

DIPLOMACY AND US-MUSLIM WORLD RELATIONS:  
THE POSSIBILITY OF THE POST-SECULAR AND INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

By

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## ABSTRACT

Prior to September 11, 2001, a calculated image problem related to America's defence strategy in the Near East and its foreign policy of exceptionalism culminated in its unfavourable perception in the Muslim world. To counter this setback, leading think-tanks recommended that US public diplomacy must lead the way in order for America to reclaim its positive image. During the Bush administration, this guidance was applied through the expansion of public diplomacy measures such as the State Department's "Brand America" campaign and the "Shared Values Initiative". Whilst they were successful at applying secular approaches to engaging international Muslim audiences, both campaigns failed to reach the core of Islamic society. This study contends that to reach this core, the crucial requirement must be to apply direct communicative engagement with local networks in order to restore trusted relations. In defining a new way forward, this study breaks new ground by examining the origin of this problem for America from the angle of communication. By acknowledging the many setbacks caused by various public diplomacy measures, we examine the prospects for the State Department in applying the post-secular communication strategy, *Interfaith Diplomacy*, to enrich political communication between US diplomats and key religious players in the Muslim world.

Findings reveal that communication training under an Obama administration is essential for improving US-Muslim world relations, and this requires the recruitment of a Religion Attaché Officer Corps within the United States Foreign Service. A new Religion Attaché, equipped with a background in broad religious affairs and communication training in *Interfaith Diplomacy*, is likely to make significant headway in counteracting the tension caused by the US-Muslim world communication problem.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AOC	Alliance of Civilization
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CMM	Coordinated Management of Meaning
CPC	Countries of Particular Concern
CSIS	Centre for Strategic and International Studies
CT	Communication Theory
CTCC	Counterterrorism Communication Center
DOD	Department of Defense
DOP	Department of Peace
DOS	Department of State
ECA	Bureaus of Education and Cultural Affairs
FSI	Foreign Service Institute
FSO	Foreign Service Officer
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GFA	Greetings from America
IFD	Interfaith Dialogue
IFD <sup>2</sup>	Interfaith Diplomacy
IIP	International Information Programs
IMTD	Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy
IRF	International Religious Freedom
MEPI	Middle East Partnership Initiative
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NSCWMD	National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction
NSS	National Security Strategy
PCC	Policy Coordinating Committee
PSR	Post-secular Recognition
RA	Religion Attaché
SPiFD	Socio-Political Interfaith Dialogue
State	US Department of State
SVI	Shared Values Initiative
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
USIP	United States Institute of Peace
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

*Let it be told to the future world, that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive, that the city and the country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet and to repulse it... There are cases which cannot be overdone by language, and this is one. There are persons, too, who see not the full extent of the evil which threatens them; they solace themselves with hopes that the enemy, if he succeed, will be merciful.<sup>1</sup>*

*The Crisis*  
Thomas Paine  
December 23, 1776

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Paine and Eric Foner, *Collected Writings* (New York: Library of America, 1995).

## INTRODUCTION

*The United States is too powerful and influential to be loved in the Middle East, but there was a time not so long ago when it was respected for its values and commitment to peace. Regaining that respect will be important if the next president is to persuade the publics in the Arab and Muslim worlds to support their leaders in working with the United States.*<sup>2</sup>

**Richard N. Haass and Martin Indyke**  
*A Time for Diplomatic Renewal, 2008*

Hurdles have obstructed US diplomacy over the last decade. Interrelated challenges have included applying new measures to maintain regional security in the Near East and restoring America's standing in the world after 9/11. Meeting these new demands requires the United States Government (USG) to make serious effort to regain the moral high ground in international relations. This will not require the United States to lower its defences; rather, it will encourage the USG to take strategic communication and the role of broad religious affairs in the Muslim world more seriously. Over the last decade, carelessness has resulted in many US foreign policy and intelligence setbacks, indicating the need for a new approach. Though religion and politics are considered by some to be strange bedfellows to the American political system, neither ignorance nor meaningless debate toward their role in foreign affairs will assure peace in this era. In order to restore America's standing and make peace with the Muslim world, the United States must convey a new attitude toward the missing dimension of US-Muslim world engagement – namely, *communication*. If “the war of ideology is over [and] the war of ideals is just beginning”, it is vital the United States recognises the dynamic of communication for appropriately engaging Islamic society.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Richard Haass, *Restoring the Balance: A Middle East Strategy for the Next President* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2008).

<sup>3</sup> Anthony J. Blinken, “Winning the War of Ideas”, *The Washington Quarterly*, No. 25 (Spring 2002):102.

Since 2009, some have seen hope for the United States of America in the election of its first African-American president, Barack Hussein Obama. In his first year, the President has pursued unprecedented measures to engage the Muslim world through direct-Oval Office diplomacy. (Watershed moments include his January 2009 inaugural address, an official interview with the Al-Arabiya new agency days after entering the White House, the President's Nowruz address to the people of Iran, and, most pressing, the "President's Remarks on a New Beginning" in Cairo, Egypt.<sup>4</sup>) Consulting with leading experts in the field of national security (i.e. Holbrooke, Nye, Albright, Brennan, Haass and Bergen), Obama acknowledges that new challenges facing US national security require the application of non-traditional approaches in order to restore trusted relations with Muslims.<sup>5</sup> Though Obama implies that such approaches are essential, it remains unclear as to how the current US Department of State might apply such approaches in a diplomatic setting to restore relations and establish a common ground. Based on the many false starts and setbacks arising under the Bush administration, it may not be wise for the current State Department to re-apply many of the traditional secular approaches taken up prior to and after 9/11. These approaches include unilateral engagement with nation states in the Near East, the building of ties with officials and groups recognised as legitimate, and the promotion of secular dialogue on topics related primarily to science, economics, defence, education and health.

