

ISLAMIC EXTREMISM AND THE WEST: EXPOUNDING THE NEGATIVE  
IMPLICATIONS OF THE CLASH BETWEEN ISLAMIC EXTREMISTS AND  
SOME WESTERN NATIONS

By

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree  
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## ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: ISLAMIC EXTREMISM AND THE WEST: EXPOUNDING  
THE NEGATIVE IMPLICATIONS OF THE CLASH  
BETWEEN ISLAMIC EXTREMISTS AND SOME WESTERN  
NATIONS

Ifeanyi V. Madu, M.A. MAY 2008

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Department of Political Science.

The collapse of the Soviet Union on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1991 after an announcement by former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev brought an end to the Cold War. Undoubtedly, the entire world heaved a sigh of relief because the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union was, indeed a threat to world peace and stability. However, since the end of the Cold War, global peace is once more threatened by the growth of a new and particularly dangerous clash. This clash has claimed thousands of lives and is still claiming more. This is the clash between some Western nations notably the United States, Great Britain, France, Spain, and Islamic extremist organizations like the Armed Islamic Group and Al Qaeda.

Saudi-born Osama Bin Laden, with strategic help from Egyptian-born Ayman Azwahiri, founded the Islamic extremists/terrorist organization known as

Al Qaeda. This group is the largest and the most influential of all the Islamic extremist organizations. Islamic extremists consider the above-mentioned Western nations as largely godless and secular societies. They also believe that, in some cases, these Western countries represent Judeo-Christian traditions whose influences on Islam and Islamic nations should be stopped. This happens to be one of the primary causes of this struggle against the West by these Islamic extremists groups. In addition, other Islamic extremist groups like Hamas and Hezbollah whose primary enemy is Israel have also threatened Western interests. In fact, Hezbollah has actually carried out an attack against the United States and France in Lebanon to protest America's support for Israel.

This thesis examined the root causes of this problem. In addition, this thesis also discussed the reasons why Islamic extremist groups have engaged in this struggle against some Western nations especially, the ones mentioned above. Furthermore, the negative implications of this clash, as it affects the international community, were also discussed in this thesis. Another important aspect covered by this thesis is the area of efforts made to end this clash. Consequently, this thesis also examined whether enough has been done to reduce the level of and, if possible, eliminate completely this problem.

Carrying out a research on Islamic extremism may involve a close study of extremist organizations like Al Qaeda. This could prove to be an uphill task because many of these organizations have no identifiable base that one could go to interview and observe them in order to get more information. Therefore, this

thesis was written using many writings, articles, journals, books and the media, including the Islamic media so as to get an Islamic perspective on the issue.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background to the Problem

The collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991, after an announcement by former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, brought an end to the Cold War between the U.S. and the former Soviet Union. However, since the end of the Cold War, global peace is once more threatened by the clash between some Western nations and Islamic extremist organizations. This clash has claimed thousands of lives, and is still claiming more in different parts of the world. Scholars like Samuel Huntington described this as a clash between two civilizations. Huntington identified these civilizations as Western civilization and Islamic civilization. In his book, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Huntington made the following observation: "Given the prevailing perceptions Muslims and Westerners have of each other plus the rise of Islamist extremism, it is hardly surprising that . . . an intercivilizational quasi war developed between Islam and the West."<sup>1</sup> Huntington's view was heavily criticized by some scholars. Among Huntington's harshest critics was Edward Said, who disagreed with Huntington's postulations. Said did not accept the idea of a clash of civilizations between the West and Islam. In his article, *The Clash of Ignorance*, Said made the following observation:

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<sup>1</sup> Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Touchstone, 1997), 216. Huntington is of the opinion that the post-cold war era will witness a clash between Islam and the West and that this will be the central and the most dangerous dimension of the emerging post Cold War global politics. His views will be discussed further in the next chapter of this thesis.

Certainly neither Huntington . . . has much time to spare for the internal dynamics and plurality of every civilization, or for the fact that the major contest in most modern cultures concerns the definition or interpretation of each culture, or for the unattractive possibility that a great deal of demagoguery and downright ignorance is involved in presuming to speak for a whole religion or civilization.<sup>2</sup>

The conflict between Islamic extremists and some Western nations has created a global impact that comes close to the impact of the Cold War rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. Just like the Cold War shaped the politics and the foreign policies of Western nations like the United States, Britain, and that of the Soviet Union, the conflict between Islamic extremists and these Western nations has also affected the politics and the foreign policies of many Western nations. A good example is the decision of the United States Congress to abort a proposed take over of U.S. port operations by Dubai Ports World. The United States Congress did not specifically allude to the threats posed by Islamic extremists to the country's security, as the reason for its decision to abort the deal. Nevertheless, one would clearly see that the outcry against Dubai Ports World was primarily because it is owned by an Islamic nation, the United Arab Emirates. In fact, it is alleged that the United Arab Emirates is the home country of two of the nineteen Al-Qaeda members involved

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<sup>2</sup> Edward Said, "The Clash of Ignorance," *The Nation*, October 22, 2001, <http://www.thenation.com/docprint.mhtml?1=20011022&s=said> (accessed June 25, 2007). Said disputed Huntington's view that Islam is incompatible with Western democratic values. This will be further discussed in the next chapter of this thesis.

in the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States. The Dubai Ports World incident and the September 2001 terrorist attacks will be discussed in subsequent chapters of this thesis.

Saudi-born Osama Bin Laden, with strategic help from Egyptian-born Dr. Ayman Azwahiri, founded Al Qaeda. This terrorist organization is the largest, and the most influential of all the Islamic extremist/terrorist organizations in the world. Islamic extremist organizations like Al Qaeda, consider many Western nations as secular societies. In addition, Islamic extremists also view many Western nations as agents of Judeo-Christian traditions. Consequently, many Islamic extremists believe that Christianity, Judaism and Western civilization have strong political, social and cultural influence on Islam, and that these should be stopped. This happens to be one of the primary causes of the struggle against the West by these Islamic extremist groups. Furthermore, Islamic extremist groups like Hamas and Hezbollah, whose primary enemy is Israel, have also threatened Western interests. In fact, Hezbollah actually carried out an attack against the United States and France in Lebanon to protest America's support for Israel.

The continued clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations has resulted in series of violent attacks against Western nations and their interests. In most cases, these attacks by Islamic extremists come in form of terrorism. Unfortunately, terrorism has had severe negative implications. The act of terrorism is seriously threatening the security and stability of many nations in the international community. In addition to terrorism, other forms of Islamic

extremists' violent campaigns against the West have also affected social and economic activities in many parts of the world. This is due to the fact that Western nations control a large part of the world's economic activities. The West, therefore, is vital to the growth and sustenance of economically beneficial activities like tourism. Tourism, for example, provides income and helps sustain the economies of many developing countries. However, terrorism could hurt tourism and in the long run have an effect on the economy of nations that are dependent on tourism for national income. Konstantinos Drakos and Ali M. Kutan discussed the negative effects of terrorism on tourism in their essay, *Regional Effects of Terrorism on Tourism in Three Mediterranean Countries*. According to Drakos and Kutan, "Terrorism may hurt tourism by reducing tourist arrivals . . . continued terrorist attacks may also significantly reduce FDI."<sup>3</sup>

The most deadly terrorist attack carried out by an Islamic extremist group against a Western nation was the one carried out against the United States on September 11, 2001. This day now has a permanent place in the history of the United States, and indeed the Western world. A Time Magazine publication, *The Middle East: The History, The Cultures, The Conflicts, The Faiths*, described the September 11, 2001 attacks in the following words:

No American needs to read a summary of the events of Sept. 11, 2001- they are forever branded on the nation's psyche, a scar that has yet to heal. The enormity of those events-the hijacking of four

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<sup>3</sup> Konstantinos Drakos and Ali M. Kutan, "Regional Effects of Terrorism on Tourism in Three Mediterranean Countries," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol.47, No. 5. (2003): 621.



jet airliners, two of which crashed into the World Trade Center in Manhattan, one of which hit the Pentagon and the last of which slammed into a Pennsylvania farm field after a timely rebellion by its alerted passengers- made this day epochal, unforgettable, a Pearl Harbor for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>4</sup>

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States led to the death of more than three thousand innocent lives. These 2001 attacks marked the apex of series of terrorist attacks carried out by suspected Islamic extremist groups against the Western interests and targets. Earlier terrorist attacks against the United States include the bombing of U.S. embassies in the African countries of Kenya and Tanzania. In addition, in November 2005, there was another terrorist attack carried out against Western interests in Amman, Jordan by suspected members of an Islamic extremist group. The group, suspected to be linked to late Abu Musab Zaqrwi's organization, Al- Qaeda in Iraq, bombed two hotels owned by Americans. One of the hotels is a popular U.S. hotel chain known as Radisson Hotels and Resort. Fifty-seven people were killed and another one hundred and seven were wounded.

Furthermore, in September 2006, an attempt was made by Islamic extremists to blow up the United States Embassy in Damascus, Syria. Four people were killed in this incident. France also suffered series of terrorist attacks carried out by suspected Islamic extremists in July, 1995. The attacks in France

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<sup>4</sup> Time Inc, *The Middle East: The History, the Cultures, the Conflicts, the Faiths*, intro. Jimmy Carter (New York: Time Magazines Inc., 2006) 106.

were suspected to have been planned and carried out by the G.I.A. (Groupe Armee Islamic), an Algerian based Islamic extremist group. These attacks were carried out against the French public and they targeted the public transit system in Paris. Eight people were killed and seventeen were wounded. Furthermore, Spain has also had its own share of Islamic extremists' attack. In March 2004, there was a series of coordinated terrorist bombings against the commuter train system of Madrid, the Spanish capital. Once more, innocent lives were lost in these attacks. According to Robert Scheina in a lecture, *Lessons Learned from Attacks on Mass Transit*, the Madrid attacks were organized by Al Qaeda operatives, possibly self-enfranchised. Scheina further observed that these attacks “. . . killed one hundred and ninety-two persons and injured one thousand five hundred others.”<sup>5</sup>

In July 2005, Britain was also attacked by members of an Islamic extremist group. The terrorist attacks in Britain involved a series of four bomb attacks that were carried out against London's public transport system during the morning rush hour. Fifty-two people and four bombers were killed, while seven hundred were injured in these attacks. Todd Richissin, in his *Baltimore Sun* article, *Blasts Shake London*, quoted London Mayor, Ken Livingston as describing these attacks as “. . . mass murder carried out by terrorists bent on indiscriminate . . . slaughter.”<sup>6</sup> In addition, in 2007, the *Washington Post* reported that an Al-Qaeda affiliated group in the North African country of Algeria also

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<sup>5</sup> Robert Scheina, “Lessons learned From Attacks on Mass Transit,” Lecture presented at the Maryland Transit Administration Police Terrorism Training, Baltimore, 11 November 2006.

<sup>6</sup> Todd Richissin, “Blasts Shake London . . .” *Baltimore Sun*, 8 July 2005, p. 1.A.

carried out a terrorist attack against the Algerian Government. The Algerian Government is considered a pro-Western Government by Algerian Islamic extremists. According to the Washington Post news report, *Al-Qaeda Branch Claims Algeria Blasts*, "Al-Qaeda's new affiliate in North Africa asserted responsibility Wednesday for the deadliest attacks in Algeria's capital in a decade as 24 people were reported killed and 222 injured in bombings that shattered the Prime Minister's headquarters and a Police base."<sup>7</sup>

Claims of responsibilities for these terrorist attacks came from terrorist organizations suspected to have links to Islamic extremist and militant groups. These groups are spreading extremist Islamic ideologies and a form of jihadist campaign against some Western nations. They also extend this aggression to any structure or government considered pro-Western, as exemplified by the earlier mentioned Algerian terrorist attacks. Furthermore, the September 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States were blamed on Al Qaeda. According to *The American Journal of International Law*, "Immediately after the attacks, U.S. government officials suspected that the hijackers had been authorized and funded by a Saudi Arabian expatriate, Osama bin Laden, based in Afghanistan and working through his secretive, compartmentalized terrorist network, Al

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<sup>7</sup> Craig Whitlock, "Al-Qaeda Branch Claims Algeria Blast," *The Washington Post*, 12 April 2007, p. A.1. Whitlock, in his Washington Post news report, further observed that these terrorist attacks in Algeria came barely a day after four suicide bombers died while attempting to carry out terrorist attacks in neighboring Morocco. The escalation in terrorist attacks in Algeria is because Islamic extremists do not like western interference in the internal affairs of Algeria. France, specifically has been involved in the internal political process in Algeria. France has also been blamed by Islamic extremists for the pro-Western look of the Algerian government.

Qaeda.”<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, according to Richissin’s article in the *Baltimore Sun*, “A previously unknown group calling itself the Secret Organization of Al-Qaeda in Europe used a web site to claim responsibility for the blasts, which killed more people than any attack in London since the Second World War. The group said it was acting in retaliation for Britain’s involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, and threatened to strike other countries with troops there.”<sup>9</sup>

The big question remains, why are Islamic extremists engaged in this violent campaign against some Western nations? A close look at the reasons given by Islamic extremists for carrying out terrorist and other forms of violent attacks against these Western nations reveals that Islamic extremists feel they have a justification for their actions. One of the reasons is to achieve political ends. These ends, as noted by Anthony Oberschall in, *Explaining Terrorism: The Contribution of Collective Action Theory*, could be for “. . . self-defense, a worthy cause impossible to attain by nonviolent means, or retaliation.”<sup>10</sup> Oberschall further noted that terrorism is not the act of madmen or of political and religious sociopaths. Rather, according to Oberschall, terrorism is the act of political agents who “. . . choose covert, violent means to achieve political goals, be they ethnonational, religious, or ideological.”<sup>11</sup> In the case of Islamic extremists, their militant actions against these Western nations have both political and religious

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<sup>8</sup> American Society of International Law, “Terrorist Attacks on World Trade Center and Pentagon,” *American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 96, No.1. (2002), 238.

<sup>9</sup> Todd Richissin, “Blasts Shake London . . .” *Baltimore Sun*, 8 July 2005, p. 1.A.

<sup>10</sup> Anthony Oberschall, “Explaining Terrorism: The Contribution of Collective Action Theory,” *Sociological Theory*, Vol.22, No.1, *Theories of Terrorism: A Symposium* ( 2004), 26.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

undertone. When one examines the trend of events in the world today, one would see that the primary political and religious end Islamic extremists wish to achieve is ending the United States military presence in Islamic countries. The presence of the United States military in an Islamic nation like Saudi Arabia is seen by Islamic extremists as sacrilegious. This is because Saudi Arabia houses Islam's most holy cities, Mecca and Medina. In addition, Islamic extremists have also alluded to freedom and independence for the Palestinian people as one of their reasons for engaging in these violent struggles against the West. Osama bin Laden has, on several occasions, made reference to this as among his reasons for waging violent campaigns against some Western nations. This reference to the Palestinians has gained him more sympathy in some parts of the Islamic world. This is due to the fact that Muslims in general have a lot of sympathy for the Palestinians. Therefore, Islamic extremists like Osama bin Laden have exploited the situation in Palestine to draw more support from Muslims. As Begona Aretxaga in an essay, *Terror as Thrill: First Thoughts on the War on Terrorism*, puts it, "For much of the Muslim world, the U.S. is perceived as the terrorist while Osama bin Laden is the unjustly persecuted saint . . ." <sup>12</sup>

Nevertheless, the terrorist incidents discussed above bring to bare the inherent dangers posed by the clash between Islamic extremist and some Western nations. It has brought with it a feeling of insecurity among Westerners and non-Westerners alike despite the elaborate security arrangements put in

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<sup>12</sup> Begona Aretxaga, "Terror as Thrill: First Thought on the 'War on Terrorism,'" *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol.75, No.1 (2001), p143.

place by each respective Western government. In fact, not since the Cold War has the world ever experienced such heightened tension. The situation has also led to a rise in the prejudice against some Western nations, particularly the United States and Britain, in many Islamic nations. The same situation could also be said to prevail in many parts of the Western world where every Muslim is seen as a potential terrorist. This has resulted into the stereotyping of Muslims as terrorists in the minds of Westerners. The resultant lack of trust between Muslims and the West continues to undermine the prospects for peaceful co-existence among the nations of the world. Muneer Ahmad in an essay, *Homeland Insecurities: Racial Violence the Day after September 11*, gives a fitting description of this scenario. According to Ahmad,

Among the enormous violence done by the United States since the tragedies suffered on September 11 has been an unrelenting, multivalent assault on the bodies, psyches, and rights of Arab, Muslim, and South Asian immigrants. Restrictions on immigration of young men from Muslim countries, racial profiling and detention of 'Muslim-looking' individuals, and an epidemic of hate violence against Arab, Muslim, and South Asian communities in the wake of September 11 recall the long history of racialized U.S. immigration and immigrant policy . . . <sup>13</sup>

What are the causes of this present clash between Islamic extremist

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<sup>13</sup> Muneer Ahmad, "Homeland Insecurities: Racial Violence the Day after September 11," *Social Text* 72, Vol. 20, No. 3, (2002): 101.

groups and some nations of the West? Many reasons for this clash have been given by different scholars. Each of these reasons represents a different school of thought. Scholars like Paul Grieve are of the opinion that the problematic relationship between Islamic extremist groups and some nations in the West is a product of the desire of extremist and fundamentalist Muslims to assert their own religious and cultural identity. This religious and cultural identity that Islamic extremists are seeking, according to Grieve, are expected to be free from any form of Western influence. Grieve further observed that Islamic extremists fear that the West and its culture are already beginning to penetrate more deeply into the very fiber of Islamic societies. Islamic extremists believe that this supposed penetration of Islam by Western values is completely unacceptable. This is more so, considering the fact that many Islamic extremists view most nations of the West as agents of Judeo-Christian traditions and values. Worse still, some extremists view some ideologies of Western origin as ungodly and secular. Grieve in his book, *Islam, History, Faith and Politics: The Complete Introduction*, gave more insight on his assertions. According to Grieve, "In modern-day Islam, fundamentalism is the reaction against compromise with modern secular society as well as the expression of a desire to maintain or rediscover the core values of the faith."<sup>14</sup> In either case, both secular and Judeo-Christian traditions have been seen as among, if not the greatest threats, to the continued survival and propagation of Islamic Religion.

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<sup>14</sup> Paul Grieve, *Islam, History, Faith and Politics: The Complete Introduction* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2006), 307.

Another primary cause of the present disagreement between Islamic extremism and some nations of the West is the Israeli–Palestinian crisis. Muslims, especially the Arab Muslims, have continued to support the Palestinians in their struggles against Israel. The Arab world has fought several wars with Israel. The perception among Arabs is that Israel has been able to survive due to military and financial support from the West, primarily from the United States. Consequently, the Israel-Palestine/Arab crisis is one of the major reasons for the establishment and growth of Islamic extremist organizations like Hamas and the Hezbollah. In addition, the Palestinian issue also led to confrontations between the Islamic world and the West. A good example is the 1973 oil embargo imposed against the United States and her Western allies by the Arab/Islamic oil-producing nations for supporting Israel during the 1973 Arab-Israeli Yom Kippur war.

In view of the above, this thesis shall, first of all, carry out an in-depth study of the origin and causes of Islamic extremism. This thesis shall examine how the present clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations started. This study will also examine why the clash between the West and Islamic extremists has degenerated into the deep hatred, violence and bloodbath that are now the hallmarks of this clash. In addition, the role of Judaism and Christianity (Judeo-Christian), and their supposed influence on the West will also be discussed. This thesis shall also attempt to establish if religion is the primary reason for this clash. In addition, the roles played by political and economic



factors will also be examined. Furthermore, has the West, especially the United States, through her foreign policies, done enough to improve relations with some nations in the Islamic world and vice-versa? Has diplomacy been given the chance it deserves in this crisis? These and other issues, including suggestions on what could be done to avert a worldwide war, shall be critically examined in this thesis.

### **The Objectives of this Thesis**

In this thesis, the following shall be examined:

- a. The events or developments that led to the present clash between some countries of the West and Islamic extremist organizations. In addition, focus will also be on the factors that contributed to the emergence of Islamic extremist organizations
- b. The role that major Islamic nations like Saudi Arabia can play towards curbing anti-Western sentiments in the Islamic world.
- c. What Western countries like the United States, France and Britain could do to improve relations between the West and Islamic nations.

### **Statement of the Problem**

For many centuries, man has always believed in the existence of a Supreme Being who influences every aspect of man's existence on earth. Every society or group of people has had its own idea of a Supreme Being and how He should be worshipped. This has led to the founding of different religions in the world today. In most cases, the teachings of these religions are incorporated as

the standard to be used in guiding a society's way of life. As a result we have religions like Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Confucianism and Christianity among others. These different religions form the basis on which law and societal values are formulated in many countries of the world.

Many of the societal conflicts known in human history could be traced to disagreements and lack of mutual understanding between the adherents of these religions. In the Middle Ages, there were cases of "Holy Wars" carried out by European Christians against Muslims in the Holy Land. These "Crusaders", as they were called, carried out a total of nine Crusades (Holy Wars) against Muslims. In the modern world, we have conflicts between Hindus and Muslims in India, Jews and Muslims in Palestine, and Christians and Muslims in Nigeria among many others. These conflicts bear eloquent testimonies to the earlier assertion that religion, in most cases, is the primary cause of many of the conflicts known to man. This view is also shared by Terry Jordan et al. in the book, *The Human Mosaic: A Thematic Introduction to Cultural Geography*. According to the Jordan et al,

Religion very often lies at the root of conflicts between cultural groups, for people seem less willing to tolerate, let alone to accommodate, differences in religious matters than differences in any other aspect of culture . . . Catholics versus Protestants in Northern Ireland, Hindus versus Muslims in India, Catholics versus Orthodox versus Muslims in the Balkans, and Jews versus Muslims

in the Middle East are all conflicts based at least in part in religion.<sup>15</sup>

However, the greatest threat to world peace today is the present hostile relationship between Islamic extremist organizations and some Western countries. According to the *American Journal of International Law*, the overall objectives of Islamic extremists like Osama bin Laden, are “. . . to oust pro-Western governments in the Middle East, to remove U.S. military forces from the region, and to prevent an Arab-Israeli settlement.”<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, the difference in religion between the West and most parts of the Middle East is also among the major causes of this clash. Islamic extremists consider many Western countries as either secular, or as agents of a Judeo-Christian agenda. Islamic extremists believe that Judeo-Christian values negate fundamental Islamic teachings, and in fact, are a threat to Islam. This has created a state of hostile relationship between Islamic extremists and a “Judeo-Christian” West. The hostile relations and the violence that come with this problem have negative implications to the security and economic stability of the world. Examples of the negative manifestations of this problem are exemplified by the deadly events in Paris, New York City, Madrid, London and Amman.

### **Rationale for the Study**

Western values and culture are believed by Islamic extremists to be a potential threat to Islamic values and traditions. This perceived threat is made worse by the apparent domination of the West in almost every aspect of human

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<sup>15</sup> Terry Jordan-Bychkov and others, *The Human Mosaic: A Thematic Introduction to Cultural Geography*, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: W.H Freeman and Company, 2006), 68.

<sup>16</sup> *American Journal of International Law*, 239.

endeavor. The West controls and dominates the media, have superior economic and military power. This, understandably, gives some Muslims a serious case for concern. In addition, the general assumption among Islamists that Western values represent Christianity also influenced this study. Does the West represent Christianity and Judaism? Considering that Western countries like the United States adopted a policy that separates religion from the affairs of the state, this study is also influenced by the desire to critically examine the validity of the assumption that the West is carrying out a Judeo-Christian agenda.

### **Hypothesis**

The assumption in this study is that the world will continue to be multi-religious and multi-cultural. Therefore, it will be a far-fetched dream to have a situation where every nation or state practiced the same religion, have the same values, traditions and way of life. This makes it difficult to completely eradicate occasional disagreement or religious conflicts. Consequently, it is further postulated that,

- a.** Islamic Religion and Western values would always have different views on issues like how a society is supposed to be run.
- b.** The continuous lingering without resolution of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict will continue to be a source of division between many Western nations and the Islamic World.
- c.** Religious extremism remains a threat to peaceful co-existence among the nations of the world.

d. The continuous dependence on oil for energy will directly or indirectly connect the West with the Islamic World.

### **Methodology and Organization**

Sources consulted in the course of writing this thesis include secondary sources from Libraries. Primary sources include books on the subject, articles, monographs and newspapers.

The thesis shall be divided into six chapters. Chapter one will consist of the overall picture of the thesis. This includes the introduction, objectives of the study, statement of the problem, rationale for the study, the hypothesis and methodology, and organization. Chapter two will be the literature review and the theoretical framework. Chapter three will be devoted to studying the origin of Islamic extremism and the emergence of militant Islamic groups. This chapter shall also examine the values and culture of Western countries like the United States and Britain. This is with a view to determining whether the West actually represents Judeo-Christian values. Chapter four shall provide a historical background and a detailed study of the causes and other thorny issues that have contributed to, or led to the present frosty relations between Islamic extremist groups and some Western countries. Chapter five shall examine the effects of this clash on global political, economic and security environment. What are the economic, social and even political costs of this crisis? Chapter six will be the final part of the thesis and it will consist of the recommendations and conclusion

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### Literature Review

Many writers have written on the clash between Islam (Islamic extremists) and some nations of the West. The most important, and probably the most controversial book on this subject is, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, written by Samuel Huntington in 1996. This book remains one of the most controversial books ever written since the end of the Cold War. Huntington painted a gloomy picture of the future, with his opinion that the next several years will almost certainly witness a clash between Western civilization and Islamic civilization. He went on to argue that Islam remains the West's number one enemy after the collapse of Communist Soviet Union. Huntington also added that a clash of civilizations between the Islamic world and the Western world is inevitable.

Samuel Huntington differentiated what he called "civilization in the singular" from "civilizations in the plural". He noted that "civilization in the singular" was an idea developed by French thinkers in the eighteenth century. According to Huntington, the French thinkers used this "civilization in the singular" to refer to the opposite of barbarism which, unlike a civilized society, was not settled, urban, and literate. Huntington further explained that "civilizations in the plural" was ". . . a shift away from the assumption there was a single standard for what was civilized . . . there were many civilizations, each of

which was civilized in its own way.”<sup>1</sup> Huntington made it clear that the civilization he meant in his book is the civilizations in the plural. He identified these civilizations as Sinic, Japanese, Hindu, Islamic, Orthodox, Western and, in his words, probably African. He further observed that religion is a central defining characteristic of civilizations. Huntington’s assertion also puts religion at the center of clashes between civilizations.

Huntington’s book centered primarily on Western civilization and Islamic civilization. According to Huntington,

Since the 1970s . . . a fairly consistent anti-Western trend has existed, marked by the rise of fundamentalism, shifts in power within Muslim countries from more pro-Western to more anti-Western governments, the emergence of a quasi war between some Islamic groups and the West . . . <sup>2</sup>

Huntington described the clash between Islam and the West as a fault line war. According to him, fault line wars are wars fought between groups that are part of larger cultural entities. According to Huntington, each of the groups involved in a fault line war will attempt to expand the war and mobilize support from civilization kin groups. Huntington observed that these civilization kin groups will eventually identify with their fighting kin. He also used the first Gulf War to further elaborate on his postulations that there is a clash of civilizations between Islam and the West. Huntington observed that the Gulf War was fought by the West to liberate

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<sup>1</sup> Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Touchstone, 1997), 41.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 185.

one Islamic country from another (Kuwait from Iraq). Nevertheless, he noted, “The Gulf war became a civilization war because the West intervened militarily in a Muslim conflict . . . Muslims throughout the world came to see that intervention as a war against them . . .”<sup>3</sup> In as much as Huntington has a point, however, it should be recalled that Saudi Arabia, an Islamic country offered its territory to the allies as a base to attack Iraq.

Huntington further added that even though Saddam Hussein was seen as a bloody tyrant by fellow Muslims, his case was an Islamic “ . . . family affair to be settled within the family and those who intervened in the name of some grand theory of international justice were doing so to . . . maintain Arab subordination to the West.”<sup>4</sup> As a consequence, he continued, “For Muslims the war thus quickly became a war between civilizations, in which the inviolability of Islam was at stake. Islamic fundamentalist groups . . . denounced it as a war against ‘Islam and its civilization’ by an alliance of Crusaders . . .”<sup>5</sup>

Huntington’s book came under heavy criticisms from so many angles. However, some scholars applauded his work, especially since after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States. Those who applauded Huntington’s views saw the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks as confirming Huntington’s earlier postulations on an inevitable clash between the West and Islam. Nevertheless, one of Huntington’s harshest critics is Edward Said. Said published an article in the Nation titled *The Clash of Ignorance*. In this

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 247.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 248.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 249.



article, Said vigorously disagreed with Huntington that there is a clash of civilizations between Islamic and Western civilizations. Said described as “downright ignorance” the idea of presuming to speak for a whole religion or civilization. According to Said, “. . . Huntington is an ideologist . . . who wants to make civilizations and identities into what they are not . . .”<sup>6</sup> Said argued that unedifying labels like Islam and the West mislead and confuse the mind. Said further asserted that there are closer ties existing among civilizations in the world. These closer ties, according to Said, are demonstrated by the increased presence of Muslims all over Europe and the United States. The increased presence of Muslims in the West, according to Said, demonstrates that Islam is no longer on the fringes of the West but at its center. Said further advised that international conflicts should not be viewed as conflicts or clashes between civilizations, rather “. . . it is better to think in terms of powerful and powerless communities, the secular politics of reason and ignorance and universal principles of justice and injustice . . .”<sup>7</sup> Said believes that Huntington’s clash of civilizations failed to recognize the increasing co-operation and interdependence between the nations of the world. This failure to recognize the cooperation and interdependence between the nations of the world, according to Said, made Huntington to erroneously describe the conflict between Islamic extremists and some Western nations as a clash between the entire Islamic world and the entire Western world. One could see the point that Said was making because not all

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<sup>6</sup>Edward Said, “The Clash of Ignorance,” *The Nation*, 22 October 2001, <http://www.thenation.com/docprint.mhtml?l=20011022&s=said> (accessed June 25, 2007).

<sup>7</sup>Said.

Muslims support the actions of Islamic extremists. Many moderate Muslims detest the actions of Islamic extremist, especially on the issue of suicide attacks and mass slaughter of innocent people in the name of religion.

Another writer who also criticized Huntington is Jack Matlock. In his article, *Can Civilizations Clash?*, Matlock disagreed with Huntington's concept of civilizations. Matlock further observed that Huntington's view on the definition of civilization can be faulted. According to Matlock,

Huntington's application of the concept of multiple civilizations . . . seem highly dubious . . . his assumption that there is a high degree of coherence within the civilizations he postulates . . . is ill-founded. The image of civilizations interacting to the point of conflict is that of entities sufficiently close-knit to be independent actors on the global stage. But civilizations, even as Huntington defines it, are not that at all.<sup>8</sup>

Matlock further added that there is no precise agreement on where the dividing lines should be placed among various civilizations. He notes that Huntington's claim that there is a generally agreed identification of the major civilizations is simply not true. Matlock specifically points out that writers ". . . like Braudel, include Russia in European civilization, while others exclude it."<sup>9</sup> From Matlock's

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<sup>8</sup> John Matlock, "Can Civilizations Clash?" *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol.143. No.3 (Sep., 1999), 431-432. Matlock noted that Huntington's opinion that broad agreement exists on central propositions concerning the nature, identity, and dynamics of civilizations, especially the idea that civilizations are cultural entities, mortal, always evolving and cultural, not political has not been generally accepted.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 431. Matlock observed that even-though Braudel includes Russia in European civilization, which by implication may mean Western civilization, however Huntington would treat Russia and other countries professing Eastern Orthodoxy as members of a civilization different from the rest

arguments, it will be difficult to talk about a clash of civilizations between the West and Islam since there is no general consensus on what actually makes up what is referred to as the West.

Closely related to Matlock's argument disputing Huntington's claim of a clash of civilizations between the West and Islam is the argument raised by John Oneal and Bruce Russett. These writers, in their article titled *A Response to Huntington*, argued that contrary to Huntington's opinion, civilizations are not, for the most part, intermingled. According to Oneal and Russett, "The boundaries of civilizations are generally the border of states. If civilizational identities fuel conflict, this should be manifest in interstate conflict."<sup>10</sup> This assertion by Oneal and Russett that the boundaries of civilizations are generally the border of states goes contrary to Huntington's postulations because Huntington's idea of civilizations encompasses many states. However, Oneal and Russett's view that the boundaries of civilizations are generally the border of states could be faulted. This is because two separate states may well belong to the same civilizations.

Nevertheless, despite the barrage of attacks aimed at Huntington's view on a clash of civilizations between Islam and the West, writers like Jonathan Fox believe that some aspects of Huntington's postulations are true. Fox, in his essay titled *Two Civilizations and Ethnic Conflict: Islam and the West*, agrees that there is an increase in the level of civilizational clash involving the West and Islam in

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of Europe. This underscores Matlock's argument that Huntington was wrong to assert that scholars generally agree in their identification of the major civilizations.

<sup>10</sup> John Oneal & Bruce Russett, "A Response to Huntington," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol.37, No. 5. (2000), 612.

the post-Cold War era. Fox observed as follows:

. . . a majority of 55.9% of the post Cold War civilizational ethnic conflicts involving the West were with Islamic groups. This is up from about 39.4% during the Cold War and is consistent with Huntington's argument that civilizational conflict between the Western and Islamic civilizations will increase in the post-Cold War era.<sup>11</sup>

Undoubtedly, Huntington's *The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of World Order*, is one of the most important books to have emerged since the end of the Cold War. Considering current events in the world today, especially the continued hostilities between Islamic extremist organizations and some Western nations, and even between Islamic extremists and Islamic moderates, Huntington's argument could be described a clear reflection of the current clash that the world is witnessing. However, contrary to calling it a clash of civilizations between the entire Islamic world and the entire Western world, one would rather describe it as a clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations. Extremists' views and the deep hatred for the United States and some Western nations expressed by Islamic extremists like Osama bin Laden do not represent the views of the entire Muslim world. Similarly, the United States' policies or

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<sup>11</sup> Jonathan Fox, "Two Civilizations and Ethnic Conflict: Islam and the West," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol.38, No.4. (Jul., 2001), 464. This assertion by Fox was based on a data he used in his essay. This data revealed that both Islamic groups and the West have had an increase in their involvement in conflicts in the post Cold War era. Fox noted that Islamic groups were involved in 109 ethnic conflicts during the post-Cold War period, and out of these, 62.4% were civilizational. Similarly, Western groups were involved in 59 ethnic conflicts in the post-Cold War era, and of these, about 59.3% were civilizational. These figures go a long way in proving that Huntington was right in his assertion that the post Cold War era will witness an increase in clashes involving the Western civilization and Islamic civilization.

British policies towards Islamic nations, most times do not represent the views of the entire Western world. France opposed the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Masoud Kheirabadi, a professor of Islamic and Middle Eastern Issues at Portland State University, also wrote extensively on the conflict between Islamic extremists and some Western nations. In his book titled *Religions of the World: Islam*, Kheirabadi traced the confrontations between the West and Islam back to the Byzantine Empire. In addition, Kheirabadi grouped Christianity together with the Western world. He opined that the West is yet to come to terms with the defeat of the Christian Byzantine Empire by Muslims. According to Kheirabadi,

The Christian West never accepted the defeat of the Byzantine Forces in 636 that led to the loss of Jerusalem and neighboring territories to Muslims. To many European Christians, this on-going conflict was not merely over territorial expansion but over religious supremacy. They saw Christianity as being challenged by Islam.<sup>12</sup>

Kheirabadi also made reference to the Crusades. He described the Crusades as attempts by Western Christians to take the control of Jerusalem from Muslims. He further described the Crusades as “. . . a long lasting series of bloody conflicts between Islamic and Christian European armies . . .”<sup>13</sup> According to Kheirabadi, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, Constantinople was captured by the Ottomans and later renamed Istanbul. Consequently, Istanbul remained the seat

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<sup>12</sup> Masoud Kheirabadi, *Religions of the World: Islam* (Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2004), 137. Masoud's view on the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations is from an Islamic point of view. He sees the conflict as a religiously motivated conflict between Christianity and Islam.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 137.

of the Ottomans until 1923 when, after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, Western colonial powers (France, England, Holland, and Italy) dismantled the Caliphates and the Sultanates that symbolically represented Islam. This, he said, marked the beginning of the imposition of what he called “Westernization” on Muslims. These efforts at Westernization, in the words of Kheirabadi, came with its own consequences. According to Kheirabadi, “Many Muslims gradually began to develop an appetite for the ways of the West, and therefore, Westernization of Muslim societies soon became a widespread phenomenon.”<sup>14</sup>

Kheirabadi further observed that this Westernization in Muslim societies resulted in the reliance upon science and technology as the ultimate solutions to human problems. This reliance on science and technology, observed Kheirabadi, undermined the “. . . prevailing Islamic worldview of the sovereignty of God and the need to observe ethical religious codes of behavior as defined by Sharia.”<sup>15</sup> He added that Western music and television led to the increased cases of alcohol consumption, prostitution, and pornography among Muslims. These behaviors, Kheirabadi insisted, are not traditionally common in Islamic societies. He categorically concluded as follows: “Western nations and Westernized rulers were held responsible for the breakdown of traditional family, religious, and social values; an increase in the divorce rate; and the overall moral decline of Islamic

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 139. Kheirabadi added that Muslims developed a taste for Western clothing, art, architecture, literature, and particularly, forms of entertainment such as music and movies. He further observed that in the colonial Muslim societies, for one to be modern, it was necessary to adopt a European-American lifestyle.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 140.

society.”<sup>16</sup> Suffice it to say that Kheirabadi is of the opinion that whatever moral decay that prevailed in Islamic societies is a product of Western influence.

Consequently, according to Kheirabadi, many Muslims began movements aimed at rediscovering their unique identities and to reclaim their societies. One of the ways they did this, in the words of Kheirabadi, was to encourage a return to the basic Islamic ideals and lifestyle “. . . as a replacement for what they perceive is the decadent Western lifestyle.”<sup>17</sup> These factors, he noted, contributed to the rise of Islamic revivalism that later metamorphosed into fundamentalism and extremism. Basically, from Kheirabadi’s point of view, the current struggle by Islamic extremists against some countries of the West is a struggle, among others, against what they see as a decadent Western lifestyle. Many Islamic extremists view the so-called decadent Western lifestyle as a potential threat to the continuous existence of basic Islamic teachings in Islamic societies.

Closely related to Kheirabadi’s opinion, is the assertion made by Paul Grieve in his book, *Islam, History, Faith and Politics: The Complete Introduction*. Grieve described the modern-day Islamic fundamentalism as “. . . the reaction against compromise with modern secular society as well as the expression of a desire to maintain or rediscover the core values of the faith.”<sup>18</sup> Grieve further noted that the collision between Western and Islamic societies during the colonial

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 140.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>18</sup> Paul Grieve, *Islam, History, Faith and Politics: The Complete Introduction* (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 2006), 307.

era resulted in the establishment of the first Islamic extremist organizations in Egypt and in Pakistan. They were the Society of Muslim Brothers (also called the Muslim Brotherhood) founded by Hasan al-Banna in Egypt, and the Jammat-e-Islamia founded by Sayyid Abu'l-A'la al-Maududi in Pakistan. According to Grieve, "Both organizations opposed the imposition of the Western-style nation-state on to the emerging independent Muslim entities of Egypt and Pakistan."<sup>19</sup> Grieve then stated that basically, modern Islamic extremist organizations tend to follow the footsteps of these two groups. He further observed, "Many Islamist groups are similarly seeking to put into action the often repeated maxim of Muslim reformers, who wish not to modernize Islam, but to 'Islamicize modernity'."<sup>20</sup>

The above assertions by Masoud and Grieve that Islamist movements are products of the desire by Muslims to rediscover the basic tenets of the Islamic religion can be substantiated. However, the militancy and the violence associated with Islamic fundamentalism and extremism have gone beyond the desire to halt the apparent penetration of Islamic culture and beliefs by Western culture. Terrorism, which is one of the means by which Islamic extremist groups carry out their attacks against the West, has claimed many lives including lives of Muslims. Going by the senseless way Islamic extremists take innocent lives, it is quite obvious that whatever goal they wish to realize has gone beyond the campaign for a return to basic Islamic teachings.

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 309.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 310.



John Esposito also examined the relationship between Islam and democracy. In one of his books titled *What Everyone Needs to Know about Islam*, Esposito explained that former Saudi ruler, King Fahd and ultraconservatives and extremists “. . . argue that Islam has its own mechanisms and institutions, which do not include democracy.”<sup>21</sup> However, Esposito observed that democracy in today’s Western world came to be as a result of many centuries of transformation from monarchies and principalities to modern democratic states. Similarly, he opined that the Islamic world will also need some time to transform from monarchies and feudal societies to full fledged democracy. In the words of Esposito, “. . . the Muslim world has struggled with several centuries of colonial rule followed by authoritarian regimes installed by European powers . . . we must remember that most modern Muslim states are only several decades old . . . ”<sup>22</sup>

It is a well-known fact that Islamic extremist organizations have, in many cases, justified their attacks against some Western nations by citing their rejection of Western values. However, democracy has not really been at the forefront of the reasons for the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations. On the contrary, modern day Islamic extremists like Osama bin Laden have expressed their total opposition to the United States military presence in Saudi Arabia and other Islamic countries. Furthermore, Islamic extremists have also alluded to the Israel-Palestine dispute as among their

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<sup>21</sup> John Esposito, *What Everyone Needs To Know About Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 159.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.

reasons for engaging in acts of militancy against Western nations like the United States. Apparently, because of the support Israel gets from the West.

Another author whose literature is also important to the thesis is Bernard Lewis. In his book, *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror*, Lewis argued that excessive modernization in the Islamic world is one of the reasons for Islamic extremism and its confrontations with the West. According to Lewis,

Muslim fundamentalists . . . feel that the troubles of the Muslim world at the present time are the result . . . of excessive modernization, which they see as a betrayal of authentic Islamic values. For them the remedy is a return to true Islam, including the abolition of all the laws and other social borrowings from the West and the restoration of the Islamic Holy Law, the Shari'a, as the effective law of the land.<sup>23</sup>

Lewis noted that modern day Islamic extremists have deviated very far from the original Islamic teachings. Lewis further observed that when Islamic extremists quote the Qu'ran, they are very selective in their choice and interpretation of the sacred text in such a way as to sanctify their actions. Lewis further observed that Islamic extremists make pious references to Islamic texts that also includes the

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<sup>23</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (New York: Modern Library, 2003), 134. Lewis, in another essay he wrote, also suggested that imperialism might be blamed for the clash between some Western nations and Islamic extremists. This, according to him, is because Islamic militants see imperialism as including missionary efforts by Western Christians into the Islamic world. See "The Roots of Muslim Rage," in *Inside Islam: The Faith, The People and The Conflicts of The World's Fastest-Growing Religion*, ed. John Miller and Aaron Kenedi (New York: Marlowe and Company, 2002),200-201.

teachings of Prophet Muhammad. He, however, opined that the present day Islamic extremists distort some of the original teachings of Islam.

To drive home his argument that Islamic extremists have distorted basic Islamic teachings, Lewis specifically made reference to suicide bombings. Suicide bombing is one of the means by which Islamic extremists carry out terrorist attacks against some Western nations. According to Lewis, would-be suicide bombers “. . . were offered a double reward – in the afterlife, the minutely described delights of paradise; in this world, bounties and stipends for their families.”<sup>24</sup> Lewis observed that this goes contrary to the original Islamic teachings because, in his words, “Islamic law books are very clear on the subject of suicide. It is a major sin and is punished by eternal damnation in the form of the endless repetition of the act by which the suicide killed himself.”<sup>25</sup> In addition, Lewis also observed that the callous destruction of thousands of lives in the World Trade Center “. . . has no justification in Islamic doctrine or law . . . these are not just crimes against humanity and against civilization; they are also acts – from a Muslim point of view – of blasphemy, when those who perpetrate such crimes claim to be doing so in the name of God, His Prophet, and His scriptures.”<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 152. Lewis observed that the present day suicide bomber is different from the medieval holy warrior in ancient Islam. Lewis asserted that unlike the medieval Islamic holy warrior who was willing to face certain death at the hands of his enemies or captors, the new suicide terrorist, dies by his own hand. He used this to illustrate how different the present day Islamic extremist is to the medieval Islamic holy warrior.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 153.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 154.

Another author, Stephen Schwartz, also expressed Lewis' assertion that Islamic extremists have gone contrary to the original teachings of Islam and Prophet Muhammad. In his book, *The Two Faces of Islam: The House of Saud from Tradition to Terror*, Schwartz asserted that Prophet Muhammad advocated peace and the avoidance of conflict throughout his lifetime. According to Schwartz,

The sharp difference between the sensible, calm, humble, and kind conception of Muhammad held by traditional Muslims and the fanatical, rigid, overbearing, and puritanical manner adopted by Islamic fundamentalists today presents us with the two faces of Islam –moderation, equanimity, patience, and fairness versus separatism, supremacism, frenzy, and aggression.<sup>27</sup>

Schwartz specifically blamed the Wahhabis for the militancy and extremism in Islamic religion. Schwartz categorically stated, “. . . a wholesale purge of the Prophet's personality from Islamic religion has been an essential goal of . . . Wahhabism, which has made a serious attempt to reshape Islam in its intolerant image.”<sup>28</sup>

However, Schwartz' assertion that Wahhabism should receive the lion share of the blame for Islamic extremism and militancy, may be misleading. The establishment of the Wahhabi ideology by Ibn Abd al-Wahhab was not a reactionary move against the West. Ibn Wahhab founded Wahhabism out of

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<sup>27</sup> Stephen Schwartz, *The Two Faces of Islam: The House of Sa'ud from Tradition to Terror* (New York: Doubleday, 2002), 8.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

dissatisfaction with what he saw as decadent lifestyles that were prevalent among Muslims in his community. Obviously, the moral decay that Ibn Wahhab saw was not a product of Western influence because this time period predates the colonization of the Islamic world by the West. Modern day Islamic extremists drew their inspirations largely from Hassan al- Banna, who founded the Muslim Brotherhood, Sayyid Abu'l-A'la al-Maududi, who founded the Jammat-e-Islamia, and Sayyid Qutb, who founded the Qutbism ideology. These men played highly significant roles towards the growth of militant Islam. In fact, Osama bin Laden and Ayman Azwahiri are both followers of Qutb. Sayyid Qutb was a member of the Muslim Brotherhood and he drew most of his inspirations from Hassan al Banna. This will be discussed in detail in the chapter that focused on the origin of Islamic extremism.

Finally, Roy R. Anderson, Robert F. Seibert and Jon G. Wagner in their book, *Politics and Change in the Middle East- Sources of Conflict and Accommodation*, also examined the frosty relations between some Western nations and Islamic extremists. The authors observed, "According to popular notions widespread in the West, Islam is . . . a religion characterized by fanatical intolerance of the 'infidel', spread 'by the sword,' and dedicated to an ultraconservative view of human social existence."<sup>29</sup> They blamed this on the misconceptions about Islam. These misconceptions, according to them, include the idea that Islam is an exotic religion, a militant religion, an intolerant religion,

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<sup>29</sup> Roy R. Andersen, Robert F. Seibert and Jon G. Wagner, *Politics and Change in the Middle East: Sources of Conflict and Accommodation*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (Upper Saddle River: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2004), 22.

an ultraconservative religion, and as a sexist religion. The writers also asserted that religious extremism is also found in Christianity. According to the authors, some of the comments made by the so-called Christian religious extremists, in most cases, fuel the violent reactions that come from Islamic extremists.

According to Andersen et al, "Prominent religious spokesmen in the United States have spoken out against Islam, in what has appeared to be a coordinated attack on the religion, widely reported in both the Western and non-Western press."<sup>30</sup> Consequently, the authors made the following observations:

These tirades against Islam are registered and remembered in the Islamic world. And they are echoed by the Islamic equivalent of this demagogic quartet, mullahs and Imams who use their privileged place in the madrasahs and mosques of the Islamic world to rail against the 'heresy', materialism, hedonism, and excessive individualism of Christianity and the West in general.<sup>31</sup>

Roy Andersen and his co-authors actually made a valid point. Negative remarks against Islam by well-respected Christian figures are quite unfortunate. These unfortunate remarks do fuel and deepen the hatred most Muslims have for the West. Consequently, it will be easy for Islamic extremists to exploit such negative

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 322. Some of the instances they gave include a statement, which they said was made by Reverend Jerry Falwell, who they said pronounced the Prophet Mohammed a "terrorist". The authors also made reference to a statement they said was made by Reverend Franklin Graham denouncing Islam as an "evil" and "wicked" religion. In addition, Andersen (et al) noted that Reverend Jimmy Swaggart had at a time called for the expulsion of all Muslim foreign students from the United States. Andersen (et al) also wrote that the Reverend Pat Robertson publicly criticized President Bush for his kind words on Islam on the occasion of Eid al Fitri, the conclusion of the Islamic holiday of Ramadan. According to the authors, Reverend Pat Robertson suggested that President Bush leave theology to the theologians.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 323.

comments about Islam. They can use these comments to sell Islamic extremist ideologies to the younger generations of Muslims by convincing them to believe that the Christian West is bent on silencing the Islamic religion. The Islamic extremists could further convince these young Muslims that a jihad against the West is the only way to stop the West from dominating Islam. With these, Islamic extremists easily recruit the younger generation of Muslims into their fold.

### **Theoretical Framework**

As earlier mentioned, this thesis shall be based on the modernization theory. In his book, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Samuel Huntington extensively discussed modernization. According to Huntington, "Modernization involves industrialization, urbanization, increasing levels of literacy, education, wealth, and social mobilization, and more complex and diversified occupational structures."<sup>32</sup> Huntington further added, "It is a product of the tremendous expansion of scientific and engineering knowledge beginning in the eighteenth century that made it possible for humans to control and shape their environment in totally unprecedented ways."<sup>33</sup> Huntington also observed that the West was the first civilization to modernize and therefore, "The expansion of the West has promoted both the modernization and Westernization of non-Western societies."<sup>34</sup> He also examined how non-Western societies reacted to modernization and Westernization. He noted that some of these non-

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<sup>32</sup> Huntington, 68.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 68.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 72.

Western societies, especially the Islamic societies, rejected both modernization and Westernization.

Dean Tipps, in an essay titled *Modernization Theory and the Comparative Study of Societies: A Critical Perspective*, defined modernization as “. . . a transition, or rather a series of transitions from primitive, subsistence economies to technology-intensive, industrialized economies, from subject to participant political cultures; from closed, ascriptive status systems to open, achievement-oriented systems; from extended to nuclear kinship units; from religious to secular ideologies . . . ”<sup>35</sup> Looking at Tipp’s definition, one could easily see some areas of non-compatibility between the concept of modernization and Islamic beliefs. The idea of changing from religious to secular ideologies goes against basic Islamic beliefs. This could be used to explain how the entire concept of modernization may have triggered the clash between extreme fundamentalist Muslims and the West.

Graham Evans and Jeffrey Newnham in *The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations* observed that modernization, which is used to identify certain processes of social change, started in Western Europe. According to Evans and Newnham, modernization is “. . . a multi-faceted process involving, in addition to politics, changes in economic, cultural, technical, psychological and intellectual aspects of human relations.”<sup>36</sup> They further observed, “Examples of

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<sup>35</sup> Dean Tipps, “Modernization Theory and the Comparative Study of Societies: A Critical Perspective,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 15, No. 2. (1973), 204.

<sup>36</sup> Graham Evans and Jeffrey Newnham, *The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations* (London: Penguin Group, 1998), 335.



such changes often cited include: the weakening of the extended family in favor of the nuclear . . . an increase in secular as opposed to sacred values . . . and the growth of urbanization.”<sup>37</sup>

As observed by Evans and Newnham, the concept of modernization started in Western Europe and there is this belief that Western Europe is the center of the Western world. Therefore, the concept of modernization is now almost synonymous with Western values. Consequently, the economic, social and even the cultural change associated with modernization are fashioned out using the United States and Western European nations as the parameters for other nations to follow. This, obviously, posed a problem in the Islamic world. Ira Lapidus examined this scenario in his essay that discussed the effects of modernization on Islamic societies. Lapidus opined that modernization created Islamic revivalism because revivalism in Islam emerged as a form of opposition to the concepts of modernization. This opposition to modernization by Islamic revivalists and fundamentalists was occasioned by their convictions that modernization was inimical to the survival of Islam. Lapidus, in his essay titled *Islamic Revival and Modernity: The Contemporary Movements and the Historical Paradigms*, asserted as follows:

The contemporary world-wide wave of Islamic revivalist movements is a direct response to the global changes that constitute modernity.

The modernization of societies, including the formation of national states, The organization of capitalist economies, technological and

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 336.

scientific developments, and the cultural and social changes that accompany these phenomenon, has generated religious movements among Muslims.<sup>38</sup>

Lapidus noted that one area of confrontation between the Western concept of modernization and Islamic extremists is the attempt at outright secularization of Islamic states. Secularization involves the separation of the affairs of the state from religion, and this is unacceptable in Islam. The modernization theory shall be applied in the course of this thesis.

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<sup>38</sup> Ira M.Lapidus, "Islamic Revival and Modernity: The Contemporary Movements and the Historical Paradigms," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, Vol. 40, No. 4. (1997), 444.

## CHAPTER THREE

### ISLAM, ISLAMIC EXTREMISM AND THE WESTERN WORLD.

In his book, *Islamic Faith in America*, James A. Beverly extensively discussed the growth of Islam in the United States. Beverly also discussed the different views held about Islam in the Western world, especially in the United States. He observed that a majority of Muslims describe Islam as a religion that encourages peace. Consequently, many Muslims distance Islam from the activities of Islamic extremists who engage in acts like terrorism to spread whatever message they wish to spread. Beverly specifically quoted Abdulaziz Sachedina, a Muslim professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Virginia. According to Beverly, Sachedina strongly condemned the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States. Beverly further noted that Sachedina strongly reaffirmed that Islam had nothing to do with such evil acts. The condemnation of the September 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States by Muslims like Sachedina, revealed the frustrations many Muslims face whenever Islamic extremists carry out a terrorist act. Sachedina, according to Beverly, expressed his feelings in the following words:

How could these terrorists invoke God's mercifulness and compassion when they had, through their evil act put to shame the entire history of this great and its culture of toleration. Had Islam failed to teach them about the sacredness of human life? Hadn't this God, whom they call the Merciful, the Compassionate Allah, given them the gift of Revelation that

regarded killing of one person as though he had killed all of human kind.<sup>1</sup> Beverly further noted that since after the September 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States, three broad reactions to Islam have formed in the United States. These three reactions, according to Beverly, include the idea that Islam is a religion of peace. Beverly observed that “. . . many American Muslim leaders and their counterparts around the world said that Islam has nothing to do with the death and destruction of the attacks.”<sup>2</sup> The second reaction, as identified by Beverly, focused on the dark side of Islam. According to him, “. . . scholars and politicians were speaking about a dark side of Islam, and there was a growing sense of alarm about the power and spread of militant Islam.”<sup>3</sup> The third and final reaction, in the words of Beverly, dwelled on the notion that Islam is a religion of terror. In explaining this third reaction, Beverly observed, “There is also the view that the events of September 11 capture the heart of Islam, that Islam is an evil religion, and that Americans need to be very suspicious of the presence of Islam on the soil of the United States.”<sup>4</sup>

Beverly's views capture the image problem that Muslims and the Islamic religion are facing today. The activities of Islamic extremists have dealt a heavy blow on the image of Islam and Muslims. This negative image of Islam is more

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<sup>1</sup> James Beverly, *Islamic Faith in America* (New York: Facts on File, Inc, 2003), 74. Beverly noted that the above statement by Abdulaziz Sachedina is an excerpt from Sachedina's essay titled *Where Was God On September 11?*. This was published in the web site Islamic Studies, at [www.aeches.ugu.edu/~godlas](http://www.aeches.ugu.edu/~godlas)). Sachedina's comments demonstrate the frustration that many Muslims face whenever Islamic extremists engage in violent acts and many like Sachedina are distancing the Islamic religion from any act of violence carried out by Islamic extremists in the name of the Islamic religion.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 75-76.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

pronounced in the Western world. Many Westerners consider the average Muslim to be a potential terrorist. Despite efforts by Muslims to portray Islam as a religion that promotes peace, tolerance, and the sacredness of human life, many non-Muslims see Islam as a militant religion, and also a religion of terror. This negative perception of Islam by non-Muslims is due to the infamous acts of Islamic extremists. These Islamic extremists have continued to carry out acts of terrorism that result in heavy loss of innocent lives. Consequently, many moderate and liberal Muslims have vigorously disassociated the Islamic religion from the actions of Islamic extremists. In addition, moderate Muslims strongly maintained that Muslims, who engage in militant acts that result in the loss of lives, do not draw their inspirations from Islamic teachings. However, some writers are of the opinion that despite efforts by some Muslims to distance Islam from Islamic extremists, many non-Muslims still believe that the basic teachings of Islam form the foundation of the militancy and aggression displayed by Islamic extremists. One of such writers is Robert Spencer. In his book titled *Islam Unveiled: Disturbing Questions about the World's Fastest-Growing Faith*, Spencer stated, "To some Muslims, the terrorist attacks on America violated the fundamental tenets of Islam and the plain words of the Qu'ran. To some, they didn't."<sup>5</sup>

Are the beliefs and the convictions of Islamic extremists different from the basic teachings of Islam? If they are, where do Islamic extremists draw their

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<sup>5</sup> Robert Spencer, *Islam Unveiled: Disturbing Questions about the World's Fastest-Growing Faith* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2002), 9. Spencer's views and assertions will be discussed further in the course of this thesis.

inspirations from? These questions will be answered in this chapter.

Consequently, this chapter will examine the origin of Islamic extremism and its conflicts with the West.

### **Brief Overview of Islam**

God is most great.

I testify there is no deity but God.

I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of God.

Come to prayer; Come to salvation.<sup>6</sup>

The prayer above is said five times a day by devoted Muslims. According to Roy Andersen et al in their book, *Politics and Change in the Middle East: Sources of Conflict and Accommodation*, this prayer has, for more than one thousand three hundred years, been calling Muslims all over the world to prayer. Muslims are required to say this prayer facing towards Islam's spiritual home land, the city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia. Most of the nations in the Middle East, like Saudi Arabia, are Islamic nations. In a majority of these nations, Islam is the foundation of all ethics, morality, and family life. This is exemplified in nations like the already mentioned Saudi Arabia, Iran and Afghanistan during the Taliban led government.

Islam is one of the major religions in the world, in fact, the second largest after Christianity. Islam, like Christianity and Judaism, started in the Semitic religious hearth. The Semitic religious hearth is located in the margins of the

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<sup>6</sup> Roy Andersen, Robert Seibert & Jon Wagner, *Politics and Change in the Middle East: Sources of Conflict and Accommodation* (Upper Saddle River: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2004), 11.

deserts of Southwestern Asia, commonly referred to as the Middle East. From this region, Islam spread quickly, mostly by military conquests or what Muslims call *jihad*, to other parts of the world including Southeast Asia, North and West Africa. Due to the way Islam spread, and is still spreading, it has grown quite tremendously. According to Masoud Kheirabadi, "Islam claims at least 1.2 billion adherents, making it the second-largest world religion after Christianity."<sup>7</sup>

Kheirabadi further explained that Muslims are found in almost all parts of the world. From Asia, which according to him, ". . . is home to more than 800 million Muslims,"<sup>8</sup> to Sub-Sahara Africa where, according to him, "The nation of Nigeria is home to more than 50 million Muslims."<sup>9</sup>

Islam was founded in the 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D. by Muhammad ibn Abd Allah, also called Prophet Muhammad (570-632 A.D.), in Mecca, Western Arabia. The region of Western Arabia is known today as Saudi Arabia. Prophet Muhammad was said to have received divine revelations in a cave. After his encounter with "Allah" in the cave, Prophet Muhammad started preaching against what he felt were the immorality and idolatry that pervaded ancient Arabia. Prophet Muhammad's new religion was vehemently resisted by the ruling class in Mecca. To avoid persecution, Prophet Muhammad was reported to have fled from Mecca to Medina. However, after getting many followers in Medina, Muhammad returned to Mecca. Prophet Muhammad was reported to have preached peace.

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<sup>7</sup> Masoud Kheirabadi, *Religions of the World: Islam* (Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2004), 14.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

In fact, according to Hammudah 'Abd al 'Ati in his book, *Islam in Focus*, "the word Islam is derived from the Arabic root "SLM" which means, among other things, peace, purity, submission and obedience."<sup>10</sup> Ati continued, "In the religious sense the word Islam means submission to the will of God and obedience to His law."<sup>11</sup>

### **Who Are Islamic Extremists?**

Charles Liebman, in an essay titled *Extremism as a Religious Norm*, gave a full description of religious extremism. Liebman's description of religious extremism shall be used in this thesis to examine the concept of religious and Islamic extremism. Liebman defined religious extremism as ". . . the desire to expand the scope, detail and strictness of religious law; social isolation; and the rejection of the surrounding culture."<sup>12</sup> Liebman observed that religious extremism is quite different from religious moderation or religious liberalism. Consequently, in the words of Liebman, religious extremists differ a lot from religious moderates or religious liberals. Unlike religious extremists, religious moderates have the willingness ". . . to accommodate themselves to their environment, to adapt their behavioral and belief patterns to prevailing cultural

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<sup>10</sup> Hammudah 'Abd al 'Ati, *Islam in Focus* (Beltsville: Amana Publications, 1997), 7. As indicated above, Islam, among others, also means peace. Muslims have long described their religion as a religion of peace, which also caters for the welfare of its members and even non-members. In fact, the third pillar of Islamic belief centers primarily on alms giving and providing for the needy. The whole concept of Islam as a religion of peace has suffered a huge set back due to Islamic extremism. Consequently, non-Muslims are really finding it difficult to accept Islam as a religion of peace.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>12</sup> Charles Liebman, "Extremism as Religious Norm," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol.22, No.1 (Mar. 1983), 75. Liebman's definition relied on impressions from contemporary Judaism. However, he observes that the Judaism perspective is similar, if not the same with the Islamic perspective on religious extremism.



norms, to make peace with the world . . .”<sup>13</sup> Liebman further observed, “Extremists may seek to impose their program on society, thereby necessarily involving themselves in political conflict; or they may withdraw from society, awaiting a more propitious time, perhaps Divine intervention for the realization of their program.”<sup>14</sup>

The concept of religious extremism versus religious moderation centers primarily, as observed by Liebman, on the question of strictness versus leniency in the interpretation of religious laws. The religious extremist tends to welcome the strict interpretation of religious laws. This strict interpretation of religious laws, according to Liebman, usually involves the imposition of greater restrictions and hardship on the adherents of the religion in question. This was exemplified in Afghanistan during the reign of the Taliban. The Taliban practiced an extreme form of Islam that went as far as denying education to women. In addition, this strict interpretation of Islamic religious laws is also found in Saudi Arabia, where Wahhabism (a form of Islamic extremist teaching founded by Ibn Wahhab) is the official form of Islam practiced there. Wahhabism has been criticized as being one of the foundations of the present day Islamic extremist organizations. This assertion on Wahhabism shall be discussed in detail in the course of this chapter.

Another characteristic of religious extremism, as identified by Liebman, is that of isolation. Religious extremists have been known to isolate themselves

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 77.

from those elements of society who do not accept their extremist norms. This is widespread in many religions, including Christianity and Islam. Islamic and Christian extremist groups tend to isolate themselves from the rest of the society if that society rejected their extremist interpretation of religious laws. For example, in Nigeria, a Christian extremist group, known as “Deeper Life” has a history of encouraging its members not to associate freely with “unbelievers”. The “unbelievers” are those, including other Christian denominations that reject their extreme interpretation of the Holy Bible. Similarly, Islamic extremist organizations like the Muslim Brotherhood isolated themselves from those in the colonial Egyptian society who they accused of not following their extremist beliefs. The Muslim Brotherhood taught strict adherence to the teachings of Islam. The Muslim Brotherhood also encouraged the rejection of Western values because of their belief that those values are not indigenous to Islam.

The above is also in line with another characteristic of religious extremism, as identified by Liebman. According to Liebman, “The third dimension of religious extremism is the rejection of cultural forms and values that are not perceived as indigenous to the religious tradition.”<sup>15</sup> Liebman’s assertion captures one of the primary reasons for one of the earliest known clashes between Islamic extremists and the West. Hassan al Banna founded the Muslim Brotherhood as a reactionary Islamic extremist organization whose primary objective was to halt the further penetration of British values and culture into the Egyptian Islamic community. Hassan al Banna, and Sayyid Qutb rejected Western cultural values.

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 78.

Al Banna and Qutb considered Western values and Western based ideologies as not being indigenous to the Islamic religious tradition.

Ahmed Mousalli, in his book titled *Historical Dictionary of Islamic Fundamentalist Movements in the Arab World, Iran, and Turkey*, also discussed religious extremism. Moussalli described extremism as “. . . the result of holding an ideology of radical and revolutionary nature that allows and sponsors violent acts and accuses regimes, societies, and individuals of unbelief.”<sup>16</sup> Moussalli further observed that Islamic extremist movements began in Egypt with the emergence of the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1920s and 1930s. However, Mousalli observed that Islamic extremist movements went through a repressive experience after 1952. Moussalli explained that Islamic extremist ideology spread from Egypt to other Eastern and Gulf Arab countries like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, and The Emirates. According to Moussalli “. . . the extremists formed the nucleus of a new political behavior that was manifested in the activism of extremist religious groups all over the Islamic world. They also derived hope for political change from the successful model of the Islamic revolution in Iran.”<sup>17</sup>

Another description of Islamic extremism is the one given by Robert Scheina. In a lecture titled *Lessons Learned from Attacks on Mass Transit*, Scheina described Islamic extremists as “Muslims who employ violent means to

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<sup>16</sup> Ahmed Moussalli, *Historical Dictionary of Islamic Fundamentalist Movements in the Arab World, Iran, and Turkey* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 1999), 59.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

spread their fundamentalist beliefs.”<sup>18</sup> He also added that contrary to widely held belief, Islamic extremists do not act irrationally, as many would conclude. Rather, Scheina observed, Islamic extremists are convinced that they are acting rationally because they always have an ultimate objective. This objective is the expression of their extreme religious ideologies in whatever manner they feel could make it easy for them to be heard.

Islamic extremism is a militant and very violent expression and practice of Islam by Muslims who have fundamentalist view of their religion. In essence, Islamic extremism is a by-product of Islamic fundamentalism. In fact, both terms are sometimes used interchangeably. It is also pertinent to note that religious fundamentalism and extremism is found in other religions. In fact, the concept of fundamentalism originally started from Christianity. Christian fundamentalism was used to describe the strict adherence to Christian doctrines based on the literal interpretation of the Bible. However, fundamentalism is now used more in the Islamic context. It refers to a new and violent movement of Islamic revivalism that uses, most times, violent means in propagating their message. Islamic extremists and fundamentalists are largely anti-West, and sometimes anti-Semitic.

### **The Background of Islamic Extremism**

In the quest to learn more about the origin and background of Islamic extremism and its militant and violent nature, a brief research was conducted on

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<sup>18</sup> Robert Scheina, “Lessons Learned from Attacks on Mass Transit”, Lecture presented at the Maryland Transit Administration Police Terrorism Training, Baltimore, 11 November 2006.

the founder of Islam, Prophet Muhammad ibn Abdallah ibn Abd al-Muttalib (570-632). This brief research on the personality of Prophet Muhammad is with a view to finding out whether the violent and militant natures of today's Islamic extremist organizations reflect the lifestyle and teachings of the Prophet. Unlike the Christian Bible, the Koran does not contain stories about the life and death of Prophet Muhammad. The Koran simply provides guidance and rules that every Muslim is expected to abide by.

Consequently, stories and writings on the life of Prophet Muhammad are found in books written by both Muslims and non-Muslims. Therefore, the Prophet's life is almost a mystery, and both Islamic and non-Islamic scholars sometimes dispute even the little that is written about him. This explains why different accounts have been given by different writers about Prophet Muhammad. Robert Spencer in his book, *Islam Unveiled: Disturbing Questions about the World's Fastest-Growing Faith* described Prophet Muhammad as a man of war. According to Spencer, Prophet Muhammad “. . . led armies . . . ordered his enemies killed . . . never shrank from bloodshed.”<sup>19</sup> Interestingly, Spencer's negative portrayal of Prophet Muhammad appeared to be totally different from the views held about Prophet Muhammad by other writers. The majority of the books consulted in the quest to get more information about Prophet Muhammad and his life revealed the opposite of what Spencer wrote. Many of the books consulted strongly affirmed that the Prophet's life and activities were, in so many ways, different from the ideologies of today's Islamic

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<sup>19</sup> Spencer, 30.

extremists. Many of the books described Prophet Muhammad as a very compassionate man, and a man that was full of virtues. Many writers opined that Prophet Muhammad would not have supported or encouraged the activities of today's Islamic extremist organizations. In addition, many of these writers also believe that the manner today's Islamic extremists propagate their extreme Islamic ideologies goes way beyond the call for jihad.

Stephen Schwartz in his book, *The Two Faces of Islam: The House of Sa'ud from Tradition to Terror*, gave an insight into the personality of Prophet Muhammad. According to Schwartz,

. . . when we examine the life of Muhammad, we discover a different reality altogether. Muhammad's career includes militant preaching, the founding of a new religious community, battles with unbelievers, and severe decisions and judgments. But overall, the prophet's personality reveals a profound commitment to compassion and mercy- the qualities Muslims mainly ascribe, among many attributes, to God, praises in Islam as compassionate and merciful.<sup>20</sup>

Schwartz is saying that in as much as Muhammad may have engaged in some form of militant preaching during his life, he was generally committed to compassion and mercy. These qualities of compassion and mercy would not be ascribed to the modern day Islamic extremists. Suffice it to say that those qualities are lacking in today's Islamic extremist organizations. Schwartz argued

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<sup>20</sup> Stephen Schwartz, *The Two Faces of Islam: The House of Sa'ud From Tradition to Terror* (New York: Doubleday, 2002), 4.

that the extremist agenda of today's Islamic extremists do not, in no way, represent the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad. Schwartz contended that violent, militant and non-tolerant form of Islam is a product of extreme Islamic teachers who came after Muhammad. He particularly mentioned Ibn Abdul Wahhab, founder of the Wahhabi sect of Islam that now dominates Saudi Arabia. Schwartz further contended that throughout his life, Muhammad advocated peace, and when possible, avoided conflicts. According to Schwartz, "The sharp difference between the sensible, calm, humble, and kind conception of Muhammad held by traditional Muslims, and the fanatical, rigid, overbearing, and puritanical manner adopted by Islamic fundamentalists today presents us with the two faces of Islam, moderation, equanimity, patience, and fairness versus separatism, supremacism, frenzy, and aggression."<sup>21</sup> Stephen Schwartz went on to note that Islamic fundamentalists (and extremists) ignore the personality of the prophet and oppose traditional Muslim's love and compassion. This, he continued, is the primary objective of the Wahhabi movement. Schwartz further observed that the Wahhabi sect ". . . has made a serious attempt to reshape Islam in its intolerant image."<sup>22</sup>

Masoud Kheirabadi also shared this opinion expressed by Schwartz. Kheirabadi distanced the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad from the teachings of Islamic fundamentalists and extremists. Kheirabadi described Prophet Muhammad in the following words:

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 9.

Muhammad remains the most respected religious political, and historical figure for more than one billion Muslims throughout the world. He is known as the 'perfect man', an ideal example of a father, husband, friend, judge, statesman, devout Muslim, and in general, a wise, kind, and generous human being.<sup>23</sup>

Kheirabadi further differentiated the moderate Muslim from an Islamic extremist and a fundamentalist. He observed that the moderate Muslim views God as merciful and compassionate through the Koran and Islamic tradition. On the contrary, according to Kheirabadi, the militant fundamentalist or the Islamic extremist imagine God to be ferociously punitive and merciless. According to Kheirabadi, "These groups are often as dangerous to their own members as they are to others, and are as capable of maintaining harsh interior discipline as they are of terrorizing those outsiders they consider their enemies . . . and they insist on pursuing their political goals, even if innocent people are slaughtered in the process."<sup>24</sup>

To support his assertion, Kheirabadi made reference to the three books of *ahadith*. According to him, these three books of *ahadith* define a Muslim as one from whose hands and tongue people are secure, and also "one from whom people are secure concerning their lives and properties."<sup>25</sup> This proclamation from a sacred Islamic text underscores the difference between traditional Islamic beliefs and the ideologies of Islamic extremists. Contrary to this proclamation by

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<sup>23</sup>Kheirabadi, 19.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 146-147.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 147.



the *ahadith*, Islamic extremists are the ones that people should secure their lives and properties from. Basically, much of the teachings of Islamic extremists have either deviated from or are totally unrelated to the origins and teachings of the Islamic religion.

From the views expressed by the writers above, it is obvious that neither Prophet Muhammad nor his teachings advocated the mass slaughter of innocent people in the name of religion. The question then becomes, where and how did the present violent and militant extremist ideologies originate from? This question made it necessary to research further on the origins and background of Islamic fundamentalism and extremism. The answer was not very hard to find. Islamic extremism started as Islamic revivalist organizations like the Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic revivalist movements like Wahhabism and Qutbism. For a better understanding of Islamic revivalism, Ira Lapidus' description of Islamic revivalist movements shall be extensively used. According to Lapidus, in *Islamic Revival and Modernity*,

The contemporary wave of Islamic revival movements has its origin in the 1920s and the 1930s . . . they call for a stripping away of many of the traditional practices and beliefs of Muslims as a false historical accretion to the pure Islam. They call for a renewed commitment to Islam in the hearts and minds of individuals as the basis of communal solidarity, social justice, and the fair treatment of the poor. They want women to return to family roles.

They want to remove corrupt regimes and create Islamic states to be the protectors and enforcers of Islamic morality in Islamized societies.<sup>26</sup>

The salient point that can be found in the above description of Islamic revivalism is the creation of Islamic states and Islamic morality in the emerging societies. Islamic revivalism, as a social movement in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, primarily targeted the Western world. Islamic revivalist blamed the West for what they believed was the moral decadence in the Islamic world. To stop this, they opposed the material and even spiritual (including cultural) invasion of the West by seeking to reestablish cultural identity among Muslims. This marked the origin of militant Islamic extremism and the conflict it has been having with the Western world.

Unlike Wahhabism that started much earlier, the Muslim Brotherhood founded by Hassan al Banna in Egypt, and the Qutbism ideology propagated by Sayyid Qutb, both emerged in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. These movements emerged primarily to fight for a halt to what they described as the contamination, influence and penetration of a secular and a morally bankrupt Western culture into the Islamic world. These movements influenced the growth of extreme Islamic ideologies. In fact, they metamorphosed into the various present day Islamic extremist/terrorist organizations that have, in no small measure, created an atmosphere of global insecurity. This atmosphere of global insecurity is mostly

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<sup>26</sup> Ira Lapidus "Islamic Revival and Modernity: The Contemporary Movements and the Historical Paradigms," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, Vol, 40, No. 4. (1997), 445.

felt in many parts of the Western world, especially in the United States, Britain, Spain and France. In addition, other non-Western nations have also been affected by the activities of these Islamic extremist/terrorist organizations. It is pertinent to note that Wahhabism did not emerge as a reactionary revivalist movement against the West. Nevertheless, it has influenced the growth and spread of Islamic extremism in other parts of the world. These Islamic extremist movements will now be discussed in detail.

### **Wahhabism**

Wahhabism is one of the earliest forms of extreme Islamic ideologies. It has influenced the ideologies of some of the present day Islamic extremist organizations. The Wahhabi sect in Islam was founded by an eighteenth century Islamic reformer and theologian called Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab. Sheikh Wahhab was born in 1703 to a judge in a small village called Uyaynah, located in the central Arabian region of Najd. Wahhab was influenced by the teachings of an early Islamic scholar known as Ibn Taymiyya, and the Hanbali Islamic code. These two were products of Ibn Hanbal's Islamic school of thought. Ibn Wahhab was an ultraconservative Muslim who, in the words of John Esposito, ". . . denounced many popular beliefs and practices as un-Islamic idolatry and a return to the paganism of pre-Islamic Arabia."<sup>27</sup> Esposito further

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<sup>27</sup> John Esposito, *What Everyone Needs to know About Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 50. Ibn Wahhab's extreme Islamic ideology was not in reaction to any Western influence. In fact, at the time Wahhab started his type of Islam, the Islamic world was yet to have any direct contact with the West. However, Wahhabism has been blamed for the modern day Islamic extremism due primarily to Ibn Wahhab's extreme type of Islam which he learned from the Hanbali School. The Hanbali school was founded by followers of ibn Hanbali who was an extreme conservatist Muslim who advocated a rigid and a strict interpretation of the Qu'ran. Hanbali's

observed, "Abd al-Wahhab called for a fresh interpretation of Islam that returned to the fundamentals of Islam, the Qu'ran and the Sunnah . . ."28

Wahhab's teachings centered primarily on the need for a return, by Islamic societies, to the original or what he called the true principles of the Islamic religion. He did this by laying emphasis on the strict obedience to the Koran and the Hadith. The Hadith is recognized by Muslims as another written authority in Islam. The Hadith contains the sayings and the deeds of Prophet Muhammad as recorded by his companions. It is considered oral traditions, which include additional principles that are not found in the Koran. Nevertheless, many Muslims consider the Hadith as being authoritative. Ibn Wahhab redefined Islamic practices and introduced rigid, puritanical guidelines aimed at bringing back sternness and austerity into Islam. Ibn Wahhab's style of Islamic practice marked one of the earliest known origins of Islamic extremism and the militancy associated with it.

Unlike the Muslim Brotherhood and Qutbism, Wahhab's teachings did not emanate from a reaction to any Western influence on Islam. Nevertheless, his teachings laid the foundation for the militancy and intolerance exhibited by modern day Islamic extremist organizations. According to Stephen Schwarz in his book, *The Two Faces of Islam: the House of Sa'ud from Tradition to Terror*, ". . . the Wahhabis killed every woman, man, and child they saw, slashing with

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Islamic codes are found in the writings of ibn Taymiya who was a Hanbali jurist and who I had earlier mentioned as one of the Muslims from who ibn Wahhab drew his inspirations from.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 50.

their sword even babies in cradles. The streets were flooded with blood.”<sup>29</sup>

Despite the violent and militant nature of the Wahhabi ideology, Ibn Abd al Wahhab got the blessing of the Al Sa’ud royal family, especially from Muhammad bin Saud. This support from the Al Sa’ud royal family helped in the quick propagation of Wahhabism in most of Arabia. Today, Wahhabism is the official religion of Saudi Arabia, a country founded by the Al Sa’ud royal family.

Tom O’Connor of the North Carolina Wesleyan College viewed Wahhabism as the inspiration for many militant Islamic reform movements around the world, from Indonesia to Africa and the Taliban of Afghanistan. According to O’Connor in his lecture titled *Islamic Extremism: Jihadism, Qutbism, and Wahhabism*, “Wahhabism is an extreme form of Islamic fundamentalism that is undeniably violent, intolerant, and fanatical beyond measure.”<sup>30</sup> O’Connor continued by affirming that the Wahhabi mindset does not allow for any conception of jihad other than “death to infidels”. O’ Connor also asserted that the Wahhabis dislike the West, particularly the United States. According to O’Connor, the Wahhabis regularly refer to the United States as the “Great Satan.” To buttress this assertion, O’Connor quoted a fatwa that, according to

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<sup>29</sup>Schwartz, 77. Schwartz further demonstrated the Wahhabi ruthlessness by asserting that citizens of the city named Ta’if who surrendered to the Wahhabis were executed and their bodies trampled by horses and left unburied. According to Schwartz, their homes were looted and their possessions scattered. Prophet Muhammad and the traditional Islamic teaching would not have condoned this act of ruthlessness and this further shows that Islamic extremists do not draw all their inspirations from the Prophet or traditional Islamic teachings.

<sup>30</sup> Tom O’Connor, “Islamic Extremism: Jihadism, Qutbism and Wahhabism,” lecture presented at the North Carolina Wesleyan College, 22 November 2005. Also available online at <http://faculty.ncwc.edu/toconnor/429lect14.htm>.

him, was issued by a Saudi Wahhabi cleric known as Shaikh Saad Al-Buraik in April of 2002. Reproduced below is an excerpt from this fatwa:

I am against America until this life ends, until the Day of Judgment.  
I am against America even if the stone liquefies. My hatred of  
America is so strong that if part of it was contained in the universe,  
it would collapse. She is the root of all evil and wickedness on earth.  
Who else implanted the tyrants in our land, and who else nurtured  
oppression? Make no allies, and show no mercy or compassion  
toward them.<sup>31</sup>

O'Connor's view is also shared by Robert Spencer. According to Spencer, "Many Western scholars blame the Wahhabis almost exclusively for terrorism . . . Certainly, Wahhabis have generously supported terrorists . . ." <sup>32</sup> However, it is important to point out that there are no documented evidence that the Wahhabis of Saudi Arabia have sponsored terrorism. In addition, there are no reasons or evidence to suggest that the ruling Saudi royal family is anti-Western. In as much as Osama bin Laden was born in Saudi Arabia, his Islamic extremist ideology came primarily from Sayyid Qutb.

### **The Muslim Brotherhood**

A conservative Islamic preacher from Egypt called Hassan Al-Banna, founded the Muslim Brotherhood in 1928. Al-Banna's organization was the first modern day Islamic extremist organization that advocated the enforcement of

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Spencer, 12-13.

strict interpretations of Islam with violence and militancy, if the need arises. Many Egyptians quickly accepted al-Banna's Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood later spread to other Islamic territories like Syria, Palestine, Jordan and the Sudan. This spread saw the membership of the organization rise dramatically. The membership of the Muslim Brotherhood in the late 1930s was estimated to be up to one million. One of the major reasons why this Islamic extremist organization gained wide acceptance in many parts of the Islamic world was because it was a grass-root organization. The Muslim Brotherhood helped in the provision of educational and social service infrastructures to the local populace in Egypt. According to John Esposito, the class inequalities and the gap between the rich and the poor in Egypt inspired the founding of the Muslim Brotherhood. Consequently, in the words of Esposito, "The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood . . . proposed Islam as the organizational and religious solution to poverty and assistance to the disposed and downtrodden."<sup>33</sup> Esposito continued, "Its founder Hassan al-Banna, taught a message of social and economic justice, preaching particularly to the poor and uneducated."<sup>34</sup>

However, things took a negative turn for the Muslim Brotherhood when it openly engaged in the first modern day clash between Islamic extremists and the West. This happened in the later part of 1940 when some members of the organization started a very violent campaign against the presence of the British in Egypt. The Muslim Brothers, another name for the Muslim Brotherhood,

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<sup>33</sup> Esposito, 164.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 164.

opposed what they called the Western domination of an Islamic territory. In addition, the members of the Muslim Brotherhood expressed deep hatred for the British by calling for a return to Islamic fundamentals. They called for the establishment of a totally Islamic government in Egypt. The Muslim Brothers accused the British and Western culture of being responsible for the moral and other forms of decadence experienced in Egypt, and also for the impoverishment of the Egyptians. The Muslim Brothers had a simple but stern message for all Egyptians, and indeed the Islamic world. This message called on all Muslims in Egypt and other Islamic territories to join in the struggle or fight to eliminate everything Western in the Islamic world. The Muslim Brothers further called for the establishment of an order that would make the Koran the constitution of Egypt and other Islamic territories. The clash between the Muslim Brotherhood and the British led to a serious crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood by the Egyptian Government. This crackdown led to the arrest and imprisonment of many members of the Brotherhood. The Egyptian Government executed the founder, Hassan Al-Banna in 1949.

### **Qutbism**

Qutbism could be described as a child of the Muslim Brotherhood. This is because the founder of Qutbism, Sayyid Qutb was a high-ranking member of the Muslim Brotherhood. Sayyid Qutb was born in 1906, but it was not until 1949 after the death of Hassan Al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood that Qutb started his Islamic extremist ideology known as Qutbism. Qutb's hatred for



the West and Western culture was said to have developed when he visited the United States. He was reported to have been dismayed at what he felt was the decadent lifestyle in the United States. Sayyid Qutb was also reported to have been angered by what he saw as excessive alcohol, gambling, prostitution and immoral music that were the order of the day in the United States. For Qutb, and other Islamic extremists, these kinds of lifestyles are associated with West. As soon as he returned to Egypt, Sayyid Qutb joined the Muslim Brotherhood. Qutb's primary reason for joining the Muslim Brotherhood was for him to join forces with the Brotherhood in their struggle against the "contamination" of Islam by the West. After the death of Hassan al Banna, Qutb continued this struggle against the West by propagating his new Islamic extremist ideology known as Qutbism. This form of Islamic extremism supported violent and militant Islam.

Qutb called for the establishment of a true Islamic society that is entirely based on the Koran and the Islamic law code, the Sharia. In addition, he continued the call of the Muslim Brotherhood for all Muslims not to cooperate with the West. He did this by writing articles that attacked the West and its culture, especially the United States. Qutb's visit to the United States made him to believe that the West had a culture filled with what he saw as immoral lifestyle. Qutb believed that if the penetration of these lifestyles into Islamic territories went unchecked, they would invade Egypt and other Islamic territories, and ultimately conquer Islam.

Due to his extremist and militant style of preaching Islam, Sayyid Qutb was tried and executed for treason in 1966. However, his legacy lives on to this day. The majority of the present day Islamic extremist and terrorist organizations base their ideological foundation on Qutb's teachings. This is due to the fact that during his lifetime, he proclaimed the superiority of Islamic doctrine over Western culture. He described the Western culture as being morally bankrupt and a dangerous influence and threat to Islam. Al Qaeda's number two figure, Dr. Ayman Zawahiri is a well-known Qutb follower. In fact, Zawahiri is suspected to have sold Islamic extremist and militant ideology to Osama bin Laden.

### **The Western World**

Western civilization had come to birth and matured in Europe, before spreading across the seas to other continents settled by Europeans. By 1900, North and South America, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa were its overseas centers and strongholds.<sup>35</sup>

The above commentary on the West by J.M. Roberts in his book, *The Triumph of the West*, provides us with an idea of what constitutes the Western world.

Roberts further asserted that however one defines the West; its historic heartland is Europe. From Roberts' assertions, one can describe the Western world as the societies of Western and Central Europe. The West can also be described as those societies and nations outside Europe that have the same genealogical,

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<sup>35</sup> J.M. Roberts, *The Triumph of The West: The Origin, Rise and Legacy of Western Civilization* (London: Phoenix Press, 1985), 9.

linguistic and cultural background with European societies. Examples are the ones earlier identified by Roberts and they include the United States, Australia and New Zealand. However, in its present usage, the West now includes most of the developed and industrialized nations of the world, sometimes referred to as the global north.

Most Western countries share a common system of values that can be traced to what Samuel Huntington, in his book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, referred to as Euro American or North Atlantic civilization. According to Huntington, "The West . . . includes Europe, North America, plus other European settler countries such as Australia and New Zealand."<sup>36</sup> He also stated that the West ". . . is now universally used to refer to what used to be called Western Christendom."<sup>37</sup> This assertion by Huntington could be acceptable considering the role the Roman Empire and Christianity played in shaping today's Western civilization. This huge influence of Christianity on the ancient West made Christianity to become the dominant religion in the West.

However, as earlier indicated, there are some nations that do not have Euro American or North Atlantic origin, but are sometimes referred to as part of the West. This assertion supports another definition of the West given by John Teeple. According to Teeple in, *Timeline World of History*, the West is a ". . . geopolitical term relating to the free market economies and countries of

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<sup>36</sup> Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), 46.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

U.S./N.A.T.O. alliance during the Cold War.”<sup>38</sup> From Teeple’s definition, the West can also consist of nations that do not have Euro Atlantic origin. A good example is Japan. Japan has neither Christian nor Euro Atlantic origin, but this Asian nation is classified among the Western nations. The West, as it is used today, may also suggest an industrialized or a developed nation. However, when one talks about the clash of civilizations between the West and Islamic extremists, one primarily refers to those Western nations that have Christian and Euro Atlantic background. The most prominent ones include the United States, Britain, and France. This is why sometimes this clash is seen as a struggle between Christianity (Judeo-Christian) and Islam. But do Western nations like the United States and Britain actually represent all that Christianity stands for?

### **The West and Christianity**

Christianity started in the Middle East more than two thousand years ago. Through the missionary efforts of the early Christians, this religion spread rapidly to the West, where it became the major religion of the Europeans. In fact, Christianity had such a strong hold in the West that the first Christian church in history has its Headquarters in Italy, a Western country. The church in question is the Roman Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Church is the largest and the most powerful/influential Christian denomination. Suffice it to say, in the words of Roberts, that Christianity “. . . was the major instrument both in the forging of

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<sup>38</sup> John Teeple, *Timeline World of History* (New York: DK Publishing, 2002), 658.

Europe and in the alchemy which produced its civilization . . .”<sup>39</sup>

Christianity was the state religion in most of the Western world in its early years. During this time period, the Popes (the Head of the Catholic Church) were both religious and political leaders. This was pronounced in Western countries like Spain, France, Britain, and most part of the European continent during the Crusade years. Most of the different denominations of Christianity originated from the West. A good example is the Anglican Church, known as the Church of England. The Anglican Church started in England and occupied the status of state religion in England. The Archbishop of Canterbury, who is also the Head of the Anglican Church, swore in English Kings and Queens into office. This practice is still observed in the present day England. Basically, Christianity contributed to the shaping of the traditional culture of the ancient Western world. In addition, Christianity is also the dominant religion of the present day Western world. However, one might ask, does the total values, culture and political orientation of the modern day Western world represent a mirror image of the values and beliefs of Christianity? Does Christianity as a religion, control and dictate the tune and foreign policy of the countries of the West? These are pertinent questions that are begging for answers.

A careful look at the West, including the United States, reveals that in many areas the West is not synonymous with Christianity. Capitalism, democracy

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<sup>39</sup> Roberts, 56. Roberts examined how the Catholic Church had so much influence, especially under Constantine, on the Roman Empire, which is one of the foundations of the Western world. Roberts further observed that many parts of the ancient Western world adopted and enforced Roman Christianity as their state religion.

and other political ideologies associated with the West are not of Christian origin. Most of these ideologies are of secular origin, and not affiliated to any religion, including the Christian religion. Democracy started with the ancient Greeks. This was long before the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, the founder of Christianity. Capitalism and socialism are also not of Christian origin. Suffice it to say that the Western world today does not represent a mirror image of Christianity. In addition, in many western countries, notably the United States, the constitution provides for a separation of church/religion from the affairs of the state. After many centuries of modernization, it is obvious that Christianity may have lost its grip on the Western world. Christianity may now be described as only a religious aspect of the evolution of Western civilization. It is also pertinent to point out that Japan and some other developed nations have sometimes been classified as the West. Christianity is not the dominant religion in Japan. Unfortunately, the misunderstanding between Islamic extremists and some nations of the West has been described as a conflict between Islam and Christianity. This may be misleading.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### SOME CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS TO THE CLASH BETWEEN ISLAMIC EXTREMISTS AND SOME WESTERN COUNTRIES.

In the previous chapter of this thesis, Islamic revivalism was identified as one of the factors that contributed to the growth of Islamic extremism and fundamentalism. Early Islamic revivalists blamed the West for what they believed was an invasion of Islamic societies and values by the West. Consequently, early Islamic revivalists embarked on a quest to reestablish cultural identity among Muslims. This move towards the reestablishment of cultural identity among Muslims resulted in the adoption and growth of extreme Islamic beliefs and teachings. These extreme Islamic teachings targeted the West and Western values because a majority of Islamic extremists have this notion that the West is a threat to Islam and Muslims. Consequently, a collision between Islamic extremists and the West became inevitable. The question that comes to mind is, how did the Western world become the so-called enemies of Islam? What aspects of Western civilization pitched the West against Islamic extremists? To find answers to these questions, it is important to go back to the primary theory on which this thesis is based upon. This is the theory of modernization.

#### **Modernization and the Clash between Islamic Extremists and Some Western nations.**

. . . attempts at modernization have been unsuccessful in much of the Third World and have undermined local traditions and community

values, causing a backlash of pent-up grievances by religious movements. This also has occurred on the individual level, with those left behind by modernization feeling alienated, disoriented, and dislocated, leaving them more open to the overtures of religious movements.<sup>1</sup>

The above assertion was made by Jonathan Fox, in his essay titled *Religion as an Overlooked Element of International Relations*. His view is a clear indication of how attempts at modernization in Islamic societies pitched the West against Islam. Therefore, it will not wrong for one to conclude that the conflict between Islamic extremists and some Western nations centers primarily on modernization. To further illustrate this assertion, Samuel Huntington's view on modernization shall be employed. According to Huntington in his book, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*,

Modernization involves industrialization, urbanization, increasing Levels of literacy, education, wealth, and social mobilization, and more complex and diversified occupational structures. It is a product of the tremendous expansion of scientific and engineering knowledge . . . that made it possible for humans to control and shape their environment in totally unprecedented ways.<sup>2</sup>

Western civilization and modern civilization are sometimes considered as one

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<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Fox, "Religion as an Overlooked Element of International Relations," *International Studies Review*, Vol.3, No.3. (2001), 56.

<sup>2</sup> Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and The Remaking of World Order* (New York: Touchstone, 1997), 68.



and the same. Therefore, the concept of modernization is viewed as the sum total of Western values. However, this assumption is wrong because modernization is like a social change that occurs in a civilization. The Western society used to be a primitive society, especially in the Dark and Middle Ages. Modernization swept through the West with the advent of the industrial revolution. Suffice it to say that any civilization can modernize in its own way. To help explain better, the difference between modernization and Western civilization, Samuel Huntington's assertions shall be used once again. According to Huntington,

Western civilization emerged in the eighth and ninth centuries and developed its distinctive characteristics in the following centuries. It did not begin to modernize until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The West was the West long before it was modern. The central characteristics of the West, those which distinguish it from other civilizations, antedate the modernization of the West.<sup>3</sup>

Huntington further observed that the Western world was the first civilization to engage in the modernization of its societies, and consequently, the West leads in the culture of modernity. Therefore, in the words of Huntington, "The expansion of the West has promoted both modernization and Westernization of non-Western societies."<sup>4</sup> This assertion by Huntington explains

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 72. Huntington observed that the political and intellectual leaders of non-Western societies have responded to the Western impact in many ways. This includes rejecting both modernization and Westernization. This is exemplified in Islamic societies where the non-acceptance of

why modernization is often associated with the Western world. Huntington's assertions also explain why there is this widely held belief that modernization is measured based on Western parameters. This is why the words "modernization" and "Westernization" are, sometimes, used interchangeably. However, Huntington disagreed with the assumption that modernization and Westernization are the same. According to Huntington, "Modernization, in short, does not necessarily mean Westernization. Non Western societies can modernize and have modernized without abandoning their own cultures and adopting wholesale Western values, institutions, and practices."<sup>5</sup>

In many parts of the Islamic world, Western-introduced modernization has been vehemently resisted as being alien to Islam. This resistance has resulted in the growth of Islamic extremism. Islamic extremists believe that many aspects of modernization go contrary to Islamic teachings. In order to resist the introduction of modernization in Islamic countries, Islamic extremists resorted to militant activities against the West. This is due to the belief among Muslims that the West is the civilization behind the concept of modernization. Ira Lapidus in, *Islamic Revival and Modernity: The Contemporary Movements and the Historical Paradigms*, captured this scenario by describing how modernization had a huge and serious impact on the entire Islamic world. According to Lapidus,

Modern states have . . . had a powerful impact on families and the relations of men and women. The new states intervened in family

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modernization and Westernization led to the growth of Islamic revivalism, and the resultant extremism that followed as a consequence.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 78.

and community affairs to promote women's education and employment.

. . . The media promoted an image of the liberated woman and of consumer values, as people everywhere were made aware of the Western materialistic lifestyle and its luxuries. Women have become less and less dependent upon their fathers and husbands for income, for social services, and even for their values and views of the world. The Islamic revivalist movements are a response to these changes by parts of the Muslim populations that do not share . . . in the culture of modernity.<sup>6</sup>

In addition, other aspects of modernization like secularization of the state and the separation of religion from the affairs of the state, have also contributed to the growth of the clash between Islamic extremists and some nations of the West. An example is Iran during the government of Shah Reza Pahlavi (The Shah of Iran). The Shah attempted to "modernize" his country, apparently, according to Western parameters. This was rejected by many radical Muslims in Iran. This resistance to Shah's policies contributed to the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and extremism in Iran. They accused the Shah's government of receiving massive support from the West, especially from the United States. Eventually, Islamic extremists, led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, brought down the Shah's government in a revolution that brought Khomeini to power. According to a Time Publication titled *The Middle East*, "Khomeini and his fellow conservatives

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<sup>6</sup> Ira Lapidus, "Islamic Revival and Modernity: The Contemporary Movements and the Historical Paradigms," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, Vol.40, No.4 (1997), 446.

resisted the secularist regime of the West-leaning Shah . . . whose modernizing tendencies offended Shi'ite fundamentalists.”<sup>7</sup>

The West, particularly the United States, was blamed for the Shah's pro-Western government. Islamic extremists in Iran believed that the Shah's administration, with the support of the United States, encouraged the de-Islamization of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Consequently, this resulted in the attack on the United States Embassy in Tehren, and the subsequent taking of 52 United States citizens as hostages by Islamic extremists. This hostage incident, in the words of the Time publication, “. . . heralds the dawn of extremist, militant Islam in the Middle East.”<sup>8</sup> As observed by the Time publication, this incident in Iran, occasioned by the attempt at modernizing the Iranian society, led to one of earliest known clashes between Islamic extremists and some nations of the West. Obviously, modernization has played a significant role in the clash between Islamic extremists and some nations of the West.

However, there are other factors that have also contributed to the clash between Islamic extremists and some nations of the West. They include imperialism, colonialism, the Israel/Palestine conflict and oil, among others. Of all these contributory factors, the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians has been a divisive issue between the entire Islamic/Arab world and the West.

Islamic extremists have exploited this conflict to their advantage because of the

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<sup>7</sup> Time Inc, *The Middle East: The History, The Cultures, The Conflicts, The Faiths* (New York: Time Books, 2006), 85. This publication further added that Iran's Ayatullah Khomeini translated his hatred of America into acts of terrorism and defiance that helped undermine the presidency of Jimmy Carter.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

common Arab/Islamic sympathy extended to the Palestinians. These and other contributory factors will now be discussed in detail.

### **Western Imperialism and Colonialism**

In the essay, *A Definition of Colonialism*, Ronald Horvath described colonialism as “. . . a form of domination . . . the control by individuals or groups over the territory and/or behavior of other individuals or groups.”<sup>9</sup> Horvath also added that colonialism “. . . refers to that form of intergroup domination in which settlers in significant numbers migrate permanently to the colony from the colonizing power.”<sup>10</sup> Horvath went further to differentiate colonialism from imperialism. According to him, the important difference between colonialism and imperialism is the presence or absence of significant numbers of permanent settlers in the colony from the colonizing power. Horvath, therefore, described imperialism as “. . . a form of intergroup domination wherein few, if any, permanent settlers from the imperial homeland migrate to the colony.”<sup>11</sup>

Graham Evans and Jeffrey Newnham in the book, *The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations*, also discussed imperialism and colonialism. Evans and Newnham observed that the word “imperialism” is derived from the Latin word *imperium*. According to them, the word *imperium* “. . . refers to the relationship of a hegemonic state to subordinate states, nations or people under its control.”<sup>12</sup>

Based on this, the authors described an imperial policy as “. . . a deliberate

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<sup>9</sup> Ronald Horvath, “A Definition of Colonialism,” *Current Anthropology*, Vol.13, No.1 (1972), 46.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

<sup>12</sup> Graham Evans & Jeffrey Newnham, *The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations* (London: Penguin Books, 1998), 244.

projection of a state's power beyond the area of its original jurisdiction with the object of forming one coherent political and administrative unit under the control of the hegemon."<sup>13</sup>

Evans and Newnham further observed that imperialistic territorial expansion are of two distinct phases. The first phase, according to them, is the “. . . mercantilist or dynastic imperialism, which dates roughly from 1492 to 1763 and which saw the Western hemisphere and much of Asia come under European control.”<sup>14</sup> The second phase, according to the authors, is “new imperialism” (1870-1914). New Imperialism, in the words of Evans and Newnham, “. . . witnessed the subjugation by Europe of most of Africa and part of the Far East.”<sup>15</sup> The authors also explained as follows: “In the development of theories of imperialism it is the second phase that has attracted the most attention.”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 244. Evans and Newnham differentiated imperialism from colonialism. The authors observed that the assertion of dominance by an imperial power is also associated with colonialism. They also added that an empire created by an imperial power can result in full economic and political integration of its subjects in the form of a supranational entity, whereas colonies are separate and subordinate by definition. Nevertheless, both concepts often overlap and they have significantly contributed to the clash between Islamic extremists and some nations of the Western world.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 244.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 244. Of the two distinct phases of imperialism identified by Evans and Newnham, the second phase, the new imperialism (1870-1914) was the phase that saw the domination of the Islamic world by the West. In addition, the new imperialism phase also ushered in the colonization of the Islamic world by the West. Colonization resulted in significant Western cultural, social, economic, and even religious influence on the Islamic world. These, including attempts at modernization, contributed to the growth of Islamic revival movements. These Islamic revivalist movements metamorphosed Islamic extremism and militancy .

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 244. According to Evans and Newnham, the second phase of imperialism attracted the most attention because it was this phase that many scholars associated imperialism with the expansion of capitalism and the exploitation that came with it. The authors specifically mentioned J.A Hobson's *Imperialism* (1902), which linked imperialism with the demands of maturing capitalism for markets, investment opportunities, raw materials and cheap labor. Hobson's view on the connection between imperialism and capitalism was, according the authors, also expressed by Lenin in his book, *Imperialism: The Highest State of Capitalism*, published in 1916. However, Evans and Newnham observed that many analysts have disputed the necessary

Interestingly, this second phase was the phase that saw more Western presence in the Islamic world in what became known as colonization.

Evans and Newnham also explained the difference between the concept of colonialism and that of imperialism. The authors described colonialism as “. . . a variety of imperialism. It involves the settlement of foreign territories, the maintenance of rule over a subordinate population and the separation of the ruling group from the subject population. The relationship between the ‘mother country’ and the colony is usually exploitative.”<sup>17</sup> They further observed, “Unlike imperialism, which can involve complete assimilation, colonialism involves more or less strict separation from the metropolitan center, the reason being that colonies exist to serve the needs of the colonizing power and as such occupy a subordinate and servile role.”<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, both colonialism and imperialism led to a deeper contact between the West and Islamic societies, with the resultant inevitable clash between the two civilizations.

In his book titled *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror*, Bernard Lewis also discussed the impact of Western imperialism on the Arab/Islamic world. According to Lewis, “Imperialism is a particularly important theme in the Middle Eastern and more especially the Islamic case against the West.”<sup>19</sup> Lewis further observed that European activities in Islamic territories went through

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connection between capitalism and imperialism. They point to the frequency of imperial conquest and war long before the development of modern capitalism. Nevertheless, the primary objective of this argument in this thesis is the role that imperialism played in the clash between Islamic extremists and the West.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>19</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (New York: Modern Library, 2003), 55.

several phases. These phases, according to him, include “. . . commercial expansion and, as Muslims see it, exploitation of them and their countries, both as markets and as sources of raw materials.”<sup>20</sup> Therefore, in the words of Lewis, there were “. . . armed invasion and conquest, by which European powers established effective domination over important areas of the Islamic world . . .”<sup>21</sup> This view by Lewis captures the scenario that existed in Egypt in the colonial era. Islamic revivalists in Egypt like Hassan al Banna believed that the Egyptians were being exploited by the British. This perceived exploitation made the Islamic revivalists to believe that the Egyptian society was divided between the rich Westerners and the poor Egyptians. Consequently, the revivalists saw what they believed were apparent inequalities between the rich (mostly the British and those who worked for them) and the poor (made up of Egyptians). Islamic teachers like Hassan al Banna believed that the rich were made rich through the exploitation of the Egyptians. This was one of the reasons that contributed to the formation of the Muslim Brotherhood by Hassan al Banna.

Western colonization of Islamic territories started in North Africa with the French occupation of Algeria and British occupation of Aden in 1830 and 1839 respectively. The Western occupation of Algeria and Aden were followed by further Western occupation of Tunisia in 1881, Egypt in 1882, the Sudan in 1889, and Libya and Morocco in 1912. However, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1918 created the enabling environment that favored further Western colonization

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 56.



of the Islamic world. The Western colonization then included more Islamic territories like Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Jordan. The colonization of the Islamic world by the Westerners led to an inevitable clash between Western civilization and Islamic civilization. One of the primary reasons for this clash was because the West was seen by the Islamic world as a dominant global power, which proved to be a military, political, economic, and ideological threat to the very foundations of the Islamic religion.

Despite the misunderstanding between the West and the Islamic world, the Westerners fortified their hold on Islamic territories with the signing of the Sykes-Picot agreement of 1915-1916. This agreement was signed by France, Britain and Russia, and it divided the territories that were formally under Ottoman rule among the Western powers, notably France and the Great Britain. The Europeans came into the Islamic world with a different culture, a different political ideology and even a different religion, Christianity. Therefore; the Western colonial powers became a visible threat to Islam, especially when European/Western values began to penetrate more deeply into Islamic societies. Furthermore, in as much as Christianity was not particularly the sum of Western culture, Christian missionaries were, however, willing participants in European colonialism. These Christian missionaries enjoyed the protection of the colonial powers in their efforts towards the planting of Christianity in the Western colonies. These Western colonies were including most parts of the Islamic world.

One can imagine the outrage among the Muslim population on this

invasion of their values and beliefs by the more dominant Western values. Consequently, the Islamic community, especially the passionate ones among them, resorted to all types of Islamic revivalism and other forms of Islamic based radical ideologies. These Islamic revivalists fought to halt, what they believed was the further contamination, influence and penetration of Western values into Islam. One of the reasons why the Islamic revivalist opposed Western values was because they viewed Western values as being secular and morally bankrupt. Islamic revivalists and later extremists believed that the only way they could stop the influence of the West on Islamic countries was by asserting their Islamic religious and cultural identity. Among these early revivalist organizations was the Egyptian based Muslim Brotherhood (Ikhwan al-muslimin), which was earlier discussed in chapter three.

Similarly, the end of colonialism did not lead to the end of Islamic revivalist movements. This is because colonialism left a legacy, that of identity crisis among the Muslim population. Many Muslims who were influenced by Western cultures and ideologies could not easily fuse together these newly acquired culture and ideology with their original Islamic background. The effect was the case of identity crisis among many Muslims in the Islamic community. Most Muslims were neither fully Muslim nor fully Western. This led to an even greater quest and call for reformation and a more indigenous authentic identity, that of their original Islamic culture and identity. Hence the struggle against the propagation of Western culture became even more pronounced.

In addition, the Islamic nations went ahead to adopt Western political ideologies and style of government, were regarded as Western stooges. They were considered to be in power to further advance the Western agenda of continuous domination and exploitation of Islamic nations for the benefit of the West. Compounding the problem was the inability of these regimes to promote good governance and economic advancement in these Islamic countries. All these led to the metamorphosis of Islamic revivalism into extremism and fundamentalism, and the resultant rise in militant activities against some countries of the West by Islamic extremists.

### **The Role of Religion: Christianity, Judaism and Islam**

Religion is another contributory factor to the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations. The religions involved include Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Samuel Huntington made reference to the significant role that religion plays in civilizations. According to Huntington, "Religion is a central defining characteristic of civilizations . . ." <sup>22</sup> Jonathan Fox also shared a similar opinion in his essay, *Religion as an Overlooked Element of International Relations*. Fox asserted that religion influences international politics in diverse ways. He identified three ways in which religion influences international politics. According to Fox, these three ways are, "First, foreign policies are influenced by the religious views and beliefs of policymakers and their constituents. Second,

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<sup>22</sup> Huntington, 47. Huntington notes that Christianity and Islam are associated with two major civilizations. These are the Western and Islamic civilizations, respectively. Despite the fact that the present day Western world is not the sum total of Christianity, the West is often considered as a civilization based on Christian values. This assumption has made the clash between Islamic extremists and the West appear like a conflict between Islam and Christianity.

religion is a source of legitimacy for both supporting and criticizing government behavior locally and internationally. Third, many local religious issues and phenomena, including religious conflicts, spread across borders or otherwise become international issues.”<sup>23</sup> Fox’ first assertion that religious views and beliefs influence the foreign policies of many states underscores how Christianity, Judaism and Islam have influenced the foreign policy of some nations.

Judaism, Christianity and Islam originated from the Semitic religious hearth. This area is located on the margins of the deserts of Southwestern Asia. This area is today, called the Middle East. Judaism, Christianity and Islam are called Abrahamic religions because they all consider Abraham as the father of their faith. However, Christianity and Judaism are more closely related due to the fact that they share many common beliefs. This closeness between Christianity and Judaism led to the term “Judeo-Christian.” In the eyes of Muslims, particularly Islamic extremists, the West is closely associated with Judeo-Christian values. This is the reason why many Islamic extremists believe that the West is an agent of Judeo-Christian values and beliefs. However, as earlier noted in the previous chapter, the present day Western world is not the sum total of Christianity or the so-called Judeo-Christian values. Nevertheless, the fact that the ancient and medieval West were deeply rooted on Christianity, and even

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<sup>23</sup> Fox, 59. Fox noted that religion influences the foreign policies of many states both in the West and in Islamic states. He specifically mentioned the nomination of Joseph Lieberman as the Democratic vice presidential candidate. This nomination of Lieberman, according to Fox, resulted in a debate over the appropriateness of an overt discussion of religious views in the United States political terrain. Fox, however, observed that one cannot deny these views exist, and that they influence the decisions of policy makers, including those who make foreign policies. Most of these Western foreign policies, especially towards Israel and the Arab world have fueled the growth of Islamic extremism.

organized the crusades in an attempt to drive Muslims away from what they described as a Christian Holy land, has led to a situation where the West is seen by Muslims as a Christian West.

Major Western countries like the United States have continued to maintain foreign policies that ensured continued support for Israel. Although Israel is a Judaist nation, it also houses the majority of Christianity's holiest sites. Many Islamic extremists view the support given to Israel by some Western nations as a religion-based conspiracy between Christianity and Judaism to undermine Islam. Michael Kronenwetter, in his book titled *Terrorism: A Guide to Events and Documents*, reproduced a statement signed by Osama bin Laden, the leaders of the Jihad Group in Egypt, the Islamic Group, and the Jihad Movement of Bangladesh. In this statement, Islamic extremists and their organizations described Western support for Israel as a religious alliance between Christianity and Judaism. They described this alliance as "the Crusader-Zionist Alliance."<sup>24</sup> This suspicion by Islamic extremists of an alliance between Christianity and Judaism to fight Islam is made worse by the West's attitude and foreign policies towards Islamic nations. Edwards Mortimer explained this better in his essay, *Christianity and Islam*. According to Mortimer, ". . . in the Middle East the

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<sup>24</sup> Michael Kronenwetter, *Terrorism: A Guide to Events and Documents* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2004), 232. In this book, Kronenwetter reproduced a statement titled *International Islamic Front Fatwah For Jihad on the Jews and Crusaders*, which was signed by Osama bin Laden, as well as leaders of the Jihad Group in Egypt, the Islamic Group (IG), the *Jamiat-ul-ulema-e-Pakistan*, and the Jihad Movement of Bangladesh. In this statement, Islamic extremists blamed the West, particularly the United States for what they believe is the oppression of Muslims in Iraq and Palestine. They see this as a religiously based alliance between Judaism and Christianity whose objective is the continuous domination of Muslims all over the world. This is why Islamic extremists coined the term "Crusader-Zionist Alliance". This underscores how religion has contributed to the fueling of the clash between Islamic extremists and some nations of the West.

possession of long-range or highly destructive weapons by Muslim states such as Iran, Iraq or Libya is automatically seen as dangerous to Europe, whereas the same conclusion is not drawn about their possession by Israel (admittedly not a Christian state, but one often subsumed, especially in American discourse, under the heading of 'Judeo-Christian civilization')."<sup>25</sup>

David Dakake and Hal Lindsey also commented on how religion and religious teachings have contributed to the clash between Islamic extremists and some nations of the West. Dakake, in his contributory essay to the book, *Islam, Fundamentalism, and the Betrayal of Tradition*, made reference to the Koran to buttress his opinion. In his essay titled *The Might of a Militant Islam*, Dakake observed that Chapter 5, verse 51 of the Koran forbids Muslims to closely associate with Jews or Christians. According to Dakake, the above-mentioned chapter in the Koran commands Muslims as follows: "O, you who believe . . . do not take Jews and Christians as *awliya*."<sup>26</sup> Dakake noted that the word "*awliya*" has been commonly translated into English to mean "friends".

Furthermore, the apparent lack of trust that exists between some Muslims and some Christians, as earlier mentioned, dates back to the medieval era. One of the major hallmarks of the medieval era was the Crusades. During these

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<sup>25</sup> Edward Mortimer, "Christianity and Islam," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, Vol.67, No. 1. (1991), 12. Edward observed that the Salman Rushdie incident and the controversy over Muslim girls wearing headscarves at state schools in France further demonstrated, in the eyes of Muslims, that the West is a Christian society bent on curtailing the influence of Islam. Many Muslims view this as a threat to Islam, and the only way to defend Islam will be to join Islamic extremists. This also contributes to the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations.

<sup>26</sup> David Dakeke, "The Might of Militant Islam," in *Islam, Fundamentalism and the Betrayal of Tradition*, ed. Joseph Lumbard (Indiana: World Wisdom Inc., 2004), 5.

years, Christians from the West (Europe) clashed with Muslims in what is now called the Crusade years. The Crusaders, who were mainly European Christians, carried out a series of nine crusades or “holy wars” against Muslims in the Holy Land. The Christians objected to the presence and settlement of Muslims who they described as occupiers of a Christian Holy Land. The Crusades took place between the 11<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, and they marked the first major clash between the Islamic world and the West. However, it is worthy to note and clarify that the events of the Crusade years did not necessarily evolve into the present state of frosty relations between the West and Islam. Nevertheless, the Crusades had an impact on the psyche of Western civilization and her perception of the Islamic world and vice versa.

The West is seen by many Islamic extremists as an agent in the propagation of Judeo-Christian beliefs. Islamic extremists believe that the Judeo-Christian West is a formidable threat to the survival of the Islamic religion, hence the attacks against the West and her interests. This view is also expressed by Hal Lindsey in his book, *The Everlasting Hatred: The Roots of Jihad*. According to Lindsey, “Assaults on Christians are growing as illustrated by the 9/11 attack on the U.S.A. Islamic fundamentalists see the U.S.A. as the center of the Judeo-Christian based world order, which they believe is the greatest threat to true Islam. They believe we must be destroyed and replaced with an Islamic based world order.”<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Hal Lindsey, *The Everlasting Hatred: The Roots of Jihad* (Murrieta: Oracle House Publishing, 2002), 142.

Furthermore, incidents like the Pope's comments on Islam have also created tensions between Christianity and Islam. The controversy created by Pope Benedict's comment had an impact, and may have contributed to the antagonism shown towards the West by Islamic extremists. Pope Benedict XVI (Joseph Ratzinger), in a lecture he delivered at the University of Regensburg in Germany, quoted a 15<sup>th</sup> century Byzantine emperor who accused Prophet Muhammad of doing things only evil and inhuman to the world. The Pope's remarks caused quite a stir and also caused a religious dispute between some Muslims and some Christians. This incident resulted in more Islamic extremists' antagonistic attitude towards the West and Christianity. The situation was made even tenser by the refusal of many Western nations to criticize or condemn the Pope's remarks. The Pope did clarify what he meant, but many Muslims did not accept anything other than an apology from the Pope. This incident underscored how religion has also fueled the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations.

### **The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**

Another and perhaps, one of the most significant factors that have contributed to the clash between Islamic extremists and some nations of the West is the unending conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Reproduced below is an excerpt from Osama bin Laden's letter to America:

(Q1) Why are we fighting and opposing you?

(Q2) What are we calling you to, and what do we want from you?



As for the first question: Why are we fighting and opposing you?

The answer is very simple:

(1) Because you attacked us and continue to attack us.

(a) You attacked us in Palestine:

(1) Palestine, which has sunk under military occupation for more than 80 years. The British handed over Palestine, with your help and your support, to the Jews, who have occupied it for more than 50 years; years overflowing with oppression, tyranny, crimes, killing, expulsion, destruction and devastation. The creation and continuation of Israel is one of the greatest crimes, and you the leaders of its criminals. And of course there is no need to explain and prove the degree of American support for Israel.<sup>28</sup>

Judging from Osama bin Laden's letter, it is obvious that the Israeli-Palestinian dispute is, undoubtedly, one of the thorniest issues of division between some Western nations and the Islamic world in general, not just Islamic extremists. As one can observe in the letter above, allegedly written by Osama bin Laden, the

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<sup>28</sup> Kronenwetter, 233. In his book titled *Terrorism: A Guide to Events and Documents*, Michael Kronenwetter reproduced a letter allegedly written by Osama bin Laden to the American people. In this letter, bin Laden tried to explain why the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks were carried out against the United States. In this Osama bin Laden also enumerated many reasons why Islamic extremists are carrying out terrorist attacks against the West, particularly the United States. Among the reasons include the conflict between Israel and Palestine, adding that Western support for Israel is the sole reason why Israel is still surviving. He said that the West, especially the United States have continued to support Israel which he said has been oppressing Muslims in Palestine. Bin Laden's reference to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict underscores how this conflict has affected relations between the West and Islam. Islamic extremists have exploited the Palestinian conflict to rally more support and recruitment from many Islamic nations.

West's, particularly the United States support for Israel in the on-going conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, has continued to draw sharp criticisms from the Islamic world. As a result, Islamic extremists like Osama bin Laden have exploited this conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians by using it as a common ground or a rallying point for all Muslims to unite against the Western. Apparently, whenever the Israeli/Palestinian conflict is mentioned, it tends to attract the attention of the entire Islamic world. The Islamic world, especially the Arabs, never wanted Israel to exist in Palestine. But the support of the West, particularly the United States, helped to sustain Israel. Israel today remains a major contributory factor to the deteriorating relations between Islam and the West. How this came to be is a question one may ask. To better understand this, the creation of the modern Israeli State will be discussed.

Many factors contributed to the creation of the modern state of Israel in 1948. These include the non-clarification of the status of Palestine in the famous McMahon-Husseini correspondence, and the Balfour Declaration. The Balfour Declaration encouraged the migration of Jews from all over the world to their ancient biblical homeland in Palestine. In addition, the formation of the World Zionist Organization also contributed immensely to the eventual creation of the Israeli state in 1948. Theodor Herzl, who many consider as the father of the modern State of Israel, influenced the formation of the World Zionist Organization. Herzl believed that as long as Jews remained a minority people, they would always be subjected to periods of deprivation. Herzl's views were

explained in his book titled *The Jewish State*, which was published in 1896. The publication of Herzl's book helped in the convening of the first World Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland in 1897. The apparent success of this World Zionist Congress led to the formation of the World Zionist Organization. This Organization's primary goal was to vigorously propagate the Zionism ideology, whose main objective was the re-establishment of the Jewish home land in Palestine. The World Zionist Organization funded a large portion of Jewish emigration into Palestine, and this resulted into a rise in Jewish population in Palestine to about 85,000 by 1914.

At the beginning of World War I, the British engaged in a series of correspondences with a prominent Arab ruler, Sherif Hussein of the Hijaz. The British correspondence with Hussein was done through their High Commissioner in Egypt, Sir Arthur Henry McMahon. In this correspondence, referred to as the McMahon-Hussein correspondence, the British urged Sherif Hussein and his people to revolt against Ottoman rule in their lands, including Palestine. The reason for the British action was because the Ottomans fought on the side of the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria) against the British and her allies in World War 1. The British promised Sherif Hussein and his fellow Arabs that, upon the defeat of the Ottomans, the Arabs would be granted self-rule in almost all the Arab territories. However, Palestine was not included in the promise because the status of the Palestinian territory was not clearly defined. Consequently, Palestine became an internationalized land. The status of

Palestine paved way for the issuance of the Balfour Declaration of 1917. The Balfour Declaration was a letter written by former British Foreign Secretary, Arthur J Balfour to Lord Rothschild, Head of the British Zionist Organization. This letter became an important policy statement that encouraged the Zionist aspiration of an establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

Despite the Balfour Declaration, Palestine was still governed by the British under a mandate from the League of Nations. Consequently, there was further Jewish migration into Palestine. However, it was not until the Holocaust that there was a large migration of Jews into Palestine. This migration of the Jews into Palestine was strongly opposed by the Arab Higher Commission, and this increased tensions between Arabs and Jews. In 1947, Britain announced that it intended to return the Palestinian mandate back to the United Nations, which replaced the League of Nations. Due to this announcement by the British, the United Nations General Assembly passed resolution 181 on November 29, 1947. This resolution divided Palestine into two, between the Arabs and the Jews. Unfortunately, the Arabs rejected the United Nations decision to divide Palestine between the Jews and the Arabs. Their rejection was based on their conviction that Palestine belonged to the Arabs. However, on the strength of this resolution 181, the Jewish People's Council went ahead and declared an independent Israeli State on May 14, 1948. In forming an independent Israeli State, the Jewish People's Council declared as follows:

. . . we members of the People's Council, Representatives of the

Jewish community of Eretz-Isreal and of the Zionist Movement is here assembled on the day of the termination of the British Mandate over Eretz-Isreal and, by virtue of our natural and historic right and on the strength of the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, hereby declare the establishment of a Jewish State in Eretz-Isreal, to be known as the State of Israel.<sup>29</sup>

Many Islamic extremist organizations were founded primarily to fight against Israel. Hamas and Hezbollah<sup>30</sup> are two examples of such Islamic extremist organizations that were formed due to the Arab-Israeli conflict. These organizations have also carried out militant actions against some Western nations. In fact, Hezbollah has actually carried out a terrorist attack against the West (France and the United States) in Lebanon.<sup>31</sup> These organizations consider the West, particularly the United States, as the backbone behind Israel's military strength. Richard Worth made a similar observation in his book, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict*. According to Worth, "From the founding of Israel in 1948, the United States has been its strongest ally . . . Jews in the United States form a powerful, well-financed lobbying group on behalf of Israel. U.S. political leaders are often reluctant to oppose Israeli interests . . ." <sup>32</sup> Consequently, according to Worth, ". . . Arab leaders have often criticized the United States for using different criteria for

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<sup>29</sup> Israeli Declaration of Statehood [database on-line] (Israeli-Palestinian ProCon.org, accessed 12 October 2005); available from

<http://www.israelipalestinianprocon.org/Treaties/1948israeldeclarationtext.html>.

<sup>30</sup> Hamas and Hezbollah shall be further discussed in the next chapter of this thesis.

<sup>31</sup> Hezbollah's attacks against the United States and French soldiers in Lebanon will also be discussed in the next chapter.

<sup>32</sup> Richard Worth, *Open for Debate: The Arab-Israeli Conflict* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 2007), 16.

judging Israel and the other nations of the Middle East. After the 1967 war, Israel occupied Palestinian territory on the West Bank. The United States did not force Israel to withdraw. In contrast, some Arab leaders pointed out that the United States formed a coalition to oust Saddam Hussein from Kuwait after his invasion of the country in 1990."<sup>33</sup>

## **Oil**

For decades, U.S. diplomatic and military strategy have been based on belief that protecting oil-supply lines from the Middle East is essential to U.S. security; the policy was specifically laid out in the 1980 Carter Doctrine. The strategy has led to fateful decisions, such as the U.S.'s 26 years of support for the regime of the Shah of Iran, that kept the oil flowing-but at a long-term cost that now harms U.S. interests. The Carter Doctrine continues to guide U.S. foreign policy: one of the first goals of U.S. troops in the 2003 Iraq incursion was to secure the oil fields.<sup>34</sup>

Another cause of the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations is oil. Most of the world's largest oil reserves are located in Islamic countries. Among them are the following countries: Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Libya, The United Arab Emirates, and Algeria among a host of others. According

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 17. Worth further noted that the United States' support for Israel is very obvious. He gave examples like the refusal of the administration of President George W. Bush to deal with Yasir Arafat. Arafat was denied an entry visa into the United States.

<sup>34</sup> Time, 32.

to Ray Dafter in his essay, *World Oil Production and Security of Supplies*, "Latest estimates of proven oil reserves show that almost 58 percent of the positively identified resources (370 billion barrels out of 641.6 billion worldwide) lie in the Middle East. In terms of non-communist countries, the Middle East oil producers control 67.5 percent of those proven reserves."<sup>35</sup> The West depends on oil for most of its energy needs. In fact, the United States (a key Western country) is the world's largest consumer of oil.

Due to the West's heavy dependence on oil, there have been suspicions in the Islamic world, especially among Islamic extremists about the West's agenda concerning the oil in Islamic countries. Many Islamic extremists are convinced that the West is bent on controlling and exploiting this vital source of energy for the benefit and further industrialization of the West, at the detriment of the Islamic world. Osama bin Laden also made reference to this suspicion. Bin Laden, in one of his statements, stated categorically, "You steal our wealth and oil at paltry prices because of your international influence and military threats. This theft is indeed the biggest theft ever witnessed by mankind in the history of the world."<sup>36</sup> Islamic extremists believe that Western foreign policies towards the Islamic world have been tailored in such a way as to keep the steady flow of oil from the Islamic world to the West. This includes many Western nations' foreign policies that have ensured cordial relations between them and Islamic countries

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<sup>35</sup> Ray Dafter, "World Oil Production and Security of Supplies," *International Security*, Vol.4, No.3. (Winter, 1979-1980), 154. Dafter observed that his figures were based on figures provided by *Oil and Gas Journal*, December 25, 1978.

<sup>36</sup> Kronenwetter, 234. "Bin Laden's letter to America."

like Saudi Arabia. Undoubtedly, therefore, oil has contributed to the clash between Islamic extremists and some nations of the West.

Furthermore, the invasion of Iraq by an army largely made up of Western nations to liberate Kuwait (the first Gulf War), was seen as a ploy by the West to control the oil on the Middle East. Samuel Huntington made this assertion in his book, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. Huntington described the first Gulf War as “. . . the first post-Cold War resource war between civilizations.”<sup>37</sup> According to Huntington, “At stake was whether the bulk of the world’s largest oil reserves would be controlled by Saudi and Emirate governments dependent on Western military power for their security or by independent anti-Western regimes which would be able and might be willing to use oil as a weapon against the West.”<sup>38</sup> Basically, the cordial relations which exists between the United States, Saudi Arabia and other pro-Western Islamic nations is viewed by many Islamic extremists as a foreign policy that is aimed at controlling the oil in the Islamic world. Furthermore, Islamic extremists also view this as a policy meant to further perpetuate the domination of the Islamic world by the Western powers.

Therefore, Islamic extremists, in their quest to bring an end to this, have carried out violent actions against some Western nations. These angry reactions from Islamic extremists have further fueled the conflict between Islamic extremists and some Western nations. Consequently, there is a rise in Islamic

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<sup>37</sup> Huntington, 251.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 251-252.



extremism in Saudi Arabia where many Islamic extremists are not happy with the presence of U.S. troops on Saudi soil. The presence of U.S. troops on Saudi soil is considered by many Islamic extremist as a violation of an Islamic soil by a Western nation. Osama Bin Laden and many members of his Al Qaeda Organization are from Saudi Arabia, and he has specifically made reference to the presence of U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia. Osama bin Laden believes that Western military presence in Islamic nations is a ploy by the West to continue the exploitation of Islamic nations. In a letter alleged to be written by him, Osama bin Laden stated, "Your forces occupy our territories; you spread your military bases throughout them; you corrupt our lands, and you besiege our sanctities to . . . ensure the continuity of your pillage of our treasures."<sup>39</sup> The interesting thing, however, is the fact that the Saudi Government actually encouraged the United States to maintain a heavy military presence on Saudi soil.

### **Post-Colonial Era Western Interference in Islamic Countries.**

Another contributory factor to the conflict between some Western nations and Islamic extremists is postcolonial era Western interference in the internal affairs of some Islamic States. A good example is the alleged Western role in the toppling of former Iranian President, Mohammed Mossadegh. According to the Time Magazine publication, *The Middle East: The History, The Cultures, The Conflicts, The Faiths*, Mossadegh was overthrown with the help and sponsorship of the United States because he nationalized a British oil company in Iran. The Time magazine further stated, "In truth, the regime change was anything but

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<sup>39</sup> Kronenewetter, 234-235. "Bin laden's letter to America."

spontaneous. It was orchestrated by the C.I.A., under the code name 'Operation Ajax'.<sup>40</sup> The Western supported change of government in Iran saw the emergence of a Western-oriented regime led by the Shah. Unfortunately, the Shah's pro-Western government was not admired by Iranian Islamic fundamentalists. Consequently, his administration was removed in the famous Iranian revolution that brought Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini to power. The Iranian revolution degenerated into the attack at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran by Islamist who took the embassy workers hostage in 1979, to protest U.S. meddling in the internal affairs of Iran. This incident marked the start of post-colonial era clash between Islamic extremist/militant Islam and some nations of the West.

Another good example of how post-colonial era Western interference in Islamic countries has contributed to the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations is the French meddling in the internal affairs of Algeria. Algeria used to be a French colony for so many years until 1962 when she finally got her independence from France after a bitter political struggle. However, France continues to interfere in the domestic affairs of this nation, especially in dictating the political ideology and system of government the Algerians should adopt. Many Islamic extremists in Algeria believe that France contributed to the non-establishment of an Islamic government in Algeria. They also believe that

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<sup>40</sup> Time Inc, *The Middle East: The History, The Cultures, The Conflicts, The Faiths*, intro. Jimmy Carter (New York: Time Magazines Inc., 2006), 69. The magazine further observed that longtime intelligence agent Kermit Roosevelt, a grandson of Theodore Roosevelt, and U.S Army General H. Norman Schwarzkopf organized the overthrow of the government of Mohammed Mossadegh. Mossadegh was the first democratically elected President in Iranian history.

France is encouraging and supporting the Westernization of the Algerian political terrain. This, the Islamic extremists alleged, stopped the Islamic Salvation Front from coming to power.

The situation in Algeria got even worse in 1992, when the Algerian military cancelled an election that was supposedly won by the Islamic Salvation Front, also known as F.I.S. (an acronym for the French interpretation, *Front Islamique du Salut*). The cancellation of this election, supported by France, was to stop the Islamic Salvation Front from claiming victory in the election. This would have brought the group to power, and ultimately result in the imposition of Islamic rule in Algeria. The angry Muslims resorted to extremism and militancy as a means of venting their anger against this supposed post colonial domination of an Islamic country by a Western power. The violence that followed the cancellation of the 1992 Algerian election left about 100,000 civilians, insurgents and security forces dead. In addition, it is suspected that the terrorist attacks carried out against France by Islamic extremists were master-minded by Algerian Islamic extremists. They used these terrorist attacks against France to convey their anger on the supposed French interference in the internal affairs of Algeria.

### **The Controversy over the 2003 U.S. and British Invasion of Iraq**

The 2003 U.S. and British invasion of Iraq is, perhaps, the most controversial case on the legal justification for the use of force by one state against another. Islamic extremists have used this 2003 invasion of Iraq to rally support in the Islamic world in their militant campaign against the West. Up until

the time of this writing, debates have continued on whether President Bush's use of force to remove Saddam Hussein from power was justified. This debate has continued despite spirited efforts by the Bush administration to convince the American public and the international community that it was justified to use force in Iraq. The Bush administration has described the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq as part of the war on terror. However, critics are not buying the administration's assertion due to the fact that there has been no evidence to suggest that Saddam Hussein had ties with Osama bin Laden or Al Qaeda.

President Bush started to beat his war drums against Iraq in his January 2002 State of the Union address. In this address, Bush pointed out that Iraq has continued to be hostile to the United States, and is also supporting terror organizations. President Bush went further to group Iraq together with Iran and North Korea, and he described these countries as the "axis of evil". According to the Time magazine publication, *The Middle East*, "The administration pointed to Saddam's long history of involvement with terrorist organizations: in 2002, he publicly rewarded the families of Palestinian suicide bombers with tens of thousands of dollars . . . But the most important and most oft-repeated charge was that Saddam was building weapons of mass destruction."<sup>41</sup> The Time publication observed that President Bush's reasons for using force in Iraq, however compelling at first glance, were disturbingly short on specific verifiable detail.

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 110-111.

All these back and forth argument and the failure of the U.S. armed forces to locate any weapons of mass-destruction in Iraq has made it increasingly difficult to find any legal justification for this use of force against Iraq. Complicating matters is the fact that Iraq did not carry out an armed attack against the United States or her allies. In addition, there was no verifiable evidence to believe that an Iraqi attack on the United States was imminent. From any angle one examines this 2003 United States use of force against Iraq; it will still be difficult to find any legal justification for this action. In addition, the United Kingdom's involvement was also condemned as not being justifiable. In an opinion (essay), titled *Legality of use of Force against Iraq*, prepared for Public Interest Lawyers by Rabinder Singh and Alison Macdonald in London, they categorically stated as follows:

The use of force against Iraq would not be justified under International law. Iraq has not attacked the United Kingdom, and no evidence is currently available to the public that any attack is imminent. Our view is that current Security Council resolutions do not authorize the use of force against Iraq. Such force would require further authorization from the Security Council. At present the United Kingdom is therefore not entitled, in international law, to use force against Iraq.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Rabinder Singh and Alison Macdonald, "Legality of Use of Force against Iraq," opinion presented to the Public Interest Lawyers on behalf of Peace rights, London. 10 September 2002. Singh & Macdonald were primarily focusing on the plans by the United Kingdom to become involved in the war against Iraq, being orchestrated by President George Bush of the United

The Iraq war helped to fuel Islamic extremism. This is because Islamic extremists were able to get more support from many Muslims in the Islamic world. Islamic extremists were also able to get more followers because many Muslims believed that the U.S. invasion of Iraq was part of a ploy by the West to continue to subdue Islamic nations. This is more so, as earlier noted, due to the lack of justifiable reasons for the Western invasion of an Islamic nation. Since this Iraq invasion, Britain has suffered a series of terrorist attacks<sup>43</sup> carried out by Islamic extremists. The extremists used these attacks to vent their anger over British involvement in the invasion of Iraq. Furthermore, the chaos and the apparent lack of stability and control in Iraq have made it easier for would-be Islamic extremists to find a relatively safe-haven in Iraq. Suffice to say that this war in Iraq is a huge contributory factor to the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations.

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States. Many of the reasons they gave on why the United Kingdom should not use force against Iraq could also be used to explain the illegality of the use of force against Saddam Hussein by the Bush Administration.

<sup>43</sup> Terrorist attacks against Britain will be discussed in the next chapter.

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE CLASH BETWEEN ISLAMIC EXTREMISTS AND  
SOME WESTERN NATIONS.**

The clash between Islamic extremist organizations and some Western nations is one of the most disturbing scenarios in recent years. This clash has disrupted social and economic activities in many parts of the world because of terrorism. Terrorism is one of the means employed by Islamic extremist organizations to launch attacks against some Western nations. The majority of these terrorist attacks usually result in the loss of innocent and unarmed lives. Terrorists operate in hiding and in secrecy, and they usually prefer to direct their attacks against the civilian populace. This tactics of operating in secrecy and the attacks on civilians makes terrorism more dangerous than a conventional warfare.

Furthermore, the panic and fear created by Islamic extremists have also affected economic and business cooperation between some Arab/Islamic nations and some Western nations. A good example is the Dubai Ports World incident that happened in the United States. The Dubai Ports World incident will be used to explain the effects of this clash on economic co-operation between the West and the Islamic World. Consequently, this chapter shall examine and expound the negative implications of the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations. Emphasis will be laid on the implications to global peace and security. In addition, this chapter will also focus on the economic, social and the

political fallout of this crisis. Reference will be made to the Dubai Ports World incident, the non-recognition of the electoral victory by Hamas, the situation in Pakistan, and the Iranian nuclear impasse

### **Implications of the Clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations to Global Peace and Security**

The conflict between Islamic extremists and some nations of the West is one of the most potent threats to the prospect for global peace and security. The tension created between Islamic extremists and Western countries like the United States and the United Kingdom, almost rivals the tension that existed between the United States and the Soviet Union in the Cold War era. Hilal Khashan of the American University of Beirut examined the global security implications of the violent campaign against some Western nations by Islamic extremist groups.

In an essay titled *The New World Order and the Tempo of Militant Islam*, Khashan made the following assertion: "With the end of the Cold War, Islamic fundamentalism has emerged as a global security issue. It poses serious challenges to state authority in the Middle East, and creates threatening ramifications in many Western countries. It is a rare historical coincidence to observe that the security of the Southern and Northern shores of the Mediterranean seem endangered by a common foe."<sup>1</sup> Islamic extremist

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<sup>1</sup> Hilal Khashan, "The New World Order and the Tempo of Militant Islam," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 24, No.1. (1997), 5. Khashan, in this essay, also blamed the West for the increase in the strength of Islamic extremists and fundamentalist organizations. He observed that some Western nations, in their desire to frustrate Soviet troops occupying



organizations like Al Qaeda have employed means such as terrorism and suicide bombings as their weapons of choice in their militant campaigns against the more sophisticated military of the West. For the purpose of this thesis, discussions on terrorism will center primarily on Islamic terrorism.

### **Terrorism (Islamic Terrorism)**

Terrorism poses a serious threat to the security of innocent lives because the majority of terrorist attacks are directed primarily at innocent and often unarmed civilians. These unarmed and innocent victims are called “soft targets” in terrorism parlance. The gravity of this threat can be measured using terrorist incidents like the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the subway explosions in France, the London explosions, and the series of attempts by Islamic extremists to carry out more terrorist attacks in Britain and other Western nations.

There is no universally acceptable definition of the word “terrorism”. This is because the word means different things to different people. However, most definitions of terrorism have been based on three factors. These three factors include the method in which terrorism is carried out, the target of the terrorist act, and the purpose for the attack. Generally, the primary objective of terrorists is to instill fear and force political or social change. In this thesis, four definitions of terrorism shall be given. These four definitions of terrorism will include the one given by Michael Kronenwetter in his book, *Terrorism: a Guide to Events and*

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Afghanistan, tinkered with the ecology of Islamic society and gave, unwittingly, a foundation of considerable strength to Islamic fundamentalism in the 1990s. Khashan’s observation is without doubt, a true observation. The United States and other Western nations supported and even helped in arming the Mujahedin who were fighting to end Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Interestingly, the same Mujahedin gave birth to Al Qaeda.

*Documents*, the Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center, the Federal Bureau of Investigations (F.B.I.), and the definition given by Jack Levin in his book, *The Roots of Terrorism: Domestic Terrorism*.

Kronenwetter describes terrorism as “malicious actions or threats directed against people who are regarded as innocent, or who are protected by the laws and conventions of modern warfare, and designed (at least partly) to frighten, intimidate, or otherwise influence populations or governments.”<sup>2</sup> Kronenwetter further observed that today’s Islamic terrorism is often traced back to a group of *Isma’ilis* (a minority sect of the shi’ites) who became known as the Assassins. According to Kronenwetter, the Assassins was founded in 1090 by Hassan-I-Sabbah, who was also known as Sheikh al-Jabal. Kronenwetter further revealed, “From roughly the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries, this murderous cult attempted to keep Islam pure by killing prominent Sunnis whom they accused of defiling it.”<sup>3</sup>

Another definition of terrorism is the one given in the book, *Anti-Terrorism Quick Reference Guide* published by the Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center. According to this book, terrorism is “the calculated use of violence or threats of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political,

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<sup>2</sup> Michael Kronenwetter, *Terrorism: A Guide to Events and Documents* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2004), 8. Kronenwetter further explained that, although terrorism is a worldwide phenomenon, it was born in the deserts and mountains of the Middle East, and it retains its strongest roots there. He observed that what might be considered the first real “terrorist group” appeared in that region in the first century A.D. This was when the Jewish sect called the Zealots used tactics that would today be recognized as terrorist in an attempt to precipitate rebellion against the Roman rulers of Judea. (23-24).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

religious, or ideological.”<sup>4</sup> In another definition of terrorism, the Federal Bureau of Investigations (F.B.I.), according to the National Transit Institute workbook titled *Terrorist Activity Recognition and Reaction*, defines terrorism as “the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government or civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.”<sup>5</sup> Jack Levin also defined terrorism using the F.B.I.’s definition; however, Levin expanded his definition. For Levin, terrorism “. . . is regarded as the unlawful use, or threatened use, of violence by a group or individual . . . committed against person or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political, social, or personal objectives.”<sup>6</sup>

The word “terrorism” was first used during the French Revolution. The French used the expression, *Regime de la Terreur* (1793-1794), to refer to the government at that time. In addition, the Jacobins of the Jacobite movement in France referred to themselves as “terrorists”. However, the violence associated with the Jacobites’ so-called “terrorism” had a positive connotation. This was because the “terrorist acts” carried out by the Jacobites were used primarily to punish those regarded as enemies of the French people. Unlike the terrorism of

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<sup>4</sup> Anti-Terrorism Advisory Council, *Anti-Terrorism Quick Reference Guide* (Baltimore: Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center, 2005), 6.

<sup>5</sup> US Department of Transportation, *Terrorism Activity Recognition and Reaction* (New Jersey: National Transit Institute, 2006), 3.

<sup>6</sup> Jack Levin, *The Roots of Terrorism: Domestic Terrorism* (New York: Chelsea House Publishers (Infobase Publishing), 2006), 6.

the ancient France, innocent civilians are mostly the victims of modern day acts of terrorism by Islamic extremists.

Terrorism cuts across all religions and civilizations. However, for the purpose of this thesis, discussions on terrorism shall be limited to Islamic terrorism. In the world of today, terrorism is now synonymous with Islamic extremism and fundamentalism. The primary reason for the association of Islamic extremism with terrorism is based on the fact that the majority of the terrorist/extremist organizations and terrorist acts in the world today are products of Islamic extremism. The emergence of Islamic terrorist activities against the West started in Egypt, in the late 1940s. This was the period that Islamic extremists belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood Organization, commenced violent campaigns against the presence of the British in Egypt. This and other similar incidents caused by the growing antagonism between some Western nations and Islamic extremists, evolved into the present day acts of terrorism against the West. Some notable terrorists include Osama Bin Laden, Dr. Ayman Azwahiri and the late Abu Musab Zaqarwi.

There have been some recorded incidents of Islamic terrorism against some Western nations. However, it was not until after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States that the threats posed by terrorism received serious attention by the West and the international community. As observed by Kronenwetter, "Since September 11, 2001, the word *terrorism* has taken the place that was once held by *communism* and, before that, by *facism*, in the

American lexicon. It has become almost a synonym for both 'evil' and 'enemy'.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, Islamic terrorism has had a significant and negative impact on global security. Terrorism has also left many innocent people dead. Suffice it to say that terrorism has created a state of panic and fear in many parts of the world, particularly in the West.

Leonard Weinberg and William Eubank of the University of Nevada, Reno also commented on the threats and security implications of terrorism. In the introduction of Jack Levin's book, *The Roots of Terrorism: Domestic Terrorism*, Weinberg and Eubank examined the implications of terrorism. According to them, "Terrorism is hard to ignore. Almost every day television news shows, newspapers, magazines, and websites run and re-run pictures of dramatic and usually bloody acts of violence carried out by ferocious-looking terrorist or claimed by shadowy militant groups. It is often hard not to be scared when we see people like us killed or maimed by terrorist attacks . . . in office buildings, on public buses and trains, or along normal looking streets."<sup>8</sup>

### **Some Known Islamic Extremists/Terrorist Organizations.**

#### **Al-Qaeda**

We – with God's help – call on every Muslim who believes  
in God and wishes to be rewarded to comply with God's

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<sup>7</sup> Kronenwetter, 4.

<sup>8</sup> Levin, vi. In the introduction of Levin's book, Weinberg and Eubanks observed that the fear caused by terrorism is exactly what those staging terrorist attacks hope to achieve, Weinberg and Eubanks opined that terrorists want the public to feel a profound sense of fear, and also angry at their governments because it seems that these governments are unable to protect them from these violent assaults. This assertion captures what was earlier hinted on, that terrorism is a very serious global security issue, especially for unarmed and innocent civilians. These "soft targets" have been the victims of terrorism.

order to kill the Americans and plunder their money wherever and whenever they find it. We also call on the Muslim . . . leaders, youths, and soldiers to launch the raid on Satan's U.S. troops and the devil's supporters allying with them and to displace those who are behind them so that they may learn a lesson. (Declaration of War by Osama bin Laden, together with leaders of the World Islamic Front for the Jihad Against the Jews and the Crusaders [Al-Jabhah al-Islamiyyah al-'Alamiyyah Li-Qital Al-Yahud Wal-Salibiyyin], Afghanistan, February 23, 1998).<sup>9</sup>

The above ominous message reproduced from Rohan Gunaratna's book, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*, gives an insight into the ideology behind Al Qaeda. This Islamic extremist/terrorist organization is a network of many different Islamic extremist organizations. Al Qaeda is the first, the most influential, and the largest Islamic extremist terrorist organization in the world. Al Qaeda was founded by Osama bin Muhammad bin Laden, popularly called Osama bin Laden. Bin Laden was born in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on July 30, 1957 to a very successful and wealthy Saudi businessman named Muhammad bin Awdah bin Laden. There are no records indicating that Osama bin Laden's father was an Islamic extremist. In fact, it is widely believed that Osama bin Laden's involvement in Islamic extremism and terrorism has no family origin.

Sheikh Abdullah Azzam was the ideological father of Al Qaeda, and he

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<sup>9</sup> Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 1.

was also Osama bin Laden's mentor. Azzam and bin Laden met when they were in charge of a group of anti-Soviet jihadists called the Mujahedin. The Mujahedin was a group that was made up of Islamic fighters from around the world. These Islamic fighters, led by Abdullah Azam, fought to end the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. After the death of Azzam on November 24, 1989, Osama bin Laden assumed control of the Mujahedin. After successfully driving out the Soviets away from Afghanistan, Osama bin Laden transformed the Mujahedin into the Al Qaeda terror network. Within a few years, this terror network grew in size and membership. However, the actual membership strength of Al Qaeda is hard to determine. Most writers argue that it will be difficult to determine the actual membership strength of Al Qaeda because it is a global terror network of many different Islamic extremist organizations with cells.

There are also many sleeper terrorist cells in many countries of the world, alleged to be affiliated to Al Qaeda. Interestingly, many of these sleeper cells are in the West, including the United States. According to Loretta Napoleoni in the book, *Terror Incorporated: Tracing the Dollars behind the Terror Networks*, "The network has a core: bin Laden and a small inner circle of supporters, people who follow him wherever he goes. The wider picture is constituted by thousands of smaller groups to individuals. These groups have their own chain of command, logistics and targets. This is a very loose network which looks to bin Laden as a charismatic figure, someone to inspire, sanction and help finance violent

actions.”<sup>10</sup> Napoleoni’s observation shows how difficult it is to determine the actual membership strength of the Al Qaeda terror network.

Al Qaeda is largely anti-Western, particularly towards the United States. Members of the terror group see the West, particularly the United States, as the prime enemy of Islam. Consequently, the main objective of Al Qaeda is the expulsion of Westerners, Western values and non-Muslims, particularly Americans, from Muslim countries. Gunaratna explained this further:

For Osama, the U.S. presence in Saudi Arabia remained the issue of primary concern, as was clearly reflected when Al Qaeda planned, prepared and executed its first major successful operation against the U.S . . . the simultaneous bombing of the two U.S Embassies in East Africa, in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, on August 7, 1998 . . . The attack was clearly in revenge for the U.S. presence in the Land of the two holy places.<sup>11</sup>

Al Qaeda has advanced this agenda by carrying out major and deadly terrorist attacks against Western nations and their interests around the world. The most pronounced of these attacks was the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States. The 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States resulted in the death of more than 3,000 people. Many more were injured in these attacks that now occupy a permanent place in U.S. history. Al Qaeda used to be based in Afghanistan, where it worked hand in hand with the Taliban Government. Both

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<sup>10</sup> Loretta Napoleoni, *Terror Incorporated: Tracing the Dollars Behind the Terror Networks* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2005), 152.

<sup>11</sup> Gunaratna, 46.



the Taliban and Al Qaeda were dislodged when, in response to the September 11 attacks, the U.S. attacked and occupied Afghanistan. However, Al Qaeda is still very operational and is rumored to be growing day by day. Osama bin Laden and his deputy, Dr. Ayman Azwahiri, are suspected to be hiding somewhere in the mountainous border region between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

### **Hamas**

Sheikh Ahmed Yasin founded Hamas in 1987, during the early days of the *intifida*. Hamas is an Islamic extremist group that was founded as a resistance group to both the state of Israel and the Israeli – Palestinian peace process. The founding fathers of Hamas believed that any effort made towards achieving peace between Israel and Palestine is a betrayal of the Palestinian people. The reason is because of their conviction that Israel is forcefully occupying territories they believe, is owned by the Palestinian people. The word “Hamas” is an Arabic acronym for “resistance movement”, and its Arabic full name is “*Harakat al-Muqawama al – Islamiyya*” (Islamic Resistance Movement). Hamas split off from the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, and is now the largest Islamic extremist and militant organization in Palestine.

Hamas is able to boast of large membership in Palestine because it gets support by telling young Palestinians that the Palestine Liberation Organization (P.L.O.) and its Fatah movement are corrupt and are ever willing to compromise with Israel. This is due to the fact that the Fatah movement is supportive of efforts by the international community to find a peaceful settlement of the conflict

between Palestine and Israel. Hamas is virulently anti-Israel and has consistently opposed all efforts towards any kind of peace deal between Palestinians and Israelis. Hamas has also been anti-Fatah. The disagreement between Hamas and Fatah has led to series of armed and, sometimes, deadly confrontations between supporters of Hamas and supporters of the Fatah movement of the Palestinian Liberation Organization. The most recent of these conflicts is the incident that took place in 2007. Presently, the Gaza region of Palestine is under Hamas rule while the rest is under Fatah rule.

Hamas primarily carries out its terrorist activities against Israel, which it describes as the "Zionist Entity". Two of the deadliest attacks against Israel by Hamas are the 1993 attacks and the March 2002 terrorist attacks that killed 28 Israelis. Surprisingly, though, Hamas won a democratic election in Palestine in 2006. The electoral victory of Hamas came as a rude shock to many in the Western world and in Israel. Expectedly, Israel refused to recognize any Hamas led government in Palestine. Hamas does not pose any direct threat to the Western world and does not pose any imminent security threat to the West. However, the group's sustained aggression and conflict with Israel has led to a situation where it is also viewed as anti-Western because of Israel's close relations with the Western world, particularly the United States. This explains why many countries in the West refused to recognize the 2006 Hamas electoral victory despite the fact that the election was adjudged by international observers to be relatively free and fair. Up until the time of this writing, Israel and many

Western nations have refused to recognize Hamas' victory at the polls. This has led to the formation of parallel governments in Palestine between Hamas and Fatah.

### **Hezbollah (Party of God)**

Hezbollah is based in the Bekaa valley in Southern Lebanon. Hezbollah is a radical Islamic Shiite extremist/terrorist organization whose primary aim is opposing Israel and the Middle East peace negotiations. Hezbollah considers the West as the pillar behind Israel's military might. Consequently, Hezbollah has also carried out terrorist attacks against some Western nations like the United States and France. Hezbollah was formed in 1982 as a political force in Lebanon during the Lebanese civil war. According to Andersen, Seibert & Wagner in their book, *Politics and Change in the Middle East: Sources of Conflict and Accommodation*, Hezbollah ". . . was led largely by clerics, financed by Iran, and strongly ideological in that it advocated the formation of an Islamic Republic."<sup>12</sup> As Andersen et al pointed out, Hezbollah is alleged to draw its moral and financial support from Iran and Syria.

The Hezbollah movement started barely a month after Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982. Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 was to weed out militant members of the Palestine Liberation Organization who were launching attacks against Israel from Lebanon. This Israeli invasion of Lebanon angered some radical Islamists from Iran. These Islamists, in their desire to counter Israeli

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<sup>12</sup> Roy Andersen, Robert Seibert and Jon Wagner, *Politics and Change in the Middle East: Sources of Conflict and Accommodation*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (Upper Saddle River: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2004), 80.

assault on Lebanon, started setting up terrorist training camps in Bekaa valley. These militants from Iran came into Lebanon through Syria because the Syrians gave them a safe passage. The group set up by these militants metamorphosed into the Islamic extremist/terrorist organization known today as Hezbollah.

The primary aim of Hezbollah is aggression against Israel and some Western nations, notably the United States and France. Hezbollah succeeded in carrying out a suicide truck bombing at the United States Marine Barracks, Beirut in October 1983. These attacks resulted in the deaths of 241 U.S. marines and 60 French soldiers. This incident marked the first time that the concept of suicide bombings was ever used by Islamic extremists, and by any other terrorist organization. The apparent success of this new phenomenon, the act of suicide bombings, came as a shock to the entire international community. Consequently, with these attacks, in the words of Simon Haddad, “. . . Shi'i Hizbullah introduced in 1983 the concept of martyrdom in waging war against the Western military presence in Lebanon.”<sup>13</sup>

Hezbollah fought a war with Israel in 2006 after the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers, allegedly by Hezbollah. In addition, Hezbollah is currently orchestrating demonstrations in Beirut against the democratically elected government in Lebanon because it sees that government as largely pro-Western.

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<sup>13</sup> Simon Haddad; Hilal Khashan, “Islam and Terrorism: Lebanese Muslim Views on September 11,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol.46, No.6. (2002), 813. The authors noted that because of the success of these attacks, and the resultant withdrawal of U.S and French forces from Lebanon, Hezbollah immediately unleashed a wave of taking Western nationals living in Lebanon as hostage in a saga that ended in the killing of a few of them and the release of the rest after several years in captivity.

As mentioned earlier, Hezbollah is allegedly sponsored by Syria and Iran. In fact, according to the Time Magazine Publication, *The Middle East*, Hezbollah “. . . receives as much as \$300 million a year from Tehran, and Nasrallah is a confidant of Syrian President Bashar Assad.”<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, Hezbollah is also active in both the political and social life of Lebanon, and it also holds several seats in the Lebanese parliament. Hezbollah has also helped in the provision of social services and medical aid to the poor in Lebanon. The involvement of the organization in the provision of social infrastructures to the Lebanese populace has drawn more support for the organization in Lebanon despite being labeled as a terrorist organization by the West. Hezbollah is currently led by 46 year old Sheik Hassan Nasrallah.

### **The Armed Islamic Group (Groupe Islamique Arme GIA)**

The Armed Islamic Group is another Islamic terrorist organization born out of Islamic extremism. Unlike Al Qaeda, the Armed Islamic Group does not have cells around the world. The activities and operations of the Armed Islamic Group are restricted to Algeria, where it is based. However, this terrorist organization is alleged to have carried out terrorist attacks in France. John Esposito, in an essay titled “Contemporary Islam: Reformation or Revolution”, published in the book, *The Oxford History of Islam*, gave a brief description of the Armed Islamic Group. According to Esposito, the Armed Islamic Group is an extremist guerrilla group that “. . . demanded an Islamic State, waged a war (jihad) of terrorism against all

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<sup>14</sup> Time Inc, *The Middle East: The History, the Cultures, the Conflicts, the Faiths*, intro. Jimmy Carter (New York: Time Magazines Inc., 2006), 119.

opponents (pro-government, or non Islamist committed) . . . killed military and civilians (including leading secularists, journalists, and school children), combatants and non-combatants alike.”<sup>15</sup>

The Armed Islamic Group is known to be very apprehensive of the role France plays in aborting attempts at introducing Islamic rule in Algeria. Consequently, this terrorist group is suspected to have planned and carried out series of terrorist attacks against France in 1995. The group is also engaged in a battle of wits with the Algerian government because that government successfully encouraged France to take an active part in the fight against the Islamic extremist organization. The Armed Islamic Group is an offshoot of the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front (F.I.S.). The Algerian Salvation Front is an Islamic political organization that seeks to introduce Islamic rule in Algeria. It has also continued to engage the Algerian government, which it sees as a pro-Western government bent on carrying out France’s agenda of frustrating any attempt at imposing Islamic rule in Algeria.

### **The Egyptian Islamic Jihad (Jamat Al-Islamiyya)**

This is an Egyptian based Islamic extremist organization formed in the late 1970s. It is also called Al -Jihad, Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the Jihad Group. The Egyptian Islamic Jihad is based in Cairo, but there are reports that it has networks in other Arab countries like Lebanon and Yemen. It is also believed to have ties with Al Qaeda. The primary objective of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad is to

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<sup>15</sup> John Esposito, “Contemporary Islam: Reformation or Revolution?” in *The Oxford History of Islam*, ed. John Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 672.

impose Islamic rule in Egypt. There are reports that this organization was instrumental to the 1981 assassination of former Egyptian President, Anwar Sadat.

Some prominent members of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad joined and assumed leadership roles in Al Qaeda. They include Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri and Muhammad Atef. In fact, Dr. Ayman Zawahiri is second in the command structure of Al Qaeda, and he is also believed to have a huge influence on Osama bin Laden. Zawahiri is also suspected to be one of the planners and executors of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States. Kronenwetter also commented on Zawahiri and Atef. According to him, Zawahiri and Atef “. . . are believed to have had major roles in planning some of Al Qaeda’s most spectacular and deadly attacks . . . including the coordinated bombings of the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, and even the events of September 11, 2001, in the United States.”<sup>16</sup>

### **Some Terrorist Attacks Carried out by Islamic Extremists against Some Western Countries.**

As was pointed out earlier, the clash between some Western nations and Islamic extremists has negative implications on the security and stability of the world. Terrorism has claimed so many innocent lives that one wonders whether the Cold War claimed such number of casualties. This section of the thesis shall briefly examine some of these terrorist attacks that have resulted from the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations.

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<sup>16</sup> Kronenwetter, 101.

### **The Bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland (1988)**

On December 21, 1988, a Pan American airline (Pan Am Flight 103) on flight from the London Heathrow Airport to New York J.F Kennedy Airport was blown up as it flew over Lockerbie in Scotland. The aircraft, a Boeing 747-100, was suspected to have been bombed by Islamic extremists. These Islamic extremists were later identified as Abdelbaset Ali Mohammed al-Megrahi and Al Amin Khalifa Fhimah. Both of them are of Libyan origin. Consequently, the Libyan Government was suspected to have sponsored the Islamic extremists. The suspected involvement of the Libyan Government resulted in increased efforts by the United Nations and the international community to stop states from funding terrorism. According to Illas Bantekas in *The International Law of Terrorist Financing*, "The undeniable involvement of Libya in the Lockerbie bombing moved the Council to call on that country to cease assisting terrorist groups, a direct acknowledgment of its financial support."<sup>17</sup> The Pan Am terrorist attack claimed the lives of 243 passengers and 16 crew members. In addition, 11 people were killed on the ground when the debris of the plane fell on to the ground.

### **The 1995 Bombings in France**

In 1995, the French suffered a series of terrorist attacks staged by the Algerian G.I.A Islamic extremist/militant group. These attacks, which targeted the French public transportation system, left 8 people dead and more than 80

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<sup>17</sup> Illas Bantekas, "The International Law of Terrorist Financing," *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol.97, No.2 (2003), 316



wounded. The first attack took place on July 25, 1995 when a bomb exploded on a train at 5:30 PM at the Saint Michel train station. The second attack took place on August 17 of the same year, when another bomb exploded in a trash bin near a metro entrance.

### **The 1998 U.S Embassy Bombings in Africa**

On August 7, 1998, the United States Embassies in Nairobi (Kenya), and Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) were bombed by Islamic extremists. The terrorists were suspected to be followers of Osama bin Laden. These attacks left about 258 people dead, and more than 5,000 were wounded.

### **September 11, 2001 Attacks**

These attacks against the U.S. were the deadliest terrorist attacks in recent history. These attacks gave the entire world a rude awakening on the realities of the threat posed by a continuous conflict between the West and Islamic extremists. On September 11, 2001, nineteen men that were suspected to be members of Al Qaeda, simultaneously hijacked four U.S. domestic flights. Two of these airplanes were crashed into the World Trade Center twin towers in New York City; the third was crashed into the Pentagon in Arlington County in Virginia, while the fourth plane crashed into a rural field in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. More than three thousand lives were lost in this tragedy.

### **March 11, 2004 Madrid Train Bombings**

The Madrid attacks have been described as the deadliest Islamic extremist attacks against Westerners in Europe since the Lockerbie bombing of

1988. This terrorist attack was also described as the worst attack in modern Spanish history. In the morning rush hours of March 11, 2004, terrorists carried out a series of coordinated attacks against the commuter train system of Madrid, in Spain. These March 2004 terrorist attacks in Spain killed 191 people and wounded 1,400. Evidence gathered by Spanish investigators strongly pointed to the involvement of Al Qaeda affiliated Islamic extremist groups. The Al Qaeda cell, the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group was the prime suspect. A videocassette was found near a Madrid mosque after the terrorist attacks. The tape contained messages from a suspected Al Qaeda spokesman who claimed that Al Qaeda was responsible for the Madrid attacks. The Al Qaeda spokesman further justified the act by saying that it was a punishment for Spain's military involvement in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Interestingly, the Islamic extremists succeeded in creating fear and panic among the Spanish people. Consequently, the government in power was voted out of office in the Spanish general elections that took place few months after the terrorist attack. The Spanish public hoped that with the election of a new government into power, Spanish troops might be pulled out of Iraq and Afghanistan. The subsequent pull out of Spanish forces from these areas, they believed, will keep Spain free of terrorist attacks by Islamic extremists.

### **The London Terrorist Attacks of July 7, 2005**

The conflict between Islam and the West once again claimed innocent lives in London. On July 7, 2005, Islamic extremist and paramilitary organization

suicide bombers detonated four bombs on London's public transportation system during the morning rush hour. Three bombs exploded on the underground trains, while the fourth exploded on a bus. 56 people were killed and 700 were wounded. An Islamic extremist group known as "The Secret Organization Group of Al-Qaeda of Jihad Organization in Europe" was alleged to have claimed responsibility for the attacks.

### **2005 Amman Bombings**

Al Qaeda in Iraq planned and executed these attacks against Western hotels in Amman, Jordan. The hotels include the Radisson Hotel, Days Inn and the Grand Hyatt Hotel. Western military contractors and diplomats often frequent these hotels. The Amman bombings left 60 people dead and injured 115 others.

### **The Clash between Islamic Extremists and Some Western Nations as a Global Security Issue**

There have been many incidents of terrorist attacks (like the ones discussed above) and continued attempts at terrorism in both Islamic nations and Western nations. The frequency at which such attacks and attempted attacks occur underscores how the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations is having an impact on global security. Furthermore, there are reports that Islamic extremists are not relenting in their attempts to carry out more violent attacks against some Western nations. In fact, Islamic extremists are reported to be gearing up for more terror attacks against some Western nations, particularly the United States. Bill Gertz of the Washington Times gave an insight into this. In

a news report titled *Al Qaeda Evolving against U.S*, Gertz revealed, “Al Qaeda terrorists are rebuilding their capabilities and continuing to plan mass-casualty attacks inside the United States . . .”<sup>18</sup> Gertz made reference to an observation made by the Director of National Intelligence, Retired Vice Admiral Michael McConnell. According to Gertz, McConnell observed that the United States will face a persistent and evolving terrorist threat in the next three years. McConnell's observation was part of the recently released National Intelligence Estimate (NIE). Gertz' report on McConnell's observation further noted, “Recent U.S cases of Islamist plots against Fort Dix, N.J and John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York are indications of a growing global extremist movement . . .”<sup>19</sup>

Another incident that further underscores the global security implications of the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations is the attempted London terror attacks on June 29, 2007. In a news report titled *Double Bombing Averted in London*, the Washington Post gave an account of this attempted terror attacks. According to the Post, “British Police thwarted a pair of apparent terrorist attacks in central London's crowded theater district . . . defusing bombs fashioned from gasoline, gas cylinders and nails and hidden inside two parked Mercedes sedans.”<sup>20</sup> The Baltimore Sun also carried a news

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<sup>18</sup> Bill Gertz, “Al Qaeda Evolving Against U.S,” *The Washington Times*, 18 July 2007, A1. Gertz' report was based on a National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), which is a consensus analysis of the sixteen United States intelligence agencies.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, A10.

<sup>20</sup> Mary Jordan & Craig Whitlock, “Double Bombing Averted In London,” *The Washington Post*, 30 June 2007, A1. The news report quoted the British Police as saying that if the terrorists had succeeded in detonating the bombs, they could have killed or injured hundreds of people. It will also be recalled that last year, the British Police also foiled another terror attempts by Islamic

report of this attempted terror attacks. The Sun's report revealed those suspected to be involved in the terrorist attempt. According to the Sun, in a news report titled *Mideast Doctors Held in British Terror Plot*, the two suspects of the Islamic extremist cell behind the attempted bombings in London were identified as ". . . physicians from Iraq and Jordan."<sup>21</sup> The involvement of medical professionals in that attempted attacks shows that Muslims of different educational and social background are now accepting the message of Islamic extremists depicting the West as the enemy of Islam. This of course poses more threats to the prospects of global peace.

Islamic nations have also felt the security threats posed by Islamic extremism. In a *Washington Post* news report titled *Al Qaeda Branch Claims Algeria Blasts*, the newspaper reported, "Al Qaeda's new affiliate in North Africa asserted responsibility for the deadliest attacks in Algeria's capital in a decade as 24 people were reported killed and 222 injured in bombings that shattered the prime minister's headquarters and a police base."<sup>22</sup> The newspaper further reported that these terrorist attacks and plots are ". . . the latest signs that local terrorist groups have escalated operations under al-Qaeda's banner and warned that the North African networks are expanding their reach to Europe . . ."<sup>23</sup>

Islamic extremists in Algeria have been carrying out terrorist attacks against the

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extremists who planned to detonate bombs aboard major U.S airlines on flights between London and New York.

<sup>21</sup> Janet Stobart & Sebastian Rotella, "Mideast Doctors Held In British Terror Plot," *The Baltimore Sun*, 3 July 2007, A1.

<sup>22</sup> Craig Whitlock, "Al-Qaeda Branch Claims Algeria Blasts," *The Washington Post*, 12 April 2007, A1. The newspaper also reported that the Algerian strikes came one day after four suicide bombers died in confrontations with police in Casablanca, in neighboring Morocco.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, A1.

government in Algeria because of their belief that the government is pro-Western. Islamic extremists in Algeria also believe that the Algerian government's close tie to the West is the major reason why efforts at introducing Islamic rule in Algeria remain unsuccessful.

In Pakistan, another Islamic country, Islamic extremists have also become a serious security threat in that country. President Pervez Musharraf's government is also considered by Islamic extremists as a pro-Western government. In fact, Musharraf has been described by the United States and Great Britain as an important ally in the war against terrorism. General Musharraf's romance with the West has led to a serious crackdown on Islamic extremism. His government is also making a more vigorous attempt to locate Osama bin Laden, who is suspected to be hiding somewhere in the mountainous region along the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Consequently, Musharraf has been having a rough ride with radical Muslims who oppose his pro-Western stance.

The resultant conflict between Musharraf's government and Islamic extremists has resulted in an assassination attempt on Musharraf. In addition, the most recent manifestation of the conflict between Musharraf's pro-Western government and Islamic extremists was the recent Red Mosque incident. The Red Mosque incident led to a deadly showdown between Islamic extremists and the Pakistani military. According to a Washington Post report titled *Mosque Siege Exposes Rift in 'Mullah-Military Alliance*, ". . . the showdown at the Red Mosque

. . . lasted nine days and cost more than 100 lives before army commandos declared victory over extremist fighters. . .”<sup>24</sup> The Red Mosque incident started when Islamic extremists, angered by Musharraf’s romance with the West, took some people hostage inside the Red Mosque in Pakistan.

### **A New Arms Race**

The clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations is also precipitating a new arms race, particularly in the Middle East. Western countries now ship arms to Islamic nations that are considered to be Western allies in the Middle East. Britain and the United States have been supplying arms to countries like Saudi Arabia, which is considered one of the many global fronts on the war against terrorism. The arms sales are also meant to intimidate Islamic extremists and those countries like Iran and Syria accused by the West of sponsoring Islamic terrorism. The Washington Post reported that the United States, under the current Bush administration, plans to sell new arms to friendly countries in the Middle East. According to the Post, the United States plans to engage in “. . . a series of arms deals worth at least \$20 billion to Saudi Arabia and five other oil-rich Persian Gulf states as well as new 10-year military aid packages to Israel

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<sup>24</sup> Griffe Withe, “Mosque Siege Exposes Rift in ‘Mullah-Military’ Alliance,” The Washington Post, 13 July 2007, A10. This Washington Post report also noted that the Pakistani president, apparently after coming to terms with the threats posed by Islamic extremists, promised to devote more resources to combating Islamic extremism. The report quoted him as saying, “After this operation, terrorism and extremism have not ended in Pakistan. But it is our resolve that we will eliminate extremism and terrorism wherever it exists.”

and Egypt, a move to shore up allies in the Middle East and counter Iran's rising influence . . . <sup>25</sup>

The United States and other Western nations like the United Kingdom see Iran as a country that supports Islamic extremism and terrorism. These Western countries would not like to see Iran become the dominant military power in the Middle East. Therefore, in order to check the Iranian threat, the United States and other Western nations have continuously engaged in huge arms sales to those Middle Eastern countries whose governments are largely pro-Western or dependent on the West for military assistance. This scenario could have a negative impact on the security situation in the Middle East, and the world in general. Continuous arms shipment to the Middle East could spark off an arms race in that region.

Countries like Iran and Syria would like to counter Western military influence in the Middle East by shopping for arms from countries like Russia, China and North Korea. Already, Iran has been conducting military exercises that include testing both short and long-range missiles. This will inevitably result in the heavy militarization of that region. This could have an effect on global security and economy because most of the world's oil reserves are located in the Middle East. Any large scale war in the Middle East could disrupt world oil supply. The

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<sup>25</sup> Robin Wright, "U.S plans New Arms Sales to Gulf Allies," *The Washington Post*, 28 July 2007, A1. The Post gave a further breakdown of the new US arms sales to the Gulf Allies. According to the newspaper, these arms sales include the sales of a variety of sophisticated weaponry and military assistance agreements, which will provide \$30 billion in new U.S. aid to Israel and \$13 billion to Egypt over 10 years. The newspaper further reported that U.S officials said the arms sales to Saudi Arabia are expected to include air-to-air missiles as well as Joint Direct Attack Munitions, which turn standard bombs into "smart" precision-guided bombs.



disruption of oil supply could cripple the economy of many nations in the world, including many Western nations.

### **Implications of the Islam/West Conflict on Global Economic Activities**

The unending confrontations between Islamic extremists and some Western nations have also had negative implications on global economy and economic activities. This section of the thesis shall examine some of the ways this clash has affected economic activities in the world.

Bill Atkinson, in a Baltimore Sun article titled *Jittery Market Belies Good Economic News*, examined the economic effects of terrorism and other forms of violence associated with the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations. According to Atkinson, "Investors simply have too much on their minds; a prolonged war with Iraq, rising oil prices, terrorism . . . The March 11 train bombings in Madrid, Spain, sent the Dow plunging 168.51 points."<sup>26</sup> In addition, after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, the New York Stock Exchange and the NASDAQ were closed from September 11-17. This closure was the longest since the Great Depression in 1929. The closure also resulted in huge loses in the value of U.S stocks.

Similarly, after the London terrorist attacks in 2005, stocks markets were closed in Britain, France, Germany and Spain. All these closures and the interruptions of world stock markets had an effect on world economy, including the world financial market and exchange rate activities. Besides, many airlines

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<sup>26</sup> Bill Atkinson, "Jittery Market Belies Good Economic News," *The Baltimore Sun*, 23 May 2004, I.D.

lose substantial amounts of money due to flight cancellations and disruptions whenever a terrorist incident occurs.

### **Effects on Tourism**

In an essay, *Regional Effects of Terrorism on Tourism in Three Mediterranean Countries*, Konstantinos Drakos and Ali Kutan examined the effects of terrorism on international tourism. The authors observed that international tourism “. . . is one of the world’s largest industries, and many small, open economies rely heavily on tourism revenues as a major source of foreign exchange earnings.”<sup>27</sup> However, Drakos and Kutan observed that terrorism could pose a significant threat to tourism and consequently, on the economic well-being of the countries that earn huge revenues from tourism. In view of the above assertions, the authors further observed, “Terrorism may hurt tourism by reducing tourist arrivals. Over time, continued terrorist attacks may also significantly reduce FDI. Besides such direct costs, indirect costs of terrorism include additional advertising expenses necessary to attract new or more tourists, reconstruction costs for damaged tourist facilities, and security enforcement expenses to lessen terrorist threats.”<sup>28</sup>

As observed above, the continuation of terrorist activities will ultimately have detrimental effects on tourist arrivals in countries with significant and

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<sup>27</sup> Konstantinos Drakos & Ali Kutan, “Regional Effects of Terrorism on Tourism in Three Mediterranean Countries,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol.47. no. 5 (2003), 621. Drakos and Kutan further observed that in addition, tourism is also a source of foreign direct investment (FDI) in many developing countries. This assertion by Drakos and Kutan is quite correct. For example, Kenya and Tanzania in Africa rely heavily on revenues from tourism. However, after the United States’ embassy bombings in both countries, revenues were lost due to the detrimental effects the terrorist incident had on the number of tourist arrivals in Kenya and Tanzania.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 621.

frequent terrorist incidents. Similarly, countries that do not have significant and frequent terrorist incidents may also be affected. These countries may also suffer a reduction in tourist arrivals due to the fear that terrorists could strike at any time and in any place. The fear of terrorism could have an effect on those countries whose economies rely on revenues from tourism. This could eventually hurt global economy.

### **The Dubai Ports World Incident**

The Dubai Ports World incident of 2006 was an eye opener to many on the realities of the lack of trust that most Western nations have, when it comes to doing business with multinational corporations owned by Islamic countries. This lack of trust is a product of the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations. If incidents like the Dubai Ports World incident continues, it could have an effect on global economic stability. This is because nations will no longer do business with some nations due to fear and lack of trust. What actually happened? For a better understanding, the Dubai Ports World incident will be fully examined.

Sometime in February 2006, there was uproar all over the United States. This uproar was sparked by the proposed sale of port management businesses in six major United States Seaports to a foreign company known as Dubai Ports World or D.P.W. The uproar was not because the ports were given to a foreign company, considering that another foreign company, Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company (P&O) was initially managing these Ports. Rather, it

was because the foreign company in question is owned by an Islamic country. To be precise, the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) government owns the port management company known as Dubai Ports World (D.P.W.).

The controversy and the emotion this deal brought with it were so deep that the traditional alliance between the then Republican controlled Congress and the Republican controlled White House under President George Bush was on the verge of being broken. In fact, both the White House and the Congress were headed for a collision course, with the President threatening to veto any blockade of the deal by the Congress. This would have been the first time in his Presidency that President Bush would have vetoed a bill from the U.S. Congress, if he had gone ahead with it. The debate on this deal became so heated that on March 8, 2006 the House Panel voted 62 - 2 to block the deal. On March 9, 2006 Dubai Ports World decided to pull out of the deal by announcing that it would transfer the proposed ports operations to a U.S. entity.

The primary reason for the high level of opposition to this deal by a majority of the American public and the Congress is because the company in question is owned by an Islamic country. Since September 11, 2001, Americans are weary of anything Arab or Islamic. An Al-jazeera news report titled *Americans' Rejection of Dubai-U.S. Ports Deal Racist*, also commented on this incident. According to the report, "Lawmakers, both Republicans and Democrats have pledged to scupper the deal, claiming that their opposition is mainly tied to

the fear that Arab management of the ports will lead to terror attacks.”<sup>29</sup> This fear of an increased risk of terrorist attack, if the Dubai Ports World were allowed to take over the management of these ports, is based on the fact that the United Arab Emirates was the home of two of the hijackers involved in the deadly September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

The Dubai Ports World controversy shows how the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations could have an economic backlash. The activities of Islamic extremist organizations affect the perception of the entire Arab / Islamic world to the West. Every Arab is now viewed as a potential terrorist. This is very unfortunate because a large majority of Arabs and Muslims do not take part in terrorist acts. Dubai Ports World may have posed no security threat to the United States and her citizens if it were allowed to manage these ports. However, one does not blame the U.S. Congress and the American public for opposing this deal. The deadly incident of September 11, 2001 is an incident that the United States would not allow to happen again. To this end, those in the government of the United States would do anything necessary to protect the American people. The Dubai Ports World incident is a good example of how economic cooperation among states has been affected by the unending clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations. This might not be healthy in a world where mutual cooperation and interdependence are needed for a healthy global economy.

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<sup>29</sup> “Americans’ Rejection of Dubai-US Ports Deal Racist,” *Al-jazeera*, 25 February 2006 [on-line]; available [http://www.aljazeera.com/cgi-bin/review/article\\_full\\_story.asp?service\\_ID=0769](http://www.aljazeera.com/cgi-bin/review/article_full_story.asp?service_ID=0769); Internet; accessed 13 March 2006.

## Effects of the Clash on Global Politics

Why is the Western World tolerating a nuclear armed India and a nuclear armed Pakistan, but would not tolerate a nuclear armed Iran? Why is the West, especially the United States and Britain, tolerating Gen. Musharraf who came to power through a coup d'etat, but would not tolerate a democratically elected government in Palestine and Iran led by Hamas and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad respectively? These are the political fall-outs of the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations. These scenarios are clear examples of how the politics of the global environment is being influenced and even reshaped by this clash.

On January 25, 2006, Palestine held its Legislative council elections. These elections were adjudged by international observers to be free and fair. However, the outcome of these elections in Palestine came as a shock to the Western World and Israel. The Islamic extremist organization, Hamas, won the elections by taking 76 seats in the 132-seat parliament. The United States, which has been advocating for democracy in the Middle East, was no longer comfortable with this "democracy" in Palestine. The Time Publication, *The Middle East: The History, The Cultures, The Conflicts, The Faiths*, made the following observation concerning the election in Palestine: "The U.S. works to bring democracy to the Palestinians - but is shocked when voters overwhelmingly prefer the terrorist-allied Hamas Party to the moderate Fatah Party."<sup>30</sup> The Hamas victory, though democratic, was not quickly recognized by the United

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<sup>30</sup> Time, 117.

States. Many Western countries like the United States consider Hamas as an Islamic extremist and militant organization that sponsors terrorism.

Similarly, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, a former mayor of Tehran, won a democratic election on June 25, 2005 to become the President of Iran. However, since his assumption into the presidency, he still has not been given the full cooperation as a democratically elected President by many Western nations. The reason is quite simple. Ahmadinejad is suspected by some Western nations to be an Islamic extremist/fundamentalist who supports terrorism. Therefore, whether democratically elected or not, the West is not very comfortable with him.

President Ahmedinejad has made this perception even worse by making controversial remarks since his assumption into the presidency. Ahmedinejad was quoted as saying that the holocaust was a myth, and that he would like to see Israel wiped off the world map. These kinds of remarks have not helped the Iranian President establish good relations with the West.

However, Gen. Musharraf of Pakistan who came to power through a coup d'etat, and who has made no move towards restoring democracy in his country is given full recognition by many Western nations. The West, especially the United States, considers the Pakistani Head of State as an ally in the war on terror. From the account given above, one could easily see how the conflict between Islamic extremists and some Western nations is having an effect on global politics. This is not particularly healthy for world peace because some nations would feel they are being targeted by Western powers.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE WAY FORWARD

#### Introduction

In his controversial book, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Francis Fukuyama wrote extensively about what he believed would one day mark the end of global conflicts. Fukuyama has an optimistic view of the future of mankind. This view is different from what Huntington wrote in his equally controversial book, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. Contrary to Fukuyama's opinion that the age of long global conflicts was over, Huntington painted a gloomy picture for mankind. According to Huntington, the next several years will almost certainly witness a clash between Western civilization and Islamic civilization. However, Fukuyama, who interestingly was Huntington's student, argued that the end of history would mark an end to global conflicts. According to Fukuyama, "The end of history would mean the end of wars and bloody revolutions. Agreeing on ends, men would have no large causes for which to fight. They would satisfy their needs through economic activity, but they would no longer have to risk their lives in battle."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Francis Fukuyama, *The End Of History and The Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 2006), 311. Fukuyama made a controversial argument that mankind need to become animals again in order to achieve global peace. He specifically used a dog to make this argument. According to him, a dog is content to sleep in the sun all day provided it is fed. He does not worry that other dogs are doing better than him, or that his career as a dog has stagnated. Basically, Fukuyama is saying that the cause of global conflicts and unrests is man's attitude towards one another, and that the day man stops interfering in the affairs of one another, there will be global peace. This argument could be true considering that one of the reasons why we have conflicts in the world is interference and intervention by one nation in another. However, in the world of today, humanitarian intervention by one country in another could be necessary to save lives.



Would Fukuyama's end of history predictions come naturally to our world? Will Islamic extremists, with time, abandon their violent campaign against some Western nations? Judging from the intensity of this clash, it is obvious that certain steps have to be taken by both parties to resolve whatever problem, or factors that contributed to this clash. Consequently, this final chapter of the thesis shall examine and give some suggestions on how the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations could be reduced, if not completely stopped.

### **Poverty Reduction in Islamic Countries**

The report of the United Nations Committee for Development Policy on the Seventh Session (14-18 March 2005) titled *Development Challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa and Post Conflict Countries*, identified poverty as one of the causative factors that fuel national and international conflicts. According to the United Nations report, "Poverty creates an environment in which violence and conflict can thrive. With high unemployment and under employment, low job and income security and little hope of improvement, the poor in many countries lack confidence or a stake in peaceful development."<sup>2</sup> The United Nations report further observed that in areas of the world where there are ". . . low levels of income per head and high unemployment and/or underemployment levels,"<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The United Nations Committee for Development Policy on the Seventh Session, *Development Challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa and Post-Conflict Countries* (New York: The United Nations, 2005), 11. The report also observed that there is evidence that poverty appears to increase the incidence of violence. The report further observed that the link between poverty and conflict seems to be particularly strong in poor countries with low levels of human capital.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

poverty contributes to the rise in people's involvement in conflicts and violent acts. This United Nations report linking poverty to the rise in violent activities underscores the importance of tackling and reducing poverty in Islamic countries. This would be a major step towards curtailing Islamic extremism.

In addition, Many Islamic extremist organizations draw their support and membership through the provision of social infrastructure and other basic needs to the rural populace. Most people living in these rural areas are the poor in the Islamic society. Hezbollah provides a good example in the rural areas of Lebanon. This Islamic extremist organization is well admired in the rural areas of Lebanon. Hezbollah draws this massive support and membership from the rural populace in Lebanon by taking active part in the provision of basic infrastructure to the poor. If the international community and the Lebanese government play a major role in the provision of these amenities, including adopting measures that will help in the reduction of poverty in these rural areas, it will be difficult for Hezbollah to entice these people into becoming members of the organization.

Furthermore, in Afghanistan, Osama bin Laden was able to win the Taliban's support and protection. Bin Laden was able to do this, not just because he has the same Islamic extremist idea with the Taliban, but also because he was seen as an asset in the poverty stricken country. Afghanistan is a country that has been devastated with a famine crisis. Similarly, the border area between Pakistan and Afghanistan is the area where Osama bin Laden is suspected to be hiding. Both the United States and the Pakistani military have made several

efforts at capturing bin Laden in that remote area. Unfortunately, these efforts have proved to be abortive. One major difficulty faced by the U.S. and Pakistani security operatives is the unwillingness of the tribal leaders to cooperate with them in their efforts to locate bin Laden and other high ranking members of Al Qaeda and the Taliban.

The remote border area between Pakistan and Afghanistan is known to be very rural. It is reported that the inhabitants of this remote and mountainous region live in abject poverty. Apparently, due to neglect by the government, the people of this region are not very willing to cooperate with the Pakistani and U.S. security operatives searching for Osama bin Laden. Consequently, the international community and the Pakistani government should devote more finances towards measures that will help in poverty reduction. In addition, the Pakistani government and the West should sponsor projects that will economically empower the inhabitants of those areas, instead of spending huge sums of money to finance unending and unsuccessful military operations in the areas. The economic empowerment of the inhabitants of these border regions between Afghanistan and Pakistan will go a long way in swaying the people's support in favor of the government.

### **Discouraging Western Interference in Islamic Countries**

It was observed in chapter four that post colonial era Western interference in the internal affairs of Islamic countries helps to fuel the conflict between Islamic extremists and some nations of the West. As Huntington puts it, “. . .

Western intervention in the affairs of other civilizations is probably the single most dangerous source of instability and potential global conflict in a multicivilizational world.”<sup>4</sup> Many countries in the West have formed the habit of interfering in the internal affairs of other countries, especially in third world countries. Almost all Islamic countries are considered third world countries. Maroun Kisirwani in an article titled *Foreign Interference and Religious Animosity in Lebanon*, discussed the problems faced by Lebanon due to continuous foreign interference (presumably the West and Syria) in the internal affairs of Lebanon. According to Kisirwani, “One persistent factor in Lebanon’s turbulent political history has been the self-interested manipulation of the country’s factional and sectarian rivalries by outside forces, from the Middle Eastern region and the World at large.”<sup>5</sup>

Western countries like the United States have continued to show interest in the internal affairs of Lebanon. This interest in Lebanon has resulted in interference in the internal affairs of Lebanon by the United States, primarily to curtail Syrian influence. The dissatisfaction with this Western interference in Lebanon led to the October 1983 terrorist bombing of the United States Marine Barracks in Beirut by Islamic extremists loyal to Hezbollah. This attack on U.S. Marine Barracks by Islamic extremists resulted in the deaths of United States

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<sup>4</sup> Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Touchstone, 1997), 312.

<sup>5</sup> Maroun Kisirwani, “Foreign Interference and Religious Animosity in Lebanon,” *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol.15, No.4 (Oct., 1980), 685. Kisirwani further observed that since Ottoman times, hardly any major conflict among the Lebanese has been free from external intervention. He added that in a number of cases, regional and foreign powers may have actually initiated Lebanese conflicts.

and French soldiers. In addition, France's meddling in the internal affairs of Algeria precipitated the series of terrorist attacks against France between 1995 and 1996 by Islamic extremists suspected to be members of the Armed Islamic Group (G.I.A.). Similarly, the attempt by the United States to continue to sustain and support the government of Shah of Iran led to the Iranian revolution and the revolt against the West in Iran. This Islamic revolution in Iran against the West was led by the late Ayatollah Khomeini. The antagonism shown towards the West by Islamic fundamentalists and extremists in Iran has continued up until this day.

Judging from the incidents identified above, it is clear that one of the ways by which the clash between Islamic extremists and some nations of the West could be stopped or reduced, is by discouraging Western interference in the internal affairs of Islamic countries. This assertion does not mean the absence of cordial and diplomatic relations or any other form of cooperation between Western countries and Islamic countries. Rather, a country's right to self-determination should be respected.

### **Halting attempts at Universalizing Western Civilization**

The idea that Western civilization is a universal civilization that other non-Western countries must adopt should be discouraged. Attempts at the westernization of non-Western countries have resulted in cultural and ideological clashes between the West and some non-Western countries. The primary reason for this is the existing cultural differences among the nations of the world. Cultural

differences, most times, come with religious differences. Therefore, any attempt to universalize Western culture may result into religious clashes. Islamic civilization is different from Western civilization due to differences in origin; religion, culture, and even their ways of life. Consequently, norms that are acceptable in Western civilization may not be acceptable in Islamic civilization, and vice versa.

In view of the above, it is evident that when one civilization is trying to impose its civilization unto another because of a belief in the universality of its civilization, it usually results in a conflict between the civilizations involved. This could be used to describe the present scenario between Islam (Islamic extremists) and some Western nations. Samuel Huntington described it as a clash of civilizations. This clash between Islamic and Western civilizations started way back in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in Egypt. In an attempt to resist British cultural and political dominance in Egypt, Muslims like Hassan al Banna and Sayyid Qutb started Islamic revivalist movements. The growth of Islamic revivalism paved the way for the emergence of Islamic extremist groups like the Muslim Brotherhood and movements like Qutbism. The Muslim Brotherhood and the Qutbism extreme Islamic ideology were the ideological foundations of the present day Islamic terrorist organizations. The violent campaign against the British by the early Islamic extremist movements has continued up until today. Present day Islamic extremist organizations have continued this campaign against the West.

Furthermore, the desire by the West to see democracy flourish in non-Western countries, especially in Islamic countries is quite commendable. Democracy comes with more freedom and human rights for the people. However, attempts at the democratization of Islamic countries should not be done in an aggressive manner. These Islamic countries have different cultural background. In addition, the Islamic religion plays an important role in the system of government adopted by many Islamic countries. The manner in which democracy, with the freedom and equality that come with it, will work in the United States may not be the same way it will work in a country like Saudi Arabia, Iran or even China. This is due to the cultural and religious imposed limitations, which should be respected and not condemned as being inferior to Western civilization.

The belief by the West that Western civilization is superior to Islamic civilization has also contributed to the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western countries. The primary reason for this is the fact that Islamic extremists are trying to establish their belief that Islamic traditions and culture are not inferior to Western culture. Therefore, the concept of cultural superiority or inferiority must be discouraged. Instead, cultural integration among the countries of the world should be encouraged.

### **Permanent Resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**

You attacked us in Palestine: Palestine, which has sunk under military occupation for more than 80 years. The British

handed over Palestine, with your help and your support, to the Jews, who have occupied it for more than 50 years; years overflowing with oppression, tyranny, crimes, killing, expulsion, destruction and devastation. The creation and continuation of Israel is one of the greatest crimes, and you are the leaders of its criminals.<sup>6</sup>

The above comments made were suspected to have been made by Osama bin Laden. These comments, reproduced from Michael Kronenwetter's book, *Terrorism: A Guide to Events and Documents*, underscores the importance of a speedy and permanent resolution of the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians. This conflict has caused a very serious division between the entire Islamic world, not just Islamic extremists, and the West. The West, especially the United States, is considered by Muslims as the major force behind Israel's military strength. With this military strength, they argue, Israel has been able to survive and maintain a forceful occupation of some Palestinian and Arabian territories. These territories include Gaza, the West Bank, Southern Lebanon and the Golan Heights.

The conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians has led to the formation of some Islamic extremist organizations like Hamas and Hezbollah. In addition, other Islamic extremist organizations also make reference to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as one of their reasons for militant and violent actions

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<sup>6</sup> Michael Kronenwetter, *Terrorism: A Guide to Events and Documents* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2004), 233.



against Israel and the West. Obviously, the reference to the plight of the Palestinians draws a lot of support for Islamic extremists. Some moderate Muslims, who share a common sympathy for the Palestinians, have identified with Islamic extremists. It should be recalled that the long history of Arab/Israeli wars has centered primarily on the refusal by Arab nations to accept Israel's right to exist in Palestine. The Arabs strongly believe that the entire territory inhabited by Israel is a Palestinian territory.

Admittedly, several efforts have been made by some Western nations to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli crisis. Some of these efforts include the 1998 Camp David Peace Accord and the 1993 Oslo Peace Accord. However, the conflict is still going on. In fact, the crisis between Israel and Palestine seems to be deteriorating from bad to worse. This is more so, considering that Hamas is engaged in a power struggle with the Fatah movement. Evidently, resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict should go beyond attempts at making peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians. It should also include settling the dispute between Hamas and Fatah. Any peace deal made between Israel and Fatah, but not recognized by Hamas, will almost certainly fail. Hamas is a very important factor in any prospect for peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians. A Washington Post news report, *Hamas, Fatah Launch Separate Governments*, underscores the importance of resolving the conflict between Hamas and Fatah, as a necessary step towards bringing peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians. According to the Post report, "Leaders of Hamas and Fatah parties

began operating parallel Palestinian governments . . . after days of intense factional fighting that have sharply defined the political and geographic divisions undermining the Palestinian drive for statehood.”<sup>7</sup>

The Washington Post news report further observed that the conflict between Hamas and Fatah “. . . has broad humanitarian and security implications for the Palestinians, for Israel . . .”<sup>8</sup> This underscores the need for the international community to find a way of making peace between Hamas and Fatah. Peace between the two is important to the eventual peaceful settlement of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. The West, especially the United States should become more involved and more committed to the Middle East efforts. Former President Jimmy Carter also commented on the importance of more U.S. commitment to the Middle East peace plans. According to Carter, “One of the first steps in reviving the peace process must be more American engagement. That too will require courage. The United States must push both sides to overcome the obstacles that stand in the way of peace.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Scott Wilson, “Hamas, Fatah Launch Separate Governments,” *The Washington Post*, 16 June 2007, A1.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, A1.

<sup>9</sup> Jimmy Carter, introduction to *The Middle East: The History, The Cultures, The Conflicts, The Faiths*, by Time Magazine (New York: Time Books, 2006), vii. Carter further observed that into the existing vacuum have flowed unilateral moves by Israel and the growing strength of militants on the Palestinian side. According to Carter, “history has proved that even when they are ready to negotiate directly, both Israelis and Palestinians need an objective and credible third party to help guide them through the process. This underscores the need for the international community, particularly the West, to become more involved and less biased about Hamas, so as achieve a lasting peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians. This will ultimately help in reducing tensions between the Islamic world and the West. This will deal a heavy blow to Islamic extremists who, for long, have exploited this conflict to convince younger generation of Muslims to join the so-called jihad against the West.

Any peaceful and permanent resolution of the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis would deal a heavy blow on Islamic extremists. It will also help to reduce the tensions between the Islamic world and some nations of the West. This will help in avoiding a repetition of the 1973 Arab oil embargo against some countries of the West to protest Western support for Israel.

### **Consistency in Western Foreign Policies towards Islamic Countries**

Some Western countries have adopted inconsistent foreign policies towards Islamic countries and other countries in the Middle East. The United States, and perhaps Britain and France, have dealt differently and sometimes with bias towards countries in the Islamic world. Those countries like Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Egypt, whose governments are classified as allies to the West, are treated differently. Steve Niva in his essay, *Between Clash and Co-optation: U.S. Foreign Policy and the Specter of Islam*, observed that the foreign policies of some Western nations have been formulated in such a way as to contain what they see as the threat posed by Islamic fundamentalism.

According to Niva, “. . . Islamic fundamentalism evokes images of a deadly virus spread by revolutionary regimes, such as Iran and Sudan, whose alleged aim is to develop a pan-Islamic bloc rich in resources and potentially armed with an Islamic bomb in order to wage jihad against the West.”<sup>10</sup> Niva further observed that the “rogue state” doctrine of the Clinton administration was more

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<sup>10</sup> Steve Niva, “Between Clash and Co-optation: U.S Foreign Policy and the Specter of Islam,” *Middle East Report*, No. 208, U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East: Critical Assessments. (1998), 26. Niva further observed that until recently, official U.S. policy statements regularly embraced alarmist representations of the Islamic threat.

“... of containment and isolation with particular vigor to Islamist states, such as Iran and Sudan, while steadfastly supporting Egypt and Tunisia in their brutal repression of all shades of Islamist activism in the name of eradicating ‘terrorism’.”<sup>11</sup> Niva’s observations underscore the earlier assertion on the inconsistencies of the foreign policies of some Western nations towards Islamic countries.

The United States and other nations in Western Europe have continued to advocate for an end to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. This is quite commendable, considering the threat posed by such weapons. However, being consistent with this policy, irrespective of the country involved, is another issue altogether. Pakistan is an Islamic country, known to possess nuclear weapons. In addition, Israel is also suspected of being in possession of nuclear weapons. Interestingly, Western countries do not see the possession of nuclear weapons by Pakistan as a threat to the West. This is because Pakistan is considered by some Western countries as an ally in the war on terror. Therefore, Western foreign policies towards Pakistan tolerate that country’s possession of a nuclear weapon. However, efforts by Iran to develop nuclear weapons technology are considered, by the West, as an act that goes contrary to the provisions of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. Therefore, an Iran with a nuclear weapon will not be tolerated by the West. To the West, an Iran with a nuclear weapon poses a formidable threat to the West and her allies, including Israel. The underlying

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 26.

reason is because Iran is seen as a fertile ground for the growth of Islamic extremism and fundamentalism.

Furthermore, a *Washington Post* news report titled *Iranian Unit to Be Labeled Terrorist*, revealed that the United States now considers Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (a branch of the Iranian army) as a terrorist organization. According to the newspaper, "The United States has decided to designate Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps, the country's 125,000-strong elite military branch, as a 'specially designated global terrorist,' according to U.S. officials, a move that allows Washington to target the group's business operations and finances."<sup>12</sup> The Revolutionary Guards Corps may well have been involved in some activities that threaten the West. Therefore, the decision of the United States to classify the Revolutionary Guards Corps as a terrorist group is quite understandable. However, there should be consistency in U.S. foreign policies on issues like this. Other similar organizations in countries that are allies to the West should also be classified as such.

In addition, President Musharraf who came to power through a coup d'etat, has remained in power for over eight years. Musharraf has made no visible plans of returning Pakistan to a true civilian and democratic rule. Nevertheless, Musharraf is a darling of the West. Interestingly, the same Western countries are vigorously advocating democratic rule in other parts of the world.

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<sup>12</sup> Robin Wright, "Iranian Unit to be Labeled 'Terrorist'," *The Washington Post*, 15 August 2007, A1. According to the newspaper, this action was taken by the U.S. government because of what U.S. officials have described as the growing involvement of the Revolutionary guards Corps in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as its support for extremists throughout the Middle East.

The same countries of the West refused to recognize Hamas' electoral victory in Palestine in 2006, in an election that was adjudged to be free and fair by international observers. The position of some Western nations on the examples given above reveals the ambiguous and inconsistent nature of Western foreign policies towards the Islamic world. These ambiguous and inconsistent Western foreign policies towards the Islamic world help to fuel the growth of Islamic extremism. It will be easy for Islamic extremists to use the above-mentioned scenarios to convince the younger generations of Muslims into believing that the West is bent on silencing Islam. Islamic extremists may claim that the West is being tough on any Islamic country or organization that challenges the West.

Simon Haddad and Hilal Khashan in, *Islam and Terrorism: Lebanese Muslim Views on September 11*, commented on the U.S. and Western foreign policies in the Middle East. According to them, "Arab proponents of eliminating the core of religious militancy from their midst did not spare U.S. policy for fanning the flames of Islamic fundamentalism."<sup>13</sup> In addition, Haddad and Khashan made reference to the views expressed by A. Al-Khater. In an essay titled *The Cultural and Political dimensions required to Stop Terrorism*, Khater blamed the United States and Western biased foreign policies in the Middle East, including the preferential treatment given to Israel, as fueling Islamic extremism in the Middle East. Khater advised the United States to reevaluate its policies in the Middle East in a way that would serve its long-term interests in the region.

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<sup>13</sup> Simon Haddad and Hilal Khashan, "Islam and Terrorism: Lebanese Muslim Views on September 11," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol.46, No. 6 (2002), 816.

This includes the establishment of a Palestinian state and putting treatment of Arabs on a par with the Israelis.<sup>14</sup> From the foregoing observations, it is important for the West to try and maintain a consistent foreign policy towards Islamic and other Middle Eastern countries. This will help in the fight against the spread of Islamic extremism.

### **Ending the U.S. and British Occupation of Iraq**

In this thesis, it was observed that the United States and British invasion of Iraq in 2003 helped to fuel Islamic extremism. The reason is because Islamic extremists exploited this occupation of Iraq by Western powers to demonstrate how the West is waging a war of domination against Islamic countries. The lack of any justifiable reason for the invasion of Iraq by the Bush administration has also worked to the advantage of Islamic extremists. Efforts by the Bush administration to convince the international community that the Iraqi war is part of the war on terror, has been unsuccessful. In describing this scenario, a Congressional Quarterly publication titled *Political Handbook of the Middle East 2006*, made the following observations: "No weapons of mass destruction were found, and accusations of the deposed regime's ties to al-Qaeda and terrorism remained unproven. While Iraqis and outsiders alike applauded the end of the Hussein era, the declared American goal of bringing democracy to Iraq became mired in an escalating resistance termed an 'insurgency' by the United States

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<sup>14</sup> A.Al-Khater, "Al-Ab'ad al-thaqafiyya wa al-syasiyya al-lazima liwaqfal-irhab [The Cultural and Political Dimensions Required to Stop Terrorism]," Al-Hayat, 13 September 2001, 18.

...<sup>15</sup> The Congressional Quarterly publication further added, "Although a few of these extremists were Iraqi, most were Arabs who had infiltrated Iraq across the Saudi and Syrian borders, readily volunteering to serve as suicide bombers."<sup>16</sup> As the publication observed, the presence of U.S. and British troops in Iraq has influenced many moderate Muslims. Consequently, the occupation of Iraq has continued to draw many Muslims into Iraq to fight against, what they believe is Western occupation of an Islamic country.

The Time magazine publication, *The Middle East: The History, The Cultures, The Conflicts, The Faiths*, also expressed the same opinion. The magazine observed that foreign fighters are slipping into Iraq "... from Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia and elsewhere in the Arab world to wage a jihad against the U.S. . . ."<sup>17</sup> From all indications, the growing resentment over the Western occupation of Iraq has resulted in acts of militancy against the West by Islamic extremist organizations. Similarly, many moderate Muslims, who oppose the occupation of Iraq by Western troops, have also chosen to join Islamic extremists. Among those involved in the 2007 attempted terrorist attacks in London was an Iraqi born medical doctor. Apparently, this doctor was not happy over the occupation of his country by Western powers. He might just be one out of many who may have been feeling the same way. Perhaps, it is only a matter of time before others might want to also take part or plan a terrorist act in the West.

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<sup>15</sup> Congressional Quarterly, *Political Handbook of the Middle East 2006* (Washington, D.C: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 2006).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>17</sup> Time Inc, *The Middle East: The History, The Cultures, The Conflicts, The Faiths*, intro. Jimmy Carter (New York: Time Magazines Inc., 2006), 113.



Therefore, an end to the United States and British occupation of Iraq will greatly reduce the tensions between the Islamic world and some nations of the West. It will also make Iraq an unfertile ground for Islamic extremists, who are said to find a safe haven in areas of Iraq that are not under the control of the Coalition forces.

### **Discouraging Religious Extremism**

Extreme religious ideologies, both in Christianity and Islam, are dangerous and are threatening world peace. Religious extremism has led to violent clashes in many parts of the world. From the Middle East to Nigeria, extremist preachers make inflammatory comments that, in most cases, have fueled violent acts carried out by one religious group against another. Western and Islamic countries should endeavor to encourage, by all means necessary, moderate religious views that are free of fundamentalist and extremist ideologies. The Arab/Islamic world should be more committed towards the dismantling of Islamic extremist organizations like Al Qaeda. These Islamic nations can do this by undertaking a massive worldwide campaign aimed at discouraging younger generations of Muslims from joining these organizations or indirectly working for them.

Similarly, in the West, efforts should be made to discourage Christian extremism. This will help in reducing Christian extremist comments like the ones identified by Roy Andersen, Robert Seibert and Jon Wagner in their book, *Politics and Change in The Middle East: Sources of Conflict and Accommodation*. Some instances the authors made reference to include a

statement, which they said was made by Reverend Jerry Falwell. According to Andersen et al, Reverend Jerry Falwell pronounced Prophet Muhammad a “terrorist.” Another Christian extremist comment identified by Andersen et al is the one allegedly made by Reverend Franklin Graham. According to the authors, Reverend Graham denounced Islam as an “evil” and “wicked” religion<sup>18</sup>.

Comments like these have a way of sinking into the minds of the followers of these preachers, and may lead to the non-tolerance that is prevalent among religions of the world. Andersen et al also weighed in on this. According to them,

These religious extremists appear to be in the minority in their respective countries. But the public appeal of apocalyptic imagery is strong: simple minded charges of evil and wickedness are credible to a zealous religious community. In their zeal to bring about the ‘end times’ of the apocalyptic prophesy, both Christian and Islamic extremists add fuel to the fire of international conflict.<sup>19</sup>

As observed by Andersen et al, extremist remarks like those identified above, fuel and deepen the antagonism between Muslims and Christians. It also can cause tensions between the West and Islam. Therefore, the West and Islamic nations should make concerted efforts towards discouraging inflammatory comments by religious extremists. This will go a long way in reducing the

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<sup>18</sup> Roy Andersen, Robert Seibert, Jon Wagner, *Politics and Change in the Middle East: Sources of Conflict and Accommodation*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (Upper Saddle River: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2004), 322.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 323. The authors observed, and rightly so, that nothing in the individual theologies of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam necessitates such militant conflict among the faiths. They are, the authors continue, in fact all Abrahamic religions, recognizing a common point of origin for all three faiths.

tensions that exist amongst the religions of the world. In the long run, this will help to reduce the tensions between Islamic extremists and some Western nations.

### **Education/Education for Peace<sup>20</sup> in Islamic Countries.**

The report of the United Nations Committee for Development Policy on the Seventh Session (14-18 March 2005) captioned *Development Challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa and post-Conflict Countries*, extensively discussed how to end international conflicts. The Committee observed that education should be used to sensitize the people in volatile areas of the world on the need for peace. According to the Committee's report, "The education system needs to convey the values of peace and cooperation . . . learning to value the benefits of cooperation; committing civil society to building a strategy for peace; valuing peace as an integral part of human development; and building the foundation of peace as a necessary condition for social advancement."<sup>21</sup> In strict Islamic countries like Saudi Arabia, where Wahhabism is the official form of Islam, education for peace and religious tolerance should be highly encouraged. Similarly, the West, particularly the United States, should come out strong in denouncing some of the Wahhabi teachings that do not encourage religious tolerance and peaceful co-existence with other religions of the world.

Furthermore, the United Nation's Committee's recommendations also underscore the importance of funding educational projects in other parts of the

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<sup>20</sup> The expression "Education for Peace" was borrowed from the Report of the United Nation's Committee for Development Policy.

<sup>21</sup> The United Nations Committee for Development Policy, 15.

world, by the wealthier West. The majority of Muslims recruited to become suicide bombers and terrorists by Islamic extremist organizations, come from areas of the Islamic world where educational facilities are either lacking or not adequate. Education liberates the mind of an individual. Education also gives an individual the skill to reason and critically analyze whatever he is told to do or believe in. Without education, an individual may be easily indoctrinated. Islamic extremists have exploited this to their advantage.

In view of the above observations, both the Western and Islamic governments should encourage, and in fact, provide and sponsor more educational programs in the Islamic world. This will help in turning out a population of educated young men and women. With education, these younger generations of Muslims would not be easily convinced or indoctrinated into becoming suicide bombers. Education will help these youths to better understand the teachings of the Koran. An educated Muslim youth might find it difficult to believe that he will have as many as "10 virgins" waiting to be with him forever in paradise, if he carried out a suicide attack against innocent people.

### **A Return to the Original Teachings of Islam**

Researches conducted during the writing of this thesis revealed that most of the ideologies and teachings of Islamic extremist organizations are innovations injected into Islam by extremist Islamic scholars. These scholars include Ibn Wahhab, Hasan al Banna and Sayyid Qutb. In an essay, *Skyscrapers versus Caves: the Unholy War between Capitalist Crusaders and Feudal Mujahids*,

E. Yuksel made the same assertion. According to Yuksel, "Today's Islam has little to do with Muhammad's original message. It has become a religion concocted by scholars who traded the teaching of the Qur'an with fabricated narration and medieval Arab culture. They promoted vicious and oppressive laws, misogyny, hatred, terror and aggression."<sup>22</sup> The original Islamic teachings, as laid down by Prophet Muhammad, actually respect and ensure the sanctity of human lives.

In addition, the Prophet was reported to have a spirit of tolerance. A good example of Prophet Muhammad's spirit of tolerance was the "Muada'a" Charter. According to Ahmed Zaoui in, *Islam and Human Rights*, Prophet Muhammad established the "Muada'a" Charter. Zaoui observed that this charter demonstrates Islam's heritage of protecting human rights. According to Zaoui,

One of the first steps that were taken by Prophet Muhammad when he established his state in Medina, was to establish two Charters . . . The second Charter, named *muada'a*, was a constitutional charter to uphold harmonious and peaceful relations between Muslims and Jews, who were the significant minority in Medina at this time. In this Charter, the religious and property rights of Jews were acknowledged and protected. As well as protecting the rights of religious observance, Islam protected the rights of other religions to have their own laws and tribunals of justice.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> E. Yuksel, "Skyscrapers Versus Caves: The Unholy war between Capitalist Crusaders and Feudal Mujahids," *The Presence Magazine*, 2-8 November 2001, 4.

<sup>23</sup> Ahmed Zaoui, "Islam and Human Rights," lecture presented at the Vice-Chancellor's lecture series, Massey University, Albany campus, 10 August 2005.

Obviously, Prophet Muhammad had a spirit of tolerance for other religions. Efforts should be made to sensitize Muslims about this charter, and the need to observe the provisions of the charter. This will help to bring peace between Muslims and non-Muslims. In the long run, observing the provisions of this charter will gradually help in eliminating the antagonism towards the West by Islamic extremists.

### **Conclusion**

This thesis has attempted to discuss the present clash between Islamic extremists and some nations of the West. This conflict affects the entire world, especially in this era of globalization where the world is becoming a global village. The clash between Islamic extremists and some Western countries is a real threat to international peace, security and economic stability. It is a very potent destabilizing force. In fact, as at the time of writing this conclusion, two other incidents occurred in Germany and Denmark. These two incidents showed that the clash between Islamic extremists and some Western nations is not going away anytime soon. Suffice it to say, therefore, that we are still faced with this threat.

The Baltimore Sun reported that Danish Police arrested eight suspected Islamic militants, “. . . charging two of them with planning a terror attack and attempted murder in what was described as a serious plot with direct ties to al-Qaida.”<sup>24</sup> In addition, the Washington Post reported another attempted terrorist

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<sup>24</sup> Helen Hajjaj & Sebastian Rotella, “Danes Arrest Suspected Militants, Say Terror Attack was Prevented,” *The Baltimore Sun*, 5 September 2007, 9A. The Sun report also noted that the Chief

bomb plot in Germany. According to the Post newspaper, “German authorities said . . . that they had disrupted a massive bombing plot targeting American interests in Germany, and they expressed alarm at evidence that the three local suspects had visited militant camps in Pakistan – the latest example of people traveling from Europe to that country for terrorist training.”<sup>25</sup>

Islamic extremists and terrorists are mostly motivated by ideologies that grew out of the hatred for the West, and not by monetary gains. The West should do a reality check on why Islamic extremists have this deep-rooted dislike for the West, especially the United States, Britain and France. Western countries should endeavor to stop acts that Muslims would consider an aggression or ridicule towards Islam. A good example is the recent French domestic policy pronouncement that forbids Muslim women in French public schools from wearing any type of Islamic scarf or hood. Another example is the failure of Western countries to categorically condemn the Muhammad cartoons in a Danish newspaper, despite the outrage in the Islamic community.

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of the Police intelligence service, in a news conference, underscored the urgency of the threat posed by Islamic militants, and the suspected foreign connections of the suspect. Six of the terrorists are Danish citizens. This has reiterated the fears of Western counterterrorism officials about resurgence in the leadership of al-Qaeda, which during the past year is suspected of training Western Europeans in clandestine facilities near the Pakistani-Afghan border. After the training in the Pakistani-Afghan border, these terrorists are dispatched on missions to attack their homelands. The Sun’s report further shows that Islamic extremists are not relenting in their efforts to carry out terrorist attacks against some Western nations. Obviously, the clash between them and some nations of the West may go on for a long time, with the resultant long-term effects on global security.

<sup>25</sup> Craig Whitlock, “Germany Says It has Foiled Bomb Plot,” *The Washington Post*, 6 September 2007, A1. The Post also reported that U.S. intelligence officials have said in recent weeks that al-Qaeda and its affiliates have reconstituted themselves in Pakistan’s remote mountain regions, along the border with Afghanistan. They are also reported to have bolstered their ability to launch attacks on the West from there.

Similarly, Islamic extremists should realize that carrying out terrorist attacks, beheading captured Westerners and other violent acts against the West, will not help them in the realization of whatever objective they have. Rather, actions like this will isolate them further, not only from the West but also from moderate Muslims. Islamic extremists should realize that international peace and security are threatened by their actions. They should also realize that their actions affect Muslims too. Innocent civilians, including Muslims, have died on account of these heinous acts of terrorism.



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