrors to unfold on the Afghan people. They thought only of their own safety, their own freedom from harm. Is this the way to think? Is this the mindset of a so-called higher, advanced civilization? The US government didn't give a damn about international law. What they did give a damn about was expanding their own personal empires, with cold, callous indifference of the human cost.[505]

If the Bush administration had accepted 9/11 as an act of terrorism, there would have been no opportunity for going to dislodge the Taliban and occupying Afghanistan despite the fact that Afghan government did not declare a war on the United States. Terrorism is dealt with as a matter of international and domestic law enforcement. Indeed, there was the Montreal Sabotage Convention to which both the United States and Afghanistan were parties. It deals with all issues in dispute here, including access to the International Court of Justice to resolve international disputes arising under the Treaty such as the extradition of Osama. The Bush administration completely ignored this treaty, jettisoned it, set it aside, and never even mentioned it. They paid no attention to this treaty or any of the other 12 international treaties dealing with acts of terrorism that could have been applied to handle this matter in a peaceful, lawful way.

Before proceeding further in assessing the legality of war on Afghanistan, we need to look into some undeniable facts, keeping in mind that for one state to use military force against another state, one of three factors must be present: (1) The use of force must be authorized by the U.N. Security Council, or (2) the use of force must be an act of self-defense in the face of an armed

attack by another nation. (3) The use of force can be justified as "humanitarian intervention":

1. Neither the Taliban, nor the world has been provided with any evidence so far regarding the Taliban involvement with 9/11. Even the families of the victims of the 9/11 terrorist attacks have been left high and dry. They did not get anything in response to their demands for disclosure of vital evidence, such as the black boxes, voice recorders, the complete "air traffic control records" of the flights and complete passenger lists.
2. The United States administration and Justice Department officials moved to prevent disclosure of evidence that could be used in discovery proceedings, and in civil law suits filed by many families of 9/11 victims. Judge Hellerstein, hearing the suits, suspended 9/11 tort lawsuits, pending clarification of government's decision. In such a situation, it is impossible to find someone who would raise a voice in favor of the suffering Afghans, particularly when there is a legion of opportunist collaborators and agents among them, serving the occupiers in consolidating the occupation.
3. Osama is not an Afghan, but a citizen of Saudi Arabia. He was acceptable to the United States when he was part of the U.S.-*Jihad* against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, but became the enemy when he started his new *Jihad*, demanding an end to the Israeli occupation of Arab lands and the U.S. presence in Saudi Arabia on the pattern of Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan.
4. The takeover of the Taliban in 1996, as the *de facto* government in Kabul controlling 95 per cent of Afghanistan, was with the backing and extensive military and logistic support from the United States, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. *Jane's Defense Weekly,* an authoritative journal on defense acquisitions the world over, has conservatively estimated that half of all military supplies to the Taliban were from Pakistan, a coun-

try which cannot move an inch without a green signal from Washington.

5. The *de facto* Taliban government in Afghanistan was dependent for support on the government of Pakistan and had not committed a single act hostile to the people of the United States. ISI links to the hijackers and the officials in Washington who might have a hand in planning 9/11 are evident. To the contrary, Bush did not support his case with the argument that the Taliban government attacked the United States.
6. The Taliban's guilt was established only by association with Al-Qaeda. Even if something by the name of Al-Qaeda existed before 9/11, it is undisputed that it was not an organized military force. As discussed earlier, many analysts dispute even the existence of this title Al-Qaeda before 9/11. It is also undisputed that there were persons (in Afghanistan) from other Muslims countries, most of whom were on the run from repressive regimes or war torn regions.
7. The argument on the part of the crusaders was "*bellum justum*"—a just war—against "international terrorism," to "smoke out" terrorists and disperse terrorist bases in Afghanistan.
8. The Security Council never authorized the invasion of Afghanistan. The Council passed two resolutions in the fall of 2001: Resolution 1368 on September 12th and Resolution 1373 on September 28th, 2001. Neither resolution gave even indirect or implicit authorization to invade Afghanistan. Both resolutions condemned the attack of 9/11. Resolution 1373 outlined legislative, administrative and judicial steps to be taken to suppress global terrorism.
9. Mullah Omar also offered to negotiate a settlement with the US, to even include the extradition of Osama bin Laden.[506]

Based on the aforementioned facts, the argument that the military attack on Afghanistan was a "just war," a measure of "self-

defense" or a "preventive war" cannot be legally sustained.

Even if the official story about 9/11 is considered as correct, still there is no place for invasion and occupation of Afghanistan in the international law. Iris Marion Young, Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago, and Daniele Archibugi, Professor and advisor to EU, OECD and several U.N. agencies, argue in an essay, "Envisioning the Global Rule of Law," that there "might have been" and "still can be" an alternative response to 9/11. They suggest that the situation should be conceptualized "in people-to-people, not state-to-state terms." In their view, the alleged attackers were not "representative of a state." They were members of a "private organization" which most of the world did not even know about until 9/11. The victims of 9/11 were private individuals from at least 70 different countries. Thus: "The events should be conceptualized as crimes, not acts of war, to which the proper response is criminal investigation and prosecution within a rule of law and legally mandated measures for preventing and deterring similar crimes. For this reason, we disagree with those who think that the concept of just war can be applied to the United States military reaction."[507]

Francis Boyle and other legal experts call the United States' invasion of Afghanistan a war of aggression because instead of going to the International Court of Justice or resorting to resolving the issue according to the existing treaties, Bush went to the United National Security Council to get a resolution authorizing the use of military force against Afghanistan and Al-Qaeda. He failed. Francis Boyle notes:

> You have to remember that. This war has never been authorized by the United Nations Security Council. If you read the two resolutions that he got, it is very clear that what Bush, Jr. tried to do was to get the exact same type of language that Bush, Sr. got from the U.N. Security Council in the late fall of 1990 to authorize a war against Iraq to produce its expulsion from Kuwait. It is very clear if you read these resolutions, Bush, Jr. tried to get the exact same language twice and they failed. Indeed the first Security Council resolution refused

> to call what happened on September 11 an "armed attack"--that is by one state against another state. Rather they called it "terrorist attacks." But the critical point here is that this war has never been approved by the U.N. Security Council so technically it is illegal under international law. It constitutes an act and a war of aggression by the United States against Afghanistan.[508]

Neither resolution passed by the Security Council sanctioned the use of force by the US against Afghanistan. In fact, nether resolution even mentions the word 'Afghanistan'. As Mandel says, "… the September 2001 resolutions, with their non-committal perambulatory invocations of the right to self-defense, authorized everything but the use of force."[509]

Although there is a universal silence over the occupation of Afghanistan, the war on Afghanistan was not in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations, customary International Law and the decisions of the International Court of Justice. Even the United States Congress did not declare a war. There is technically no state of war today against Afghanistan as a matter of constitutional law as formally declared. Bush tried to get a formal declaration of war along the lines of December 8, 1941 after the Day of Infamy like Roosevelt got on Pearl Harbor. As stated in the introduction of this book, Bush began to use the rhetoric of Pearl Harbor, but he failed to get a declaration of war. The Congress never declared a war against Afghanistan or against anyone. All Bush could obtain was a War Powers Resolution authorization on September 14, 2001 which authorized the use of military force in specified, limited circumstances. One needs to keep in mind the speed with which the United States administration tried to obtain authorization for war. This limited authorization, which Bush obtained, means that the Bush administration must inform the Congress for Congressional oversight. In theory, in such a case, Congress controls funding, and ultimately Congress decides, not the Executive branch of the government.

Bush then went over to NATO to get a resolution for war. He convinced NATO to invoke Article 5 of the NATO Pact,[510]

which is only intended to deal with the armed attack by one state against another state. It is not, and has never been, intended to deal with a terrorist attack. The NATO Pact was supposed to deal in theory with an attack on a NATO member state by a member of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union. With the collapse of both the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, there was no real justification or pretext anymore for the continued existence of NATO.

Although this resolution enabled NATO countries to act collectively, countries were restricted to action determined by the North Atlantic Council. The September 12, 2001 resolution in clear language barred any action until further decision by the Council.

> No collective action will be taken by NATO until further consultations are held and further decisions are made by the North Atlantic Council.

On October 5, 2001, at the request of the United States, NATO agreed to take eight measures collectively and individually including the provision of blanket over flight clearances for U.S. aircraft and to provide the United States access to NATO members' ports and airfields. NATO thereby agreed to facilitate actions taken by the United States outside the restrictions of the NATO decision-making process.[511]

The United States then rejected this collective approach and put together its own group of "allies" leaving the United States in control of all aspects of the bombing of Afghanistan and of any future war actions including bombings of additional countries. Lloyd Axworthy, president of the University of Winnipeg and a former Canadian foreign minister, correctly described the "coalition" as a "hub-and-spoke arrangement, where direction comes from the centre with little input from the outside members."[512]

The absence of evidence to establish that the 9/11 attacks had any connection with Afghanistan, even if such a conclusion was possible as per the public statements of Bush and company on

the reasons for waging this "war against terror," this would not justify a full scale military onslaught on Afghanistan with hundreds of bombing sorties and thousands of civilian casualties, leading to establishing a puppet regime in Kabul.

One of the most significant 20th Century developments in International Law has been the restriction and regulation by treaty and customary law of the former unregulated privileges of states to resort to war on this scale. Even at the home front, Bush was not constitutionally empowered to declare war. The Congress under the United States Constitution was not authorized to delegate to the President its constitutional power to declare war. Whereas under Article 1, Section 8, clause 11 of the Constitution of the United States, the power to declare war vests with Congress. Limitations are imposed on the exercise of this power by Article 1, Section 8, clause 15, which mandates that Congress is not authorized to "call forth the militia" except to "execute the laws of the Union and to suppress insurrections and invasions."[513]

The staged attack of 9/11 was neither an insurrection nor an invasion of the United States of America. Congress could not delegate what was constitutionally impermissible. *Prima facie* the military attack on Afghanistan was an unconstitutional and illegal exercise of power by the United States administration-turned-crusaders of our age.

Moreover, the war on Afghanistan was not justified in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. Article 2, paragraph 4 of the United Nations, a treaty ratified and signed by the United States, specifies:

> All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.[514]

The only exception to the aforesaid binding rule is the right to resort to self-defense under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations,[515] strictly subject to the rule of law and proce-

dure laid down in the U.N. Charter. The 9/11 attacks were terrorist attacks carried by unknown/unidentified individuals. As such, Bush could not resort to Article 51 of the United Nation Charter. The issue ought to have been resolved by resorting to Conventions against terrorism to which the United States is a signatory. Article 33 of the U.N. Charter[516] mandates that before resorting to war, every government is required to resort to negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and judicial settlement. This mandatory procedure was not complied with, as we see that all proposals, suggestions and requests from the Taliban government were rejected off hand and no inquiry was ever conducted to find out the level of support provided from within to carry out the 9/11 operation.

The communication of John Negroponte, U.S. Permanent Representative to the Security Council, indicates that the decision by Bush and company to resort to war was taken long before 9/11 and well before complete facts were available on the nature of the attack. This communication informed the Security Council that:

> Since 11 September, my government has obtained clear and compelling information that the Al-Qaeda organization which is supported by the Taliban regime in Afghanistan had a central role in the attacks. There is much we do not know. Our enquiry is in its early stages. We may find that our self-defense requires further actions with respect to other organizations and States.

It was clear that there was no "clear and compelling information" and the enquiry was not even in the "early stages." In that case, war cannot be resorted to unless the facts are clearly ascertained. War is a remedy of last resort. The last sentence of the above communication, that the government of the United States reserves its right to take "further actions with respect to other organizations and States," establishes that a case for continuous military intervention was already being made.

The right to resort to war as a measure of self-defense is neither unrestricted nor subjective, as observed by the International

Court of Justice in the case relating to "Military and Paramilitary Activities" in and against Nicaragua ruling that:

> …the submission of the right to self-defense to the conditions of necessity and proportionality is a rule of customary International Law …there is a specific rule whereby self-defense would warrant only measures which are proportional to the armed attack and necessary to respond to it, a rule well established in International Law …[517]

This dual condition applies to customary International law as well as to the right of self-defense under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

No government or an armed contingent of any government or state carried out the terrorist attacks of 9/11. The *de facto* Taliban government in Kabul did not authorize the 9/11 attacks in any manner whatsoever. The response of the United States in waging a war to devastate an entire nation and install a regime run by CIA agents was neither a proportional response, nor warranted. It was based on malicious intentions as established in the earlier sections of this book. Professor Francis Boyle insists:

> Clearly, what is going on now in Afghanistan is not self-defense. Let's be honest. We all know it. At best, this is reprisal, retaliation, vengeance, catharsis—call it what you want. It is not self-defense. And retaliation is never self-defense. Indeed, that was the official position of the United States government. Even during the darkest days of the Vietnam War, when former Under Secretary of State Eugene V. Rosca tried to get the State Department to switch their position, they refused and continued to maintain, no, retaliation is not self-defense. And this is not self-defense what we are doing in Afghanistan. Since none of these justifications and pretexts hold up as a matter of law, then what the United States government today is doing against Afghanistan constitutes armed aggression. It is illegal. There is no authority for this.[518]

The 21st century crusaders were fully aware that many countries facing real terrorist attacks for several years have not resorted to war on other countries. Instead, they opted to negotiate and resolve the issues and causes which lead to the desperation of other people. The United States government could have resorted to the

provisions of the Tokyo Convention or to the 1971 Montreal Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the safety of Civil Aviation. The United States could have resorted to any of the existing Conventions against terrorism. It could have resorted to any other proportionate response. It is for the first time that a state calling itself upholder of the international law and moral standards resorted to such an unjust war on a helpless nation.

Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations permits the exercise of the right to self-defense only "until the Security Council has taken measures." The Security Council responded immediately. The Security Council, by Resolution No.1368 passed on September 12, 2001, and Resolution No.1373 dated September 28, 2001, which called on member states to work together urgently to "fully implement the relevant International Anti-Terrorist Conventions" and "prevent and suppress the financing" of terrorist attacks by "freezing financial assets."

Resolution 1373 adopted by the Security Council at its 4385th meeting on September 28, 2001 (incorporating the earlier resolution September 12) affirms the responsibility of Member States to take only those measures that are:

> ...in compliance with national and international law including international human rights standards to prevent and suppress terrorist attacks and to take action against the perpetrators of such acts.

Security Council resolution 1373 specifically restricts member states to actions that are authorized by law and in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The September 28, 2001 Security Council Resolution 1373 (affirming resolution 1368 of September 12) does not authorize the armed attacks. While this resolution condemns the September 11 attacks and affirms the Charter right to individual and collective self-defense, it clearly directs member states to combat threats to international peace and security caused by terrorism in "accordance with the Charter."

Nowhere do any of these important Security Council resolutions authorize the use of force against non-combatants or the use of force to overthrow the Taliban government. The Security Council set up a committee to monitor progress on the measures of the resolutions and gave all states 90 days to report back to it. According to Michael Mandel, professor of law at Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto with a specialization in international criminal law:

> Neither resolution can remotely be said to authorize the use of military force. True, both, in their preambles, abstractly "affirm" the inherent right of self-defense, but they do so 'in accordance with the Charter.' They do not say military action against Afghanistan would be within the right of self-defense Nor could they. That's because the right of unilateral self-defense does not include the right to retaliate once an attack has stopped. The right of self-defense in international law is like the right of self-defense in our own law: It allows you to defend yourself when the law is not around, but it does not allow you to take the law into your own hands.[519]

It may be argued that the Bush administration attempted to prevent the war by demanding that Osama and the Al-Qaeda should be handed over by the Taliban. This was not a *bona fide* attempt because inadequate time was allotted for the so-called negotiations in which the Taliban were pleading innocence and suggesting solutions, whereas the United States was rejecting everything and threatening a full-scale war. Even though the Taliban government made some overtures but everything was rejected immediately. In just 25 days, before dawn on October 7, 2001, the U.S.-UK coalition forces launched serial bombings in Afghanistan on Kabul and 31 major cities and towns without exhausting other alternative remedies, confirming that the war was already planned and all logistical arrangements were well in place before 9/11.

Bush's address to the United States Congress on September 20, 2001, just 9 days after the staged attacks, also shows that he had reached the decision to attack Afghanistan regardless of the results

of the cosmetic demands for handing over Osama to the United States. Bush declared that the United States would find Al-Qaeda in sixty countries and that the "war against terror" was just beginning with Afghanistan as the first target. In other words, the war will not be the last and the military attack on Afghanistan was only the first of a series of wars to be initiated against different nations.

In any assessment of the nature of the war in Afghanistan, it must be remembered that the United States had termed Soviet military troop presence in Afghanistan in support of the then Afghan government in 1979 as "Soviet military aggression." Applying the same standards, the war waged by the United States and its installing a puppet regime in Kabul could not be regarded as a just or legitimate war for democracy or a war in "self-defense." Furthermore, the Taliban government admittedly did not request any military assistance from the United States, unlike the Afghan government, which in 1979 had sought from the former USSR against the U.S.-supported groups waging covert war before the full-scale Soviet invasion.

None of the ruses the United States and Britain listed as justifications for war on Afghanistan stands the scrutiny of the law. Even in the U.S. military courts, judges have accepted that the United States war on Afghanistan is illegal. Marjorie Cohn, a professor at Thomas Jefferson School of Law, President-elect of the National Lawyers Guild, and the United States representative to the executive committee of the American Association of Jurists, writes that she testified at the hearing of Petty Officer 3rd Class Pablo Paredes. Pablo was charged for refusing orders to board the amphibious assault ship Bonhomme Richard before it left San Diego with 3,000 sailors and Marines bound for the Persian Gulf on December 6, 2004. Pablo maintained that transporting Marines to fight in an illegal war, and possibly to commit war crimes, would make him complicit in those crimes. According to Marjorie Cohn:

> On cross-examination, Navy prosecutor Lt. Jonathan Freeman elicited testimony from me that the U.S. wars in Yugoslavia and Afghanistan also violated the U.N. Charter, as neither was conducted in self-defense or with the blessing of the Security Council. Upon the conclusion of my testimony, the judge said, 'I think that the government has successfully proved that any service member has reasonable cause to believe that the wars in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq were illegal.'[520]

There cannot be a just war against terrorists because they are neither a sovereign state, nor do they necessarily represent a true rebel cause that will justify talking about civil war in some sense. This is not surprising as the fairly conservative politician, Wayland Kennet, pointed out in Britain, there was only 'rhetorical declaration of war' in Afghanistan, rendering it an illegal conflict from the point of view of international law."[521]

The oft-repeated analogy with medieval wars against pirates is not going to make the war on Afghanistan legal. Pirates in the Middle Ages were in many cases treated like criminals, in a period in which war itself was seen as a kind of police action—at least justified war. And because pirates were mostly afloat, they were a kind of isolatable anti-state in any case. By contrast, those who were accused of the 9/11 attacks were living in the pores of the society, like other criminals. They could not have been reached by military means. Therefore, John Milbank, Francis Gall Professor of Philosophical Theology at the University of Virginia, argues:

> Were this a war against terrorists it would not be a just one, primarily because it would be lunatically 'disproportionate' action. A case against Al-Qaeda should have been brought before the International Court in the Hague, which could have sponsored many effective means to reduce the influence. In any case, not the perpetrators (still at large after thousands of deaths and the sowing of the seeds of untold future misery and future terroristic movements) but a sovereign state—which was ready to hand over the supposed perpetrators, and with whom the British Foreign Office recommended a deal—has been attacked. As I have already said, the idea that Britain or the

> United States cares about the inequities of the Taliban is ludicrous. They helped to create them; they are happy to tolerate the convenient Islamic atrocities of the Saudis; and having totally failed to carryout their own ground war, they were ready to let the Taliban be displaced by the equally obnoxious Northern Alliance.[522]

One must assume that the 21st century crusaders are cynically aware of all that these analysts are saying. So one must assume that the war against Afghanistan in specific and on terrorism in general is a premeditated response to a staged event and a cover for the operations and purposes of the kind described in Chapter 1-3 of this book. The above discussion proves that the United States war on Afghanistan is a religiously motivated war of terror, which has no legal basis at all. That is why Western analysts are confused. To them "war on terrorism" makes no sense, as Rowan Williams points out: "since terrorism is now a permanently possible form of behavior, the idea of a 'war' against it is as absurd as the idea of a 'war on drugs.'"[523] On the other hand, Muslims do not have much doubt left. Abdel Hadi Owang, prime minister of Tringono Sultanate in Malaysia said on the TV show Bila Hodoud (without frontiers) on October 31, 2001 that the war was illegal because the United States administration did not present any evidence or witnesses proving Afghanistan involvement in 9/11: "There are hidden religious objectives behind the United States military campaign."[524]

It is doubtful that any reasonable legal apparatus could find the U.S. to have acted proportionately by declaring an illegal 'war' and causing the damage it subsequently incurred.[525] Regarding illegality of the war, Professor Michael Mandel concludes:

> Since the United States and Britain have undertaken this attack without the explicit authorization of the Security Council, those who die from it will be victims of a crime against humanity, just like the victims of the 9/11 attacks…Now it must be clear to everyone that the military attack on Afghanistan has nothing to do with preventing terrorism.[526]

While referring to 12 multi-lateral agreements against terror-

ism,[527] Gail Davidson, a member of the Law Society of British Columbia and founder of Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada, concludes:

> The September 11 attacks are illegal under these conventions. So is the war against Afghanistan.
>
> The bombing of Afghanistan and the resulting deaths, injuries, starvation and displacement of Afghanistan people and the destruction of property including the destruction of necessary infrastructure is illegal. The use of force to topple the Taliban government is also illegal.
>
> While the rhetoric justifying war raids on Afghanistan (and possibly other countries) suggests there are no laws or law enforcement mechanisms that can respond to the September 11 attacks. That is not true and flies in the face of both international law and its underlying policies.[528]

The above discussion proves that war on Afghanistan was even more illegitimate than the war on Iraq. The slight difference is that memos of the Bush and Blair's determination to launch a war of aggression on Iraq are leaked to the media and the world now knows how the war-infected minds were planning to even fly "U2 reconnaissance aircraft planes with fighter cover over Iraq, painted in UN colors." Bush told Blair, "If Saddam fired on them, he would be in breach [of UN resolutions]."

The disclosures come in a new edition of *Lawless World*, by Phillipe Sands, a professor of international law at University College, London. The memo seen by Prof Sands reveals Bush even expressed the hope that a defector would be extracted from Iraq and give a "public presentation about Saddam's WMD." These are the signs of minds, which are fresh from the success of 9/11 deception. Also present at the meeting were President Bush's National Security Adviser, Condoleezza Rice and her deputy Dan Fried, and the Presidents Chief of Staff, Andrew Card. Bush also said to have referred Mr Blair to a "small possibility" that Saddam would be "assassinated".

The leak information about the way Bush and his associates were planning different false flag operations to launch a war on Iraq clearly shows their mindset, which are bent upon destroying their perceived enemies, even at the cost of their own people and resources. The United Nations is no more than a tool for them to legitimize the unprovoked aggression. According to Professor Sands, Blair told the US president that a second UN resolution would be an "insurance policy," providing "international cover, including with the Arabs."

The revelation that Blair and Bush joined hands to hatch a conspiracy, entrap Saddam and launch a war of aggression on Iraq, even in the absence of a second UN resolution, perfectly tallies with what happened in the case of Afghanistan, where the US administration was pretty sure that it cannot come up with any excuse of launching a war of aggression, other than a 9/11 kind of operation. That is what happened and that is how the United States is sitting in Afghanistan despite the religiously motivated illegal and illegitimate actions from the very beginning.

CHAPTER 7

Extreme Intolerance: A Sign of Religious Vengeance

WHATEVER we have witnessed in Afghanistan since October 07, 2001 are not crimes against the Taliban. The word Talib means "anyone who seeks." Those who seek religious knowledge and education are specifically called Taliban: plural of the word Talib in Pashtu. So, every Afghan who supported the government in Afghanistan after 1996 did not become a Talib. Similarly, not all those who oppose the U.S.-installed puppet regime after October 07, 2001 are Taliban. Therefore, the United States crimes in Afghanistan are crimes against a nation and humanity, not the Taliban alone. These crimes have exposed the limits of intolerance of the modern day crusaders who have committed themselves to going to any extreme to teach a lesson to those Muslims who are working to make living by Islam feasible for other Muslims.

Under the smokescreen of the Taliban's alleged crimes, the modern day crusaders committed serious crimes against humanity by waging a war of aggression on Afghanistan. The war and subsequent war crimes are motivated only by a religious factor. Waging wars of aggression, killing and systematically torturing human

beings is not possible without extra-ordinary moral justification. Christopher Coker describes this phenomenon in his book, *Waging War Without Warriors.* He writes that the Western people became "human" by denying humanity to others, by treating the colonized hardly any better than animals. The category *human* was thereby emptied of its universal meaning.[529]

This has become particularly true after the extensive anti-Islam campaign. Muslims, particularly those who pose ideological or physical threat to the West-dominated world order, are no longer a party to a Western philosophical discourse. A Muslim labeled as "Islamist" suddenly loses human status and becomes an evil barbarian. If these "barbarians" are attacked, they do not have the right to self-defense. They do not have the rights of warriors and represent no *human* existential dimension. Under the influence of the anti-Islam media blitz, Western armies in particular do not understand their enemies anymore. "Islamists" are considered "terrorists" and unlike revolutionaries and freedom fighters, they have no place in the Western intellectual tradition.

September 11 changed the nature of warfare because it is not an ordinary war any longer. The distinction between war and crime was eliminated with the religious touch given to the war by the architects of war (See chapter 2 and 3). The history of warfare can be seen as a history of finding mechanisms that are more effective for enabling and conditioning men to overcome their innate resistance to killing their fellow human beings. Nothing has worked better than religious motivation.

It is said that it is so much easier to kill someone if they look and behave distinctly different from you. The Bush and Blair administrations repetition of, "they hate our way of life," further refined the anti-Islam mindset that was developed over the years with systematic propaganda. This type of rhetoric on the part of Bush and his fellow crusaders served the mechanisms, which Dave Grossman believes, facilitate these kinds of psychological operations for dehumanizing an enemy. These mechanisms include:

— *Cultural* distance, such as racial and ethnic differences, which permit the killer to dehumanize the victim;
— *Moral* distance, which takes into consideration the kind of intense belief in moral superiority and vengeful actions associated with many civil wars;
— *Social* distance, which considers the impact of a lifetime of practice in thinking of a particular class as less than human in a socially stratified environment; and
— *Mechanical* distance, which includes the sterile Nintendo-game unreality of killing through a TV screen, a thermal sight, a sniper sight, or some other kind of mechanical buffer that permits the killer to deny the humanity of his victim.[530]

Typically, distance is a tool that overcomes our natural resistance to killing fellow human beings. Religious motivation provided this tool to the United States soldiers. Besides considering their victims as evil, the United States forces cannot consider their enemy more than mere numbers due to remote control killing.

In reality, the problem of distinguishing murder from killing in religiously motivated combat is extremely complex. Common soldiers must first deny the guilt within them, and they must assure themselves that the world, the battlefield, and the horrific environment are not mad and irrational, that the victims and targets are less than animals, that the victims are evil vermin, and that what the nation or coalition and the leaders and superiors have told them to do is right and just. The repetition of "evil" from Bush, Boykin and other military leaders re-enforced the mindset in the United States forces.

Brook Warner best explains the motivation which led U.S. soldiers to commit the worst crimes against humanity in Afghanistan and Iraq in his essay published in the latest book, *Abu Ghraib: The Politics of torture*. He writes:

> Emotional distancing prevails even outside the pressure cooker of war. It is choosing to turn a blind eye to protect ourselves from the

> pain of seeing others suffer. It is dismissing the customs and traditions of another culture with the notion that the way we do it is better. It is the faithful asserting without qualms that their religion is the only true religion and that all non-believers are going to hell. And though empathy is the most resounding quality Americans have for countering emotional distancing, military training works hard to squash it. Reserve Brig. Gen, Janis Karpinksi, who was in charge of all sixteen U.S. prisons, spoke out against Maj. Gen. Geoffrey Miller, Chief of interrogations and Prisons in Iraq, saying, 'He said they are like dogs, and if you allow them to believe at any point they are more than a dog then you've lost control of them.'[531]

This explains how U.S. soldiers are behaving in Iraq, which has no connection with 9/11. Imagine the level of vengeance in Afghanistan among U.S. soldiers who were conditioned with years-long anti-Taliban propaganda and the lie that the Taliban government facilitated 9/11 attacks. It is not surprising to see U.S. forces using radioactive depleted uranium and other weapons of mass destruction in Afghanistan, turning the whole country into one huge prison[532] and torturing hundreds of children for the first time in modern history in the modern day concentration camps.[533] This is naked aggression, carried out by religiously motivated soldiers. This is not a just or a rational response.

According to a *New York Times* report: "Juvenile detainees in American facilities like Abu Ghraib and Bagram Air Base have been subject to the same mistreatment as adults as if they were one way or the other connected to 9/11. The International Red Cross, Amnesty International and the Pentagon itself have gathered substantial testimony of torture of children, bolstered by accounts from soldiers who witnessed or participated in the abuse."[534] Some of these detainees are "as young as eight."[535]

Under the international law, the alleged crimes of the Taliban were not of the magnitude to subject the Afghan nation to such inhumane treatment under an indefinite occupation. As discussed earlier, the crimes of the United States, Israel, India and the former Soviet Union or present day Russia far exceed the al-

leged crimes of the Taliban. However, no one ever thought of waging a war of aggression or occupation on these states to correct their problems. The aggression of the United States forces against Afghanistan based on lies and deception reminds one of the Nuremberg Trials. There were three major charges levied during the Nuremberg tribunals: Crimes against peace (i.e., waging a "war of aggression"), war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg referring to the charge of waging a war of aggression highlighted the gravity of the kind of crimes the United States has been committing since the dawn of 21st century.[536]

It is important to understand that war crimes fall into two classes: (1) war crimes relevant to battlefield conduct; and (2) waging a war of aggression. To explain what was at that time an unprecedented focus on the second kind of war crime—war of aggression—the Nuremberg Judgment included the following statement:

> The charges in the indictment that the defendants planned and waged aggressive wars are charges of the utmost gravity. War is essentially an evil thing. Its consequences are not confined to the belligerent states alone, but affect the whole world. To initiate a war of aggression, therefore, is not only an international crime; it is the supreme international crime differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole.[537]

The 21st century crusaders argue that the military attack of October 7, 2001 was a "just war" or a "*bellum justu*'; a war of self-defense, a preventive war in response to the terrorist attacks of Al-Qaeda, masterminded by Osama. The Taliban, in turn, were accused for harboring Osama and permitting terrorist camps on its territory for hostile acts against the United States.

The world—which is silent over the United States aggression and subsequent crimes against humanity—knows that it is still not clearly established that the 9/11 incidents were the acts of Osama and the Taliban. The United States letter to the Chairman

of the United Nations Security Council on October 7, 2001, another letter from UK on October 4, 2001 and the videotape released on December 13 cannot justify this war of aggression and subsequent crimes against humanity.

As described in chapter 5, a fake videotape of an individual allegedly claiming to be Osama, reaching swiftly into the hands of the United States administration, desiring to advance its own explanation for events, is not a proof of the involvement of Osama, let alone the Taliban and the whole Afghan nation, in the terrorist attacks of 9/11. On the basis of the facts, which have emerged in the public domain about the background of Osama and of those alleged to have perpetrated the 9/11 attacks, the core issue is whether those who allegedly committed the crimes in the United States had any connection with Afghanistan. The way the blame was shifted to Iraq and even to Iran exposed the depth of lies and deceptions on the part of the United States administration. Even the 9/11 Commission attempted to link Iran to Al-Qaeda.[538]

The war waged on Afghanistan was manifestly a religiously motivated war of aggression against a people who were working to establish a society and a way of governance according to their religion—Islam. Bush was aware that the military attack on Afghanistan was not justified; yet orders were given for the carpet-bombing of cities, towns and villages. The nature of the weapons of mass destruction used and the range of firepower unleashed in a country with few military targets resulted in mass murder of civilians and unnecessary loss of life of combatants who had surrendered. The entire infrastructure of Afghanistan, including valuable natural resources, such as the forests in Tora Bora and other places, were severely damaged.

The bombings of U.S. military forces were indiscriminate, sparing neither the International Red Cross Hospitals in Kabul and Kandahar, nor the Kajakai dam, food warehouses of the Red Cross, the maternity hospital at Kabul, and the military hospi-

tal at Heart. Homes, power facilities, irrigation projects, schools, Al-Jazeera office and telephone exchanges were among other installations indiscriminately bombed and destroyed. The people of Afghanistan constructed the destroyed infrastructure over years of development efforts.

The use of illegal weapons

The United States labeled its war crimes as "collateral damage." It is necessary to compare the Taliban's capacity to respond to the United States military might on the one hand and the kind of weapons and amount of ammunition U.S. forces used on theother to see the extent of the vengeance of U.S. soldiers—brimming with Christian faith—on the march. During the first four weeks of war on Afghanistan, these soldiers of faith dropped half a million tons of bombs, 20 kilo for every man, woman and child.[539] Marc Herold, a U.S. economic professor at the University of Hampshire, claimed that on the bases of official figures "between October 7 and December 6, 2001, U.S. aerial attacks on Afghanistan had killed an average of 62 innocent civilians a day."[540]

Daniela Gioseffi writes in her book, *Women on War*:

> In addition to deploying the most horrific weapons even known to man (even though there were very few targets of military significance), the Defense Department recommended the use of tactical nuclear weapons, while some members of Congress advised the use of small nuclear 'bunker busters.' Bush advisors, including Stephen Hadley, Deputy National Security Advisor Stephen Cambone, and William Schneider, also advocated the use of nuclear weapons. The father of the neutron bomb, Samuel Cohen, even postulated that his weapon might be appropriate for Afghanistan…Some of the conventional weapons America used to support the Northern Alliance during their advances on the Taliban were so powerful that they are described by the Pentagon as 'near nuclear' weapons.[541]

It is thus necessary to reiterate the well-established principles of International Humanitarian Law which prohibit such war crimes.

In the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on Nuclear Weapons rendered in 1996, Judge Christopher Gregory Weeramantry recalled that traditional principles of Humanitarian Law are deep rooted in many cultures and civilizations. Quoting the famous "Martens clause" introduced by unanimous vote into the Hague Convention of 1899 on the Laws and Customs of War on Land (Hague IV) and the 1907 Hague Convention which mandated that "in cases not included in the Regulations adopted by them, the inhabitants and belligerents remain under the protection and the rule of the principles of the law of nations, as they result from the usage established among civilized peoples, from the law of humanity and the dictates of conscience."

To contend that the United States Armed forces and its President are not bound by rules of International Humanitarian Warfare for the manufacture, stockpiling and use of weapons, in violation of the laws of warfare,[542] is an attempt to turn back the clock of history and to continue the tragic and criminal decision making of the United States government that led to the criminal attack on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

In addition, with regard to the United States cluster and napalm bombing, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction of 1997 and similar Conventions merely codify established principles of customary International law that the right of parties "to adopt means of injuring the enemy are not unlimited" and "arms, projectiles or material calculated to cause unnecessary suffering shall not be used," and civilian populations are not to be harmed, among other principles codified subsequently by convention.[543]

Weapons, such as the 15,000-pound Fuel Air Explosives (FAEs) and Cluster bombs are to be considered banned if their use has indiscriminate effects (no effective distinction between civilians and belligerents); or if their use is out of proportion with the pursuit of military objective; or adversely affects the environment

in a widespread, long term and severe manner; or causes superfluous injury and unnecessary suffering."[544]

In accordance with these standards, Depleted Uranium munitions, Fuel-air Explosives (FAEs) or Daisy Cutters, Cluster bombs and Anti-Personnel mines are illegal. The permission for their use in Afghanistan by the United States president as a Commander-in-Chief of U.S. forces constitutes a war crime.

Leuren Moret, president of Scientists For Indigenous People and City of Berkely Environmental Commissioner; Professor Katsuma Yagasaki of the Faculty of Science of the Ryukyus University, Okinawa; and Major Doug Rokke, Professor of Physics and Geosciences of Jacksonville State University and former Director of DU weapons project of the U.S. army from 1994-1995 in charge of the cleaning up of DU in Iraq and himself affected by DU have made available details of their investigations. The scientific documents and memoranda from U.S. army sources, which they have brought in public, prove beyond any doubt that Bush's crusading administration allowed the use of DU weapons in Afghanistan in the manner that Zyklon-B was used across Europe—as a weapon of mass murder calculated to destroy all living species exposed.[545]

Professor Albrecht Schott, scientist member of World Depleted Uranium Center in Berlin, in an address entitled "Consequences of the Military and Civil Use of Depleted Uranium (DU)," at the public symposium on "American Policy and its Consequences," has described Depleted Uranium as "A Weapon Against This Planet." Describing the effect of this weapon system, Leuren Moret coined the term "omnicide" as going beyond the "silent genocide" it has inflicted on the Afghan and Iraqi people.[546]

Rosalie Bartell author of the classic book, *No Immediate Danger*, has given a comprehensive meaning of the term omnicide as:

> The concept of species annihilation means a relatively swift, deliberately induced end to history, culture, science, biological reproduction and memory. It is the ultimate human rejection of the gift of life, an act

which requires a new word to describe it as omnicide.[547]

The use of DU in Afghanistan by U.S. forces has not been denied. The U.S. forces used DU ordnance by way of attack aircraft, AH-64 helicopter gun ships, advanced cruise missiles, and Conventional Air Launched Cruise Missile (CALCM) among others, such as PGU-14 API uranium piercing munitions fired by Vulcan Canon installed on A10 Gun ships and AH-64 Apache gun ships. The Bunker buster bombs (DU weapons) were dropped from F-16 attack planes.

It is authoritatively estimated by independent scientific investigations and reports on record that at the very minimum 500-600 tons of DU ordnance were used throughout Afghanistan including at Tora Bora, Shaikoot, Paktia, Mazare-e-Sharif, Jalalabad, Nangarhar, Khost, Kundoz and Kabul around Bagram. Another estimate by Dr Mohammed Daud Miraki, director Afghan DU and Recovery Fund, is at least 1000 tons of Depleted and undepleted Uranium used.[548] Professor Katsuma Yagasaki, a scientist at the Ryukyus University, Okinawa, calculated that 800 tons of DU were used in Afghanistan.[549] Dr. Asef Dracovic said in November 2002 that U.S. forces had used more DU weapons in Afghanistan than they had in the Gulf War and the Balkans.[550]

British researcher Dai Williams reports that as many as 21 different weapon systems used by the United States in bombing Afghanistan contain a mystery "dense metal" needed to double the penetration of older models. Unlike its admissions in Iraq, Bosnia and Kosovo, the Pentagon has refused to confirm the use of DU in Afghanistan. But if the mystery metal turns out to be DU, Williams believes that between 500 and 1,000 tons of DU may have been used. So-called bunker busters, which are known as GBU 28s and GBU 37s, weigh about 1.5 tons and between 50 and 70% of the warhead weight has to be this high-density metal, says Williams. "So you're talking about, potentially, for each bunker buster bomb over a ton of uranium waste being burnt up and then spread around in the area," Williams told *Asia Pacific*

Features in July 2002.[551]

One has to look at the need for using such a great amount of banned ammunition against an enemy with no meaningful weapons at all. If there was no need, what is the motivation behind such an indiscriminate use of banned weapons? What did the crusaders want to achieve—to defeat the Taliban or to poison Afghanistan soil and air for generations of Afghans to come?

On January 16, 2002, the Secretary of Defense, Rumsfeld confirmed in a briefing that "high levels of radioactive count" had been confirmed due to the result of "depleted uranium shells on some warheads." Mr Philip Coyle, Senior Adviser of the Centre for Defense Information in Washington DC, admitted that DU weapons had been used in Afghanistan.[552] He did not rule out its use right from the beginning of the war of aggression. Instead, he said: "You won't see that much depleted uranium used because there just aren't the targets.[553]

The documented reports of Marc Herold and Dai Williams, the Survey of the Uranium Medical Research Centre, Washington DC; and the reports of Dr. Mohammed Daud Miraki, Afghan Recovery Fund, refer in detail to the widespread use and effects of DU weapons on the people in Afghanistan inflicting slow and painful death, termed as the "silent genocide." The unborn are being affected and the radioactivity levels are altering irreversibly the genetic code of all those exposed. This shows the extreme to which the crusaders can go to eliminate the imaginary fear which they have created about Islam. Their crusade threatens to destroy not only the existing life, but also to mutilate the life to come anywhere Muslims start a struggle for self-determination.

Leuren Moret presents evidence of United States military policy on the use of DU weapons, tracing the history of its creation and the politics of its use. According to Moret, after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, an international outcry and taboo against nuclear weapons prevented the further use of nuclear and radioactive weapons; this policy was abandoned in 1991.

A decision was made by the Strategic Command in the United States to blur the distinction between conventional and nuclear weapons by introducing DU into the battlefield. Moret aptly described DU as the "Trojan horse" of nuclear weapons.[554]

Apart from unnecessarily using DU weapons with the full knowledge of Bush, Cluster Bombs and Fuel-Air Explosives (Daisy Cutters) were used against a defenseless population by the United States military. The report of Human Rights Watch, titled *Fatally Flawed: Cluster bombs and Their Use by the United States in Afghanistan*, reported that "the U.S. arsenal included cluster bombs, large bombs that release hundreds of smaller ammunitions or bomblets…, they also have serious civilian side effects …(the areas over which the bomblets disperse) as well as the fact that they leave behind large numbers of unexploded sub-munitions, that they become *de facto* land mines."[555]

The modern-day crusaders did not hesitate in dropping "about 1,228 cluster bombs containing 248,056 bomblets between October 2001 and March 2002…the United States primarily used two models, the CBU-87, a veteran of the Gulf War and the NATO bombing campaign in Yugoslavia, and the new…CBU-103 … Navy CBU-99s, CBU-100S and JSOW were also used."[556] Does this reflect a war on poorly armed Taliban, a war on terrorism or a war on a nation as a whole to make it a living example for other wanna-be Islamic states? The Taliban government was not an imperial army with vast military resources encampments. Taliban were ordinary people. The United States' excessive use of heavy bombs despite the lack of military targets shows that the United States was targeting civilian installations, terrorizing the nation into submission, which has no justification under the law.

In a three and a half week mission to Afghanistan in March 2001, Human Rights found ample evidence that cluster bombs caused civilians harm. "Cluster bombs also left unexploded bomblets, or live duds which continue to injure and kill innocent civilians long after the attack….common post-strike victims

in Afghanistan include shepherds grazing their flocks, farmers plowing their fields, and children gathering wood."[557]

According to Laura Flanders, a journalist and broadcaster, BLU-82 is named "Daisy Cutter" because of the nature of crater it leaves. It has the ability "to clear a 3 mile long path. Dropped from a huge transport aircraft 'Big Blue' releases a cloud of inflammable ammonium nitrate, aluminium dust, and polystyrene slurry, which is then ignited by a detonator. The result is a firestorm that incinerates an area the size of five football fields, consumes oxygen, and creates a shock-wave and a vacuum pressure that destroys internal organs of anyone in range."[558]

None of these weapon systems used in Afghanistan satisfy the test of International Humanitarian Law or the argument of self-defense and means required to dislodge the Taliban. The use of these weapons is part of the ongoing war crimes against a defenseless people whose only crime was the desire to live by Islam. If the objectives were eliminating terrorism and terrorists, let the modern day crusaders admit their defeat in finding and apprehending Osama and Al-Zawahiri in the past 4 years. Let them stay away from drafting constitutions for Muslims and consolidating the thrones of CIA's puppets. Humanity cannot justify the United States crimes just because the Taliban were turned into monsters by the co-opted and fully embedded "mainstream" media.

Unfortunately, the lies about the Taliban are not like the lies about Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction. The latter were exposed the moment no one could find such weapons in Iraq. The lies about the Taliban, however, may never be exposed.

War Crimes, religion and Muslim Prisoners

Examination of the United States treatment of prisoners is very important to note because it shows not only religious motivation of the captors, but also the way they used religion

and religious faith of Muslim prisoners to add psychological and spiritual aspect to their modern-day torture techniques. Later on, these war crimes were deliberately leaked to media to terrorize all those who may have an ambition to live by Islam or struggle for Muslims' right to self-determination. The objective has been to break their will to resist the United States occupations meant for imposing its values and way of life upon Muslim populations.

Before discussing other factors, let us analyze status of the Muslim prisoners in American custody in many known and unknown places since 9/11. The relevant details from the Fact Sheet on Status of Detainees at Guantanamo Bay, released by the office of the U.S. Press Secretary on February 7, 2002, states:

> The President has determined that the Geneva Convention applies to the Taliban detainees but not to the Al-Qaeda detainees. Al-Qaeda is not a State party to the Geneva Convention; it is a foreign terrorist group. As such its members are not entitled to POW status. Although we have never recognized the Taliban as the legitimate Afghan government, Afghanistan is a party to the Convention, and the President has determined that the Taliban are covered by the Convention, however the Taliban detainees do not qualify as POWs.

The status of Osama and other foreigners differs from the Taliban as they belonged to various countries, not parties to the conflict imposed on Afghanistan and it is not conclusively established that they were "volunteers." They did not attack the United States.

The United States does not have evidence to prove it to the contrary. The United States imposed a war on Afghanistan and all those who were there. It is not the other way round. Not a single Afghan has either attacked or thought to invade the United States. Even if we consider the Muslims' taking asylum in Afghanistan as "foreign fighters," still they are entitled to humane treatment under the 1899 Martens Clause and the Additional Protocol 1 of 1977, a rule of customary law.[559]

The issue is far more complicated than it appears. The Taliban

did not recruit the so-labeled "foreign fighters" from several countries. It is the United States, Britain, Saudi Arabia, Australia, Canada, Pakistan, Morocco, and others who facilitated their arrival into Afghanistan. They were trained in Pakistan and Afghanistan by Special Forces of the United States, Pakistan and other countries in furtherance of the U.S.-led *Jihad* for its strategic interest of the United State and its allies. This is a universally recognized fact, also admitted to by Mr. Brerzinski, former National Security Advisor, and Robert Gates, former Director of the CIA Director. If these "foreign fighters" stayed in Afghanistan or some of the *Mujahideen* returned from the Middle East, it was not a crime on the part of the Taliban, as these fighters were the people who put their lives at stake for liberating Afghanistan from the Soviet occupation.

In acknowledgment of their help, the United States has granted citizenship to many defectors from the former Soviet Union, Cuba, China, Iran and Iraq. By the same token, it was nothing wrong on the part of the Taliban to allow those individuals who put their lives at stake for Afghanistan to stay in the country. Their stay, or asylum, in Afghanistan was not a crime in itself: neither on their part, nor on the part of the Taliban. As far their military training activities, shown to the world from some old recordings, it is preposterous to assume that those activities were conducted in preparation for the invasion of the United States or for threatening U.S. security in any other conceivable way.

The legal issue which arises is: can the United States government deny the "foreign fighters" POW status, having recruited, financed, trained and supported these same "foreign fighters" through friendly intelligence agencies, and agreed to their assisting the Taliban in a supporting role for regime change? The status of these "foreign fighters" has to be ascertained by an impartial Tribunal—not by a secret military commission or a secret military tribunal—in accordance with Article 5 of the Geneva Convention which stipulates that:

> Should any doubt arise as to whether persons having committed a belligerent act and having fallen into the hands of the enemy, belong to any one of the categories enumerated in Article 4, such persons shall enjoy the protection of the present Convention until such time as their status has been determined by a competent tribunal.

In other words, until their status is ascertained by competent tribunals those who are suspected of being foreign fighters are entitled to POW status. This is not to mention the fact that the war itself was illegal and, therefore, so are all detentions.

Article 13 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War 1949 mandates:

> Prisoners of War must at all times be humanely treated .Any unlawful act or omission by the Detaining Power causing death or seriously endangering the health of a prisoner of war in its custody is prohibited …….no prisoner of war must be subjected to physical mutilation or to medical or scientific experiments which are unjustified. Likewise, prisoners of war must at all times be protected, particularly against acts of violence or intimidation and against insults and public curiosity.

The objective of the United States policy, as reflected in various reports of humanitarian organizations and supported by evidence on the ground, leads to the conclusion that appears to have been to eliminate "foreign fighters," probably to suppress evidence of the United States crimes. Eliminating Arab refugees in particular was necessary to eliminate chances of their going back to their respective countries and launching movements against U.S.-friendly repressive regimes. The few who have been released from the modern day concentration camps for spreading the tales of horror are enough to expose the real face of the 21st century crusaders. Their stories reveal that the torture tactics, from flushing the Qur'an down the toilet, to putting fake or original menstrual blood on prisoners' faces,[560] to using naked women for torturing Muslims,[561] expose that one thing that remains uppermost in the minds of the torturers is being Islam, not terrorism. The recent publication of cartoons of Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) in the mainstream media in Denmark and other places, and the sup-

port of such acts in the name of freedom of speech, show how a mindset against Islam has been shaped that finds satisfaction physically torturing and psychologically degrading Muslims,

The documented evidence of atrocities, including a film by the Irish film maker Jamie Doran, entitled "*Afghan Massacre: The Convoy of Death,*" confirms that war crimes were committed and still are being committed by U.S. military forces in Afghanistan.[562] These crimes have been committed under the overall command of Bush as the Commander-in-Chief in all operations, including killing by suffocating prisoners in containers, holding them in secret prisons and even butchering them in some cases, like the prison at Sheberghan. Making a horrifying example of all the suspects remained the primary objective of the crusaders.[563]

The International Tribunal of the Far East established after the Second World War held that: "In general the responsibility of prisoners held in Japan may be stated to have rested upon: 1. Members of the Government; 2. Military or Naval Officers in command of formations having prisoner in their possession; 3. Officials in those departments which were concerned with the well being of prisoners; 4. Officials, whether civilian, military, or naval having direct and immediate Control of the prisoners."

Using these guidelines, it is not difficult to determine who is responsible for bombing 4000 detainees and POW at Qala-i-Janghi; torturing prisoners at Bagram, Qandahar, Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean,[564] and Guantanamo Bay;[565] transporting prisoners in containers;[566] killing 500-600 unconscious and seriously wounded prisoners at Dashte-e-Leili against the international law. The Geneva Convention (III) of 1949 and the Additional Protocol I of 1977[567] enjoin that civilian populations are to be protected in times of War. The common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions provides that persons taking no part in the hostilities, including those who have laid down their arms, the sick and wounded "shall in all circumstances be treated humanely, without adverse distinction. Violence to the life and person

of the above categories is prohibited. Weapons deployed against military targets and combatants should not therefore be of indiscriminate effect as to affect civilians and those who have laid down their arms."

Article 48 of Protocol I of 1977, Additional to the Geneva Conventions promulgates the basic rule of customary International Law applicable to all states whether signatories or not to the Additional Protocol 1, as these customary laws of warfare have been in existence for over a century and a half and reflect the provisions of multilateral treaties already in existence and reads as follows:

> In order to ensure respect for and protection of civilian population and civilian objects, the Parties to the conflict shall at all times distinguish between the civilian population and combatants and between civilian objects and military objects and accordingly shall direct their operations only against military objects.

In their obsession with annihilating those who are committed to living according to Islam and making them a lesson for the rest of the Muslims, the modern day crusaders under the leadership of Bush, who has made impassioned pleas for bringing "democracy" and "freedom" to Afghanistan and Iraq, have failed to observe even the most basic rules of warfare. The whole Afghan nation was made a living example for those who even contemplate going against the way of life that the United States wants to impose on the Muslim world.

As recently as February, 03, 2006, the *Washington Post* reported Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld as saying: "they [Muslims] will either succeed in changing our way of life, or we will succeed in changing theirs." Rumsfeld said this in a speech at the National Press Club on February 2, 2006, to underline the plan that The United States is engaged in what could be a generational conflict akin to the Cold War, the kind of struggle that might last decades as allies work to root out terrorists across the globe and battle extremists who want to rule the world.

The speech, which aides said was titled "The Long War," came on the eve of the Pentagon's release of its Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), which sets out plans for how the U.S. military will address major security challenges 20 years into the future. The plans to be released today include shifts to make the military more agile and capable of dealing with unconventional threats, something Rumsfeld has said is necessary to move from a military designed for the Cold War into one that is more flexible.

These strategies, which are now being publicly discussed, were on the minds which planned the war on Afghanistan long before 9/11. They had the challenge of changing Muslims way of life on their mind. The treatment of Afghan nation testifies to this fact.

According to UNCHR report, victims of the indiscriminate U.S. bombings were not in a position to carry personal belongings They left their homes and fled in all directions obvious to the 10 million mines burried in the land. They were not in a position to carry personal belongings or food and were rendered completely destitute. The foreign ministry spokespersons of Pakistan stated that "Pakistan was not in a position to deal with mass flows of Afghan refugees into Pakistan." Consequently, thousands were turned away from the Pakistan border. The UNCHR estimated that after the October 7, 2001 air strikes, the number of new refugees from Afghanistan into Pakistan alone "exceeded one million" besides those who fled towards Iran and northern Afghanistan.

As if this was not bad enough, even the refugee camps were not spared the bombing. Foreign intelligence agencies deliberately festered ethnic divide, resulting in worsening the plight of refugees by worries about reprisal from rival forces.

The callousness of the crusaders and the extent to which they are willing to go against international law and all norms of human decency to eliminate the possibilities of the emergence of a single Islamic entity—or a model of the Islamic way of life on

a smaller scale in any of the existing Muslim countries—can be judged from the "extermination" of people in Afghanistan, in the name of freedom, liberation and democracy. Dan McDougall of the *Observer* reported from Afghanistan on February 05, 2006, that the new Afghanistan is a myth. According to the report:

> Five years after the Taliban were deposed by a US-led military alliance, Afghanistan remains entrenched in poverty. Intense frustration with the government, particularly among refugees who returned amid promises of change, is growing. The Observer has learnt that such is the demand among ordinary Afghans to leave that this weekend the Interior Ministry has run out of the basic materials to make passports.

This is a fraction of the reality of the post-Taliban Afghanistan, where the so-called Western-led "reconstruction" has cost $8bn so far. The objective of the war of aggression, massacres, incarcerations and tortures is to force the nation to bow down to a regime headed by a CIA puppet and accept the way of life as envisioned modern day crusaders under a made-in-USA constitution.

CONCLUSION

The Real Motives Confirmed

BESIDES achieving the main objective of dislodging the Taliban and depriving Muslims of coming up with a model of Islamic society and way of life, the United States obtained other benefits that are now before our eyes from its occupation of Afghanistan. Pakistan is fully neutralized, with the most-favored dictator seated in power, and with no immediate hope for the success of an Islamic movement that can unite the Muslim *Ummah* in a single Islamic entity. Achieving Muslims' right to self-determination seems like a dream that will remain unfulfilled for a long time to come.

After the July 7, 2005 subway and bus bombings in London, the UK government did not arrest as many people as General Musharraf did with his sweeping arrests of at least 300 people in Pakistan in just two weeks. Religious political parties, such as those in Pakistan, which had no chance of establishing an Islamic State anyway, have been fully exploited as a result of the constitutionalization of dictatorship. In the broader, regional context, the United States has now flanked Iran from both the North and South. Similarly, the new autonomous countries in the break-

away republics from the former Soviet Union are prone to U.S. influence. Breakaway governments have been successfully formed in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Georgia and Azerbaijan. Only the area to the north of Georgia and Azerbaijan now needs to be broken off from Russia to end Russia's territorial rights to the Caspian Sea.

The new autonomous countries will now simply become subject to American hegemony, rather than Russian. Furthermore, rather than being genuine expressions of local culture, identity and self-determination, the new autonomous countries will be dominated by local "democratically elected" tyrants, such as Islam Karimov, making deals with the United States for the sake of their own personal interests and for staying in power.

The United States is more than happy to talk business with tyrannical Muslim regimes. In fact, that is the whole idea of setting up these local tyrants who can put a lid on local Islamic movements. Uzbekistan's dictator, Islam Karimov, kills hundreds of civilians and gets away with the crime simply by stating, "They wanted to establish *Khilafah*."[568] The 20-year civil war that has ravaged Afghanistan and caused such appalling death, poverty and misery, was a deliberate policy on the part of the United States, which initially backed the Taliban, thinking to utilize them in its grand designs for the region.

The motive of the neoconservatives to keep Muslims away from Islam is so far-reaching that they may find it necessary to pound the Muslim world to restrict Muslims from exercising their right of self-determination and self-rule. One way or the other, Muslims have to submit to secularism in their respective states and live by the standards of moderation set by Islamophobes. One way or another, the Islamophobes must control all of the Muslim countries and force Muslims not to consider the Qur'an as the final manifesto of God.[569] Muslims must not live by the standards of the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. If they do, or if they attempt to do so, they must be invaded, occupied, "civilized" and "democra-

tized." Some countries are likely to cave in due to a combination of intimidating tactics and bribery, as is so far the case in Pakistan. Others may need to be attacked, like Afghanistan.

The staged 9/11 event has given the 21st century crusaders a license to attack any country in the world under the banner of a "war on terrorism," which has now been clearly changed to "holding *extremists* among Muslims from *realizing their dream of establishing Caliphate*."[570] In Afghanistan, we witnessed the genesis of the final crusade. Sudan is a target in the making. Initially, the same kind of spadework that paved the way for invasion and occupation of Afghanistan was going on in the media. Nicholas D. Kristof of the *New York Times* has been specially assigned the task of paving the way for another Afghanistan-like adventure by writing weekly reports on "genocide" in Sudan.[571] Iran and Syria are also clear targets for future aggression. Above all, the main target—the Qur'an—is now up for demands to be banned.[572] As the crusade progresses, such demands will only intensify.

The 9/11 attack has given the United States and its allies, such as Britain, a blank check to roll back civil liberties to the extent that any of their own non-Muslim citizens, who might call for justice and the rule of law, can be silenced simply by uttering the words "terrorist sympathizer." After the July 7, 2005 attack, the UK government wanted to come up with a "global extremist list"—a list of exclusion, that includes all those who do not necessarily promote terrorism but their work is considered to "indirectly incite violence."[573] The blank check means that anything that doesn't support the policies of the crusaders of this age would amount to inciting violence and hence would be declared "extremist," excluded, deported and, who knows, may be sent to gas chambers if there are a few more staged 7/7s and 9/11s.[574]

The real motives behind invading and occupying Afghanistan are evident from the way the occupation forces "modernized" the constitution of Afghanistan and the way Bush, Rumsfeld and their military commander General Abizaid are now openly saying

that their war is on the Muslim struggle towards reviving "the 7th century paradise." [575] Despite occupying two countries for the last few years and killing around 150,000 people, including Americans, the terrorist in chief in the United States, General Abizaid, "believes that the Long War is only in its early stages." Imagine the advanced stages of the war with the objective to "modernize the Islamic world" and its "accommodation with the [capitalist] global economy." [576]

The November 14, 2003 editorial of the *New York Times* removed any doubts with regard to the real motives behind the United States' invading Afghanistan. This lead editorial reveals the mentality at work behind the ongoing struggle in the name of democracy and the war on terrorism in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

Commenting on the constitution-formulating efforts in Afghanistan, the *New York Times* writes that the draft includes some "promising aspirations…but there are also troubling aspects of this crucial document." It is a happy occasion for the editors of the *New York Times* to see that the "document does not invoke *Shari'ah*," because they believe "among other restrictions, *Shari'ah* does not tolerate dissent." These words tempt one to simply ask the editorial board of the *New York Times*: "Of what use is dissent in a 'democracy' when it could not hold its 'democratically elected' leaders from launching wars of aggression on the basis of chicanery, lies and deceit?"

The *New York Times* is not talking about dissent to the ways the "democratic" government of an elite rules the majority with lies and deception. The dissent the paper is talking about is to refuse to live according to Islam and reject the Qur'an as "the final manifesto of God," like the dissent of Irshad Manji—a self-professed lesbian author of the book *The trouble with Islam.*[577] The dissent to the *New York Times* is what Abdullahi An-Na`im, Sudanese academic and human rights activist, is engaged in by rejecting parts of the Qur'an that are revealed in Madina.[578] The

portions that are revealed in Madina, in Abdullahi An-Na`im's view, give rise to discrimination by placing the solidarity of male Muslims above women and non-Muslims. To remove these "contradictions," he proposes the application of reverse *naskh*, i.e., the abrogation of the portions of the Qur'an revealed in Madina when they contradict the earlier parts.[579] That is what the modern day crusaders want. The process does not stop at rejecting parts of the Qur'an. Evangelicals have recently demanded a complete ban on the Qur'an.[580]

The neo-conservatives, the Evangelicals[581] and now recently the Vatican[582] are highlighting problems with parts of the Qur'an. Pope Benedict realizes the centrality of the Qur'an. In *Salt of the Earth: The Church at the End of the Millennium*, an interview with Peter Seewald (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1997), he elaborates his understanding of the need for Muslims to abide by the Qru'an in these words:

> Today's discussion in the West about the possibility of Islamic theological faculties, or about the idea of Islam as a legal entity, presupposes that all religions have basically the same structure, that they all fit into a democratic system with its regulations and the possibilities provided by these regulations. In itself, however, this necessarily contradicts the essence of Islam, which simply does not have the separation of the political and religious sphere which Christianity has had from the beginning. The Koran is a total religious law, which regulates the whole of political and social life and insists that the whole order of life be Islamic. Sharia shapes society from beginning to end. In this sense, it can exploit such partial freedoms as our constitution gives, but it can't be its final goal to say: Yes, now we too are a body with rights, now we are present just like the Catholics and the Protestants. In such a situation, it would not achieve a status consistent with its inner nature; it would be in alienation from itself.

Despite this realization, the focus is on forcing Muslims to make the Qur'an compatible to the Western way of life and "modern values," rather than allowing Muslims to live by the Qur'an. Daniel Pipes is one of the lead promoters of this idea.

Bush has proved his belief in the same thinking through his going to all extremes to ensure Pipes's controversial nomination to the board of the United States Institute of Peace, a governmental think tank.[583] Rejecting parts of the Qur'an by proving them irrelevant to present-day realities is what the "enlightened moderation" is all about. This is what the *New York Times* has boldly brought to the "mainstream" media through its November 14, 2003 editorial with regard to tinkering with Afghanistan's constitution after getting rid of the Islamophobes' worst nightmare: the Taliban's dream to establish a real model of Islamic governance.

What ails editors and some Islamophobic writers of the *New York Times* the most is: "It [Afghanistan's proposed constitution] says that no law can be contrary to the sacred religion of Islam. And it says the members of the Supreme Court should be educated in either civil law or Islamic law, a provision that raises the possibility of more judges who base their rulings on the Koran rather than civil law."[584]

So, basing "ruling on the Koran" is the problem, and that is why the United States is in Afghanistan in the first place. In other words, Muslims have to accept laws, norms and standards that clearly contradict or reject the Qur'an. Basing "ruling on the Qur'an" is a problem because, according to the *New York Times'* editors, it jeopardizes "the protection of core human rights in this document [Afghanistan constitution]."

The editors of the *New York Times* appeal to the United Nations and American officials "to push for language" that does not refer to the Qur'an. Then these editors appeal to the so-called international community: "The time is right for the international community to weigh in. This constitution must provide an enduring promise to all the Afghan people that their most basic freedoms are inalienable, not to be granted or withdrawn easily by a government, its courts or its religious leaders," as if any reference to the Qur'an directly undermines the "most basic freedoms."

The point to note is that the grave concerns shown and the appeals made to the United Nations, the "international community" and U.S. authorities in the November 14, 2003 editorial of the *New York Times* are not the result of any direct threat of terrorism against the United States, the "curse" of "Wahabi-ism" or any other misinterpreted "brand of Islam," calls for *Jihad* against the United States, or any other such propaganda themes that have been made the cornerstones of the war on Islam. The editorial directly calls on the world to help alienate Afghans from the Qur'an.

This editorial is sufficient for shattering the philosophy of the neo-mods of Islam[585] and others who still believe that the United States is in Afghanistan because of the behavior of the Taliban and the presence of Osama. Other think tanks in the US are producing reports on the pattern of the above-mentioned *New York Times*' editorial. For example, "Democracy and Islam in the New Constitution of Afghanistan," from RAND institute[586] is enough to open the eyes of those who still have doubts to the reality that terrorism, fundamentalism, Islamism and a whole lot of other rancid notions are just ruses for alienating Muslims from the Qur'an.

Thus, according to the modern-day crusaders, who paved the way for the invasion of Afghanistan after years of propaganda on the media front, the Afghans cannot be liberated, they cannot live free lives and their rights cannot be guaranteed unless every reference to the Qur'an is eliminated from their constitution and they are liberated from Islam. The Qur'an is what the Afghans can read in privacy at home for blessings, but any attempt to practically implement its guidance and live life in the light of its teachings is a threat to the world order as envisaged by the United States for itself and its allies. That is how the 21st century crusaders are confronting the challenge described in Chapter 3.

In the end, all liberalism and all "enlightened moderation" have clearly boiled down to saying good-bye to the Qur'an. The same

idea is being promoted for application in Iraq. Both the Saudi government and opposition are being presented as evil. Eyes are set on Syria and Iran, and the marriage of convenience between Pakistan and the United States will not last for long. Madrassas have already been demonized to the maximum extent possible. Only the physical destruction of madrassas has not been accomplished. When it finally gets done, the total ban or destruction will hardly raise any voice in protest, just as the world governments have been dead silent—despite opposition at the people level—over the wars of aggression and subsequent occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq.

After success in Afghanistan and Iraq, others will join the crusaders to force the rest of the Muslim world into saying goodbye to the Qur'an and to the aspiration for living by Islam in an Islamic entity. Understanding the Muslims obligation to live like an *Ummah*, as a single Islamic body, is lacking. But a question needs to be asked: "Are Muslims—irrespective of the artificial divisions and the lack of awareness about the obligation to remain one and live by Islam—ready to reject the Qur'an as demanded by the modern-day crusaders?" The answer to this question and its consequences is what everyone has to think about.

Crux of the matter

It is evident from the discussion in the introduction of this book that the United States could not possibly decide on and launch a war of aggression against Afghanistan in a matter of 25 days. Planning and implementing an invasion of this scale takes resources, human effort and, most importantly, time. Harder still for many of us is determining the motives of the barbarians of our age.

The easy-to-reach conclusion, even for those who do not believe in the official story of 9/11, is that the United States administration was motivated by the desire to procure and protect natural resources. They, however, ignore the fact that Afghanistan

has existed for a long time and that the United States could access natural resources in Afghanistan and elsewhere through other means. Moreover, there is no dearth in the United States of the natural resources that are available in Afghanistan. Nor was there a shortage of ways to go about the oil and gas pipeline projects that Unocal and Halliburton sought to build across Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan. The question is: "Why did the United States administration wage a war of aggression against Afghanistan, and why now?" More importantly, why was this pipeline so important as to deliver a serious ultimatum through a United States Official, Tom Simons, telling the Afghan government (via the Pakistani delegation acting as their interlocutors): "Either you accept our offer of a carpet of gold, or we bury you under a carpet of bombs"?[587]

Lee Coldren, a member of the United States delegation, confirmed the broader outline of the American position at the meeting in which this ultimatum was made: "I think there was some discussion of the fact that the United States was so disgusted with the Taliban that they might be considering some military action."[588] One must not forget that these discussion and threats were made months before 9/11. Niaz Naik, a former foreign secretary of Pakistan and a member of the Pakistani delegation in the July 2001 talks in Berlin, recalls that he was told that Washington would launch its operation from bases in Tajikistan, where American advisors were already in place. He was told that Uzbekistan would also take part and 17,000 Russian troops were also on standby.[589] In the face of all these facts, we must be fooling ourselves if we continue to believe that the United States had all these war plans in place and were threatening the Taliban with "carpet bombing" just because of oil and pipelines.

When the argument that the United States invaded Afghanistan because of oil and energy needs turns on its head, others resort to concluding that it was the horror of 9/11 that forced the United States into launching a "defensive" war on Afghanistan.

The aforementioned facts show that the Taliban had nothing to do with 9/11, and that getting Osama was not a good-enough justification for invading and occupying Afghanistan for an indefinite period. The invasion was planned before 9/11 and 9/11 was too sophisticated an operation for people living in caves in Afghanistan to put together and successfully implement to the last detail (Chapter 5).

Everyone who loves peace on this earth earnestly wishes that this was a war for natural resources or it was in retaliation for 9/11. But, unfortunately, this is not the case. The evidence discussed in Chapter 5 and the emerging reports show that the motive was to not allow Muslims to get united as an *Ummah* and live by Islam.

We could have given the crusaders the benefit of the doubt and considered it a war on Al-Qaeda and weapons of mass destruction. However, the almost weekly statements from Rumsfeld, and others, with the mention of "Caliphate" can hardly leave anyone in doubt regarding the motives of the modern-day crusaders (Chapters 2 and 3). Note the frequency of Bush and Rumsfeld statements calling the war on Iraq a war on Caliphate in the months of October and November of 2005. For example, Rumsfeld repeated the same story at a Department of Defense briefing, CNN Late Edition, CBS's Face the Nation, PBS News Hour with Jim Lehrer and many other news shows.[590]

These statements are good enough to expose the real motives of the modern-day crusaders (Chapter 1). However, if someone still has a problem with understanding the main goal of the crusaders, he or she would need to go beyond the visible fronts and stated objectives of the war on Afghanistan. In fact, it is the religious ideology and crusading spirit that motivate the overt and covert warlords. The overt warlords openly challenge Islam and its main sources: the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. The covert ones are those who, in the garb of liberal analysts and reporters, present the same point of view and promote the same war on Islam in

the name of "a war within Islam" and a "war of ideas."

The religious warriors mostly stay behind the scenes. However, they provide moral inspiration to the apparently secular warlords, the neo-cons and the institutions that condemn everything remotely related to Islam, let alone those who openly declare, like the Taliban, to establish an order on the pattern of Prophet Mohammed (pbuh). The covert warlords, who conceal their affiliation with the religious front, are the ones who played a lead role for many years in distorting the reality with consistent lies and misconceptions about the Taliban. While hiding behind the façade of mock neutrality, liberalism and secularism, they paved the way for the invasion of Afghanistan. As a result, even today, everyone criticizes the war on Iraq and very few talk about the illegal and illegitimate war on Afghanistan. At the same time, even long-time left-leaning critics of U.S. foreign policy have accepted the official story of 9/11.

Behind the shield of this legitimacy, the initial encounters of the 21st century crusade are going on in Afghanistan. The overarching goal of this struggle appeared in the German newspaper *Welt am Sonntag* (May 30, 2004) under the title: "*Millionen gegen Mohammed*" ("Millions against Mohammed").[591] The by-line reads: "*Der Vatikan will weltweit die Ausbreitung des Islam stoppen*" ("The Vatican Wants to Stop the World-wide Propagation of Islam").

That is the overall goal. The rest that we hear, such as eradicating fundamentalism, radicalism, political Islam, and Islamism, are plain ruses, used as labels to fool the world and achieve the overall goal. Taliban happened to be the first victims of the 21st century crusade against Islam.

Of course, the architects of the final crusade want to stop the propagation of Islam and undermine all possibilities that would give Muslims an opportunity to establish an Islamic model of governance. However, the Islamophobes could not stand up and say openly that they do not want the Taliban to work for the es-

tablishment of a model Islamic society and ways to govern by Islamic rules. They needed to follow some strategic course and use specific tools to gradually demonize the Taliban rule, divide Muslims in general and Afghans in particular and prove that governance by Islamic principles is the most inhuman way to living life, and has no place in the "civilized" world.

The silence over the occupation of Afghanistan is clear evidence of the success of this strategy of the modern-day crusaders. As discussed in Chapters 1-3, the source of inspiration for the religiously inspired warlords has been the ultimate objective behind invading Afghanistan, which according to *Welt am Sonntag*'s report is to contain the "aggressive religion" of Islam and at the same time "spread the Christian faith." Here we see why the covert neo-cons in the media, academia and politics try to hide behind the façade of secular democracy and liberalism. The Taliban government was far more broad-based and inclusive than the American-backed regime since their departure from the scene. Yet the Taliban had to be "smoked out" in the name of democracy because not everyone would have jumped on the bandwagon for war if the crusaders had launched the war in the name of crushing Islam and planting the flags of the Christian faith in every living heart.

The fundamentalist Christians' war for establishing the "dominion of God" had to begin from somewhere. Afghanistan was the best place to begin the crusade with crushing what Suzanne Goldenberg of the *Guardian* called "the Taliban's experiment to build the world's one true Islamic state."[592] Author and educator George Grant,[593] founder of Franklin Classical School in the United States, was Executive Director of Coral Ridge Ministries[594] for many years. He explains in *The Changing of the Guard, Biblical Principles for Political Action*:

> Christians have an obligation, a mandate, a commission, a holy responsibility to reclaim the land for Jesus Christ — to have dominion in civil structures, just as in every other aspect of life and godliness.

> But it is dominion we are after. Not just a voice. It is dominion we are after. Not just influence. It is dominion we are after. Not just equal time. It is dominion we are after. World conquest. That's what Christ has commissioned us to accomplish. We must win the world with the power of the Gospel. And we must never settle for anything less... Thus, Christian politics has as its primary intent the conquest of the land—of men, families, institutions, bureaucracies, courts, and governments for the Kingdom of Christ. (pp. 50-51).

Fast as the world was being moved to undermine Islam, it was still not fast enough to match the timescale demanded by those who are awaiting the second coming of Jesus and the establishment of the dominion of God. And the Muslims' interest in the experiment in Afghanistan was gathering by the day. Social scientists, businesspeople, social workers, scientists and people from all walks of life were rushing to rebuild Afghanistan and assist the Taliban in materializing the dream of establishing an Islamic society and Islamic state in true sense. This was leading to the birth of an international Islamic movement.

Besides the unrelenting anti-Taliban propaganda, something of enormous magnitude was being orchestrated—something that devastated the collective human mind with fear, horror, and insecurity. This is what we saw in America on 9/11. Subsequently war of aggression was offered as a solution and the masses accepted it wholeheartedly. It advanced the Islamophobes' agenda in a colossal leap almost overnight.

A growing number of American analysts are reaching the conclusion that the mind-numbing 9/11 atrocities were an "inside job." In fact, this "inside job" was the beginning of the final crusade for the mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical imprisonment of humankind. People in the position of authority in the United States, the people who made 9/11 attacks possible, were definitely religiously motivated. Their religious motivation forced them into launching the final crusade with butchering their own people and destroying their own assets. In their view, the end they were looking forward to justified the means they applied to begin

the latest crusade. Many people consider oil as a factor for this fanaticism. However, sane minds do not go fanatic to this extent for securing oil and other resources. More death and destruction will unfold as the so-called "free world" unites to use the threat of "terrorism" to justify a war against a people it chooses to take the rap just for being Muslims. The reason for keeping Muslims away from the Qur'an is that Muslims may not be living by the Qur'an because it has the guidance for establishing a just socio-political and economic order as opposed to prevailing injustice, exploitations and disparity on local and international levels. From the crusaders' perspective, anything that challenges the status quo of the present order, or becomes a hurdle in the way of those who want to establish the Christian version dominion of God, must be eradicated.

The predictability of the crusade against Islam can be seen in the news management that has followed the staged disaster of 9/11. Look at what always happens in such moments of staged chaos, and you will see that the blueprint for coming events is the same in almost every case. Before a staged terrorist attack happens, the fall-guy or "patsy" is already set up to take the blame, thus steering the public mind away from dangerous speculation and onto a pre-ordained target.

Osama's name was introduced immediately after the disaster unfolded. As we observed from the facts in Chapter 5, the idea that this person from the mountains of Afghanistan with far more mouth than substance could be the "Mr. Big" of this enormous operation is utterly insulting to anyone of intelligence. We are not talking about a parcel bomb here. Four commercial airliners had to be simultaneously hijacked in American air space via American airports and flown into highly specific targets within 45 minutes of each other. How was this possible? It was possible because it was an inside job, orchestrated by forces *within* the United States and planned by the highest levels of U.S. authority and intelligence community.

As the evidence discussed in chapter 5 suggests, the terror unleashed on 9/11 was not a failure of U.S. intelligence. The CIA and others were not supposed to uncover the plot. Getting weapons onto planes is so much easier if you have support from those who control the system. Bush reportedly wrote in his diary: "The Pearl Harbor of the 21st century took place today."[595] We were told that this is another "Pearl Harbor;" and yes, it is. We can read in books, such as *And The Truth Shall Set You Free* and other studies, how the American government knew the Japanese were going to attack Pearl Harbor, but they did nothing about it. Why? Because they wanted it to happen for a specific reason—to justify the United States entry into the Second World War, which President Franklin D. Roosevelt (a blood relative of the Bushes) had said just to get elected, that America would not be involved in.

In the immediate aftermath of the attacks, the "pin it on Osama" and "dislodge the Taliban" campaign was launched as pre-planned. The Republican, Orrin Hatch, for example, said in the Noon Hour on CNN that he had high-level information from the FBI that Osama was behind the unprecedented attacks. "I do have some information," Hatch said in reference to his FBI briefing. "They've come to the conclusion that this looks like it may be the signature of Osama bin Laden, that he may be the one behind this."[596]

So, the question, "Whose objective is served from these horrific events in America?," can be answered very simply: "Anyone who wanted to invade Afghanistan in the first place." As discussed in the introduction, there is plenty of evidence about warlords in the United States planning a war of aggression on Afghanistan long before 9/11. The disaster of 9/11 simply provided the overt and covert warlords with a justification for "retaliation" against anyone who wanted Muslims to be united—with one army, one foreign policy and one governance system based on Islam. The Taliban were demonized for unintentionally leading Muslims in

this direction. From the crusaders' perspective, they have been "legitimately" punished. The world has approved of the punishment with its silence and acceptance of the legitimacy of the U.S. occupation of Afghanistan. Can anyone now dare to dream about uniting Muslims and establishing Islam, as per the Qur'anic injunctions? Dare to dream, and the crusaders will be there. Not tolerating "Caliphate" is now a good excuse for justifying the existing occupations despite the fact no one among the resistance fighters has claimed to be fighting for establishing *Khilafah*.

The "free world united with America" rhetoric from Tony Blair and other "world leaders" is a code for the crusaders coming together as a world army and police force to fight a "war against terrorism" on those who raise a voice for Muslims' self-determination and self-rule. Already the NATO (the world army in waiting) has pledged such support. The collective consciousness is being manipulated so comprehensively at this time that most people will support American and NATO terrorist attacks on unsubstantiated targets in the name of fighting terrorism and ending the dream of "Islamic caliphate"—a theme now frequently repeated in the statements of Bush and his cronies. The stunning contradiction in this policy has been totally lost on the popular majority blinded by the blatant and intense mind manipulation after 9/11.

The crusaders, who got away with their lies and deception for invading Afghanistan, were greatly encouraged and they came up with more and more lies to expand their crusade into Iraq—"the heart of the Arab-Muslim world," as Thomas Friedman calls that country.[597] As conflict escalates due to such adventures, the pressure for centralization of military power increases and the willingness to concede that power by the populations of America and its allies gathers strength. The so-called mainstream media reaches the conclusion that it is the United States vs. Jihadists; that it is the free-democratic world against the forces of darkness trying to establish Islamic "Caliphate."

This is what we read in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* on a weekly, if not daily, basis. This consolidates a mindset in the United States and allied countries that they are not at war because of the lies of the administration in Washington and London but, rather, because of the Taliban-like fundamentalists, who want to establish Islamic *Shari'ah*. People are told that the United States does not allow the "nihilists" to succeed because that will amount to Talibanization of the Muslim world. The nihilists will oppress women and violate human rights. This propaganda is paving the way for creating a world army with the power to attack and take over any Muslim country that fits the crusaders' criteria.

The collective mind of humanity, and particularly that of America, is, understandably, now in a deeply traumatized state. Most of those who have concluded that 9/11 was an inside job find it hard to believe that the Taliban were the target of the staged 9/11 attacks. This is because these well-educated, honest and intelligent people have been subjected to collective trauma-based mind control; and, as any mind-controller or researcher can affirm, a traumatized mind is a suggestion-prone mind. So, in the wake of the trauma comes the programming to manipulate the population to see events in the desired fashion. Belief of Noam Chomsky and other critics on the left in the official story of 9/11 is the most authentic evidence of the success of indoctrination because these are the very people who have been explaining the effects of indoctrination for decades. Today, they are victims of the grand lies.

One of the biggest potential obstacles to realizing the crusaders' dream is the psyche of most American people, who have been raised in the concept of separation of church and state. When faced with the prospect of waging war in the name of God—as Bush says that God told him to invade Iraq—most would be vehemently opposed to it. The mantra of secularism has so deeply infected the national psyche that the religious fanatics like Bush

and company and others who present themselves as liberals would have a hard time selling a religious war. They changed titles and gave it the flavor of a "war on terror," a "war for democracy" and now a war on nihilists who want to establish "Caliphate." This is the greatest deception ever and the most effective way to sell the religious war on Islam after generating fear of "Caliphate" at a time when there is no organized efforts on the part of Muslims to establish it. To prevent people from realizing that it is a religious war, the crusaders had to first make a war on their national psyche. Years of Islam-bashing in different names was not good enough to allow them to openly declare a religious war on any Muslim country.

The crusaders in the United States knew that their nation's collective sense of security, confidence, and pride has been built on the foundations of immense military and financial strength. It is a collective version of the John Wayne mentality—"don't mess with us—this is America." From that has come the Americans' collective confidence in America as a nation. The crusaders had to prove to their nation that now that very sense of who they are, and their belief that they have the power to stand alone, were in danger of being devastated. That is what 9/11 achieved and that is what was hammered in with statements like "our way of life is under attack," "they hate our freedoms" and "they hate our way of life."

It is absolutely no coincidence that the targets of those hijacked planes were the very symbols of America's sense of itself and its own security—the Pentagon, symbol of their military might; and the World Trade Centre, the twin pillars of U.S. financial might. This is not primarily an attack on America; it is an attack on America's image of itself. Break the spirit of Americans and their sense of being "American," break America's confidence in itself, put the United States in fear and fundamental insecurity, and you have overcome the most significant opposition to America allowing itself to be absorbed into the crusader's totalitarian de-

signs.

Soon after the staged attacks, the American psyche was bombarded with more and more shocks to its security and sense of self. The mysterious anthrax mails and stories of crop dusters, etc. were no different than the shock to its security and sense of self as with the Oklahoma City bombing and the school shootings in the past. But from then on, everything was increased dramatically.

Of course, the masses are misguided. But so are the apparent leaders of the modern-day crusade: helpless before the forces behind the scene. As already discussed, George W. Bush knew that these devastating disasters were going to happen that day. But he acted like a pawn in a game controlled by far greater powers. Bush, Blair and others are as expendable as anyone once they have served their purpose. Colin Powell, for example told lies through his teeth to the United Nations and now he is out of the loop after performing his task. It would not be surprising if Bush and Blair were sacrificed eventually to advance the "global terrorism" scenario. And, of course, if Bush were to go, the new president would be the most serious crusader, such as Dick Cheney,[598] who might be acting under martial law in the United States. The stakes are going to be very high indeed from this point onwards because more and more Americans are realizing that they have been taken for a ride and that the crusaders' final push to global fascism has begun.

The crusaders claimed that the world will never be the same again.[599] That is true but within every danger there is opportunity. And for those of us, the vast majority, who seek peace not conflict, who desire freedom-for-all, not dictatorship-by-the-few, now have to look ourselves in the mirror and ask what did we do to expose or hold the crusaders accountable for their crimes against humanity in Afghanistan and then Iraq? We need to ask ourselves, "Why did we consider occupation of Afghanistan as legitimate?"

Consequences

"War is essentially an evil thing. Its consequences are not confined to the belligerent states alone, but affect the whole world. To initiate a war of aggression, therefore, is not only an international crime; it is the supreme international crime differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole."

Nuremberg Tribunal

The world has to lift the veil of the so-called democracy and expose the true face of the religious wars waged by the modern-day crusaders. The apparently secular politicians and media pundits are purely motivated by religious devotion and fervor. It has been concealed from citizens and soldiers alike that decisions for war and peace have been vested in the religious front, its political allies, lobbies, media pundits and extremists in academia. They are the ones manipulating the resources and institutions of the state despite the guise of being secular and democratic. The reasons for the First and Second World War were neither religious nor the inclination of the German or Japanese people towards war. The Axis and Allied nations with a few exceptions were in the crucible of the same system with difference of degrees: oppressing other peoples and nations for economic resources, which they succeeded in camouflaging at the Nuremberg and Far East Trials. The nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the conventional bombings of German towns that had no military targets were also war crimes. Despite the contribution of outstanding investigators and prosecutors, these realities were swept away. Even as U.S. soldiers were landing on Normandy beach, certain U.S. corporations were still dealing with the Nazi Party. Some U.S. corporations had used slave labor, held stocks and were partners in German plants; a continuation of the capital accumulation from the slavery of African people, caught and sold across the Atlantic by companies.

These institutions and systems have been further exploited by the religious zealots for whom every step towards restricting

Muslims from living by Islam and denying them the right to self-determination is part of a wider crusade. People have to equally reject the invasions and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan because both are part of the larger 21st century crusade. Accepting the lies about Afghanistan is giving Bush and his fellow crusaders an opportunity to hide behind Afghanistan even in the case of Iraq. For that matter, even Iraq will not be the last frontier.

Seeing his support ebbing away in Iraq, Bush told the world on June 28, 2005, that the United States is staying in Iraq because they have to fight terrorists with the same ideology as those behind 9/11. The terrorists have congregated there since the Americans arrived. In his October 6, 2005 speech, Bush said the insurgents want to establish an "Islamic empire."[600] Bush believes that his co-crusaders have been successful in selling the "war on terrorism" in Afghanistan. That is why he tries to reassure those who have accepted the logic of the occupation of Afghanistan that Iraq has now also become the "central front" in the "war on terrorism."

Whatever the ghastly defects of Hussein's Iraq, it was not like Afghanistan at all. Bush and company had to craft totally different lies than the lies they crafted for invading Afghanistan. Now that the lies about Afghanistan have been universally accepted and those about Iraq have been rejected, Bush and Rumsfeld repeatedly argue that Iraq is in danger of becoming something it never was—the equivalent of Afghanistan under the Taliban and on the way to becoming Islamic Empire.

Instead of arguing that "no, it is not" and "no, Afghanistan was not as was described," the anti-war activists argue, "It's Bush's war that transformed the country and created the Islamic threat." No such threat has been created. Islam has never been a threat. It is Bush's democracy that needs Daisy Cutters and White Phosphorus to be imposed on a "liberated" people. Invade any independent, sovereign country and you will face the same threat of resistance as Bush is facing in Iraq and Afghanistan. Does it

mean that the crusaders have a right to occupy every single country on the earth, make the occupied people live the way the self-righteous totalitarians want them to live and no one is supposed to oppose their totalitarian designs? Or if people oppose such designs, they are doing so because they want to establish "Caliphate." Since Bush is there to deny Muslims the opportunity to live according to Islam, he and company have assumed that those who are working to unite Muslims and establish *Khilafah* are behind the resistance they face. In reality, no one has made such a claim on the part of Muslims engaged in armed resistance against the U.S. occupations. There are no "Iraqi terrorists" or "jihadists." The United States is facing legitimate resistance of a people, 1.8 million of whom were starved to death with sanctions and 150,000 of whom have been killed due to an illegal war imposed on them.

At the very least, the anti-war forces and activists have to see through the misconceptions that there are "bitter-enders from Hussein's regime," that the "Iraqi Sunni extremists" alone are against the United States, or that there are anti-American "Islamic militants" in other parts of the Muslim world. There is no anti-Americanism for the sake of anti-Americanism. Ignoring the root causes and motives of the crusaders is suicidal. It would lead to a Muslim holocaust in the 21st century. Muslims are already on the verge of being turned into 21st century Jews in the non-Muslim world.[601] The unfolding events and evolving environment in the United States and its allied states force one to see three major historic events in the making: the holocaust of Muslims, the subsequent mass exodus of the survivors towards Muslim majority areas and the end of the nation-state system as we know it.[602]

It is only due to lack of opposition to the occupation of Afghanistan that the crusaders are now hiding behind the same argument for Iraq. Their justification has turned back to 9/11, which would have been laughed away by the public if the crusad-

ers had tried to make it a basis for the invasion of Iraq. Rather than committing to a real inquiry of what actually happened on 9/11, or going after the alleged Osama alone, the crusaders went for Afghanistan, and then decided to overthrow Saddam Hussein. Now they claim that Osama's alleged legions have relocated to Iraq and the United States needs to defeat them there. So much for a straightforward strategy! This is cunning beyond belief—indeed, beyond comprehension. If this kind of super-fascism is not prevented from getting mainstream,[603] Osama's "legions" would be moving around from country to country to give the crusaders a chance to go after them from one war of aggression to another. If the public fails to realize the extent of the crusaders' actual campaign that started with Afghanistan, its expansion into a world war seems inevitable.

Notes

Introduction: The Pre-planned Aggression

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which implies the following: you are treated the same way you treat others. These above-mentioned four linguistic meanings constitute the concept of the word *Deen* in the *Qur'an* where it implies a comprehensive system of life that is composed of four parts: 1. The rulership and the authority belong to *Allah*. 2. The obedience and submission to this rulership and authority by those who embraced this *Deen*. 3. The comprehensive system (intellectual and practical) established by this authority (*Allah*). 4. The reward given by this authority (*Allah*) to those that followed the system and submitted to it and the punishment inflicted upon those who rebel against it and disobey it. According to the Qur'an, *Deen* is a submission, following and worship by man for the creator, the ruler, the subjugator in a comprehensive system of life with all its belief, intellectual, moral and practical aspects.

197 Further See: "He hath ordained for you that religion which He commended unto Noah and that which we inspire in thee (Muhammad) and that which we commended unto Ibrahim and Moses and Jesus, saying establish the religion and be not divided therein. (Qur'an 42:13) The Deen for Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S) was the same as for Noah, Ibrahim, Moosa and Eisa and as our Prophet came after all the Prophets, he was asked to follow the earlier Prophets in Deen. Hence Allah says: "And afterwards we inspired thee (Muhammad saying) follow the religion of Ibrahim as one by nature upright." (Qur'an 16:123).

198 " ... And whoever fails to judge on the basis of that which Allah revealed has committed *Kufr* (disbelief)." " ... And whoever fails to judge on the basis of that which Allah revealed has committed *Dhulm* (Injustice and oppression)." " ... And whoever fails to judge on the basis of that which Allah has revealed, has committed *Fisq* (wickedness)." (Qur´an, 5:44-47).

199 " ... And whoever fails to judge on the basis of that which Allah revealed has committed *Kufr*." " ... And whoever fails to judge on the basis of that which Allah revealed has committed *Dhulm*." " ... And whoever fails to judge on the basis of that which Allah has revealed, has committed *Fisq*." (Qur'an, 5:44-47).

200 The title given to the collection of recorded words and actions of the prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Most of what he said or did throughout his lifetime is recorded in the *Sunnah. Sunnah*: Literally "a path or way, a manner of life". Sunnah is that which Muhammad did, which he enjoined, and which was not forbidden by him when done in his presence.

201 "...therefore judge between them by what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their low desires (to turn away) from the truth that has come to you..." (5:48) "...And that you should judge between them by what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their low desires, and be cautious of them, lest they seduce you from part of what Allah has revealed to you..." (5:49). "These are those to whom We have given the book, the authority to rule and the prophethood. And if they disbelieved in any of them (the Book, the authority to rule, and the Prophethood) then We have already entrusted a people who are not disbelievers in it." (6:89).

202 "Surely this Islam is your religion, one religion (only), and I am your Lord, therefore serve Me." Shakir Translation of the Qur'an 21:92. "Verily, this brotherhood

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Chapter 4: From Jihad to Crusade

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Chapter 8: The Real Motives Confirmed

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About the author

ABID ULLAH JAN is the author of *A War on Islam?* (2001), *The End of Democracy* (2003) and *The Musharraf Factor: Leading Pakistan to Inevitable Demise* (2005). He is a political analyst and journalist from Pakistan, currently residing in Canada.

He is associated with the Independent Centre for Strategic Studies and Analysis (www.icssa.org). A frequent commentator on global politics, his write-ups are published widely in various leading publications around the world.

The author is born and raised in Northern part of Pakistan, adjacent to Afghanistan. He interviewed the Taliban officials and visited various communities in Afghanistan on a UNDP mission to specifically assess policies of the Taliban government and their impact on local development initiatives. The objective was to find out if specific community development interventions were possible under the Taliban.

Abid Jan interviewed Osama bin Laden and Dr. Ayman El-Zawahiri a few weeks before 9/11 in connection of one of his books on terrorism.

In this book the author is sharing some information for the first time which he could not get published in press or media in Pakistan for the fear of backlash of Osama-sympathizers without understanding the broader context.

The author's interview with Osama and Dr. Ayman in the crucial days before September 11 is critical in exposing some myths, such as Arabs were ruling Afghanistan by proxy during the Taliban reign and that Osama was capable of planning and implementing the 9/11 terrorist operation from Afghanistan.

In this book, the author shows how Osama was set up into making the statement that "we are about to do something" to the author and possibly others.