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<sup>4</sup> See Barack Obama, *Inauguration Address* [address online]; available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/inaugural-address/>; Internet, accessed 12 January 2010; *A New Year, A New Beginning* [address online]; available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nowruz/>; Internet, accessed 12 January 2010; *The President's Speech in Cairo: A New Beginning* [address online]; available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/NewBeginning/>; Internet, accessed 12 January 2010; Hisham Melhem (27 January 2009) *President Gives First Interview Since Taking Office to Arab TV: "Obama Tells Al Arabiya Peace Talks Should Resume"* [online transcript]; available from <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2009/01/27/65087.html>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

<sup>5</sup> Audrey Gillian, *Obama Would Welcome Talks with Taliban Moderates* (8 March 2009) [article online]; available from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/mar/08/barack-obama-talks-taliban-afghanistan>; Internet, accessed 12 January 2010.

Amidst these challenges, this study contends that the most vital foreign policy obstacle that will confront the Obama administration within the next year will be the US-Muslim world communication problem. Presently, there is an imbalance in America's communicative relationship with the Muslim world, caused in part by a persistence of key USG officials with regards to applying a non-cooperative game theory to both its communicative and foreign policy relationships with Near Eastern nations. Success over understanding has dominated the communicative arena where the essential aim on the part of the US was that of manipulating its opponent to reach a predetermined end. This was seen particularly between 2001 and 2008 in American public diplomacy and its reliance upon secular approaches (such as commercial advertising and its efforts to sell the perfect image of America by promoting democracy and cultural exchanges).

Today's communication problem is distinct in that it cannot be separated from an American history of adverse foreign relations with the Near East. Hence, the symptoms of this prolonged problem are two-fold:

- 1) Some Muslims state that their dismay toward the US originates from an American history of inconsistent foreign policy in predominantly Muslim countries, and America's unbreakable bond with Israel.
- 2) In contrast, key US officials suggest that the problem actually arises from ideological forces linked to the spread of political Islam and religious violence projected towards America and its allies.

Throughout the latter part of the twentieth century, the US diplomatic community would encounter this communication problem to a great extent. In handling this tension, traditional secular approaches were applied when communicating with religious audiences; however this has only served to complicate matters further. Since 2001, US engagement efforts have experienced numerous diplomatic and programming setbacks arising from a lack

of expertise and insight by key US Department of State officials with regards to employing strategic communication as the first option. Instead of re-evaluating its use of secular approaches (which often exclude integrating moderate Islamic perspectives and aspirations into the US foreign policy debate), corporate logic coloured US diplomacy under the Bush administration, and Secretary Colin Powell's *Diplomatic Readiness Initiative*, "Brand America" – a government-run marketing campaign to bolster America's image in the Muslim world – led an inimical crusade to sell America. Instead of taking seriously the option of directly engaging Muslims at a grassroots level to establish trusted relations with local networks, commercial marketing approaches prevailed. Findings suggest that such efforts neither raised US favourability ratings nor improved America's image after 9/11.

**Table 1**

**Limitations of US Public Diplomacy after 9/11**

<b>A)</b> Rather than establishing a non-traditional strategy to communicate with Muslim publics, key State Department officials considered the "Brand America" campaign that previously existed, five months prior to 9/11;
<b>B)</b> This commercial marketing campaign served as a pre-existing programme solely intended to raise US favourability ratings throughout the Muslim world, while selling an American foreign policy of exceptionalism to predominantly Muslim audiences;
<b>C)</b> After the events of 9/11, a reluctance by key officials to re-evaluate and/or reorganise the current public diplomacy campaign (to address the Muslim world) was not considered;
<b>D)</b> Such reluctance resulted in the State Department applying a pre-existing campaign to a more intense US-Muslim world communication problem after 9/11; and
<b>E)</b> State's redeployment efforts of "Brand America" distorted communicative relations with the Muslim world (between 2001 and 2008).

While I will argue here that maintaining favourable perceptions throughout the Muslim world is vital to maintaining US national security, applying alternative strategies that include the aspirations and perspectives of religious audiences and others is equally essential. This argument is based on the fact that over the last decade, post-9/11 religious forces are colliding considerably with US-foreign relations. Today, identity politics are contributing to



religious terrorism more so than ever before, interrupting secular ideals in the public sphere. The once-credible secularisation thesis of the twentieth-century (which anticipated the decline of religion's impact on political affairs) is increasingly replaced by a new term – *post-secularism*. Contrary to the secularisation thesis, *post-secularism* points to the re-emergence of the religious voice and religious ideas in public life. In addition, it brings with it an intractable tension experienced between religious and political players in the public sphere.

Instead of engaging in discourse with the religious forces that emerged to confront US foreign affairs, the State Department avoided the consideration of religious aspirations in the Muslim world by relying instead on “branding” America with a narrow foreign policy of exceptionalism. In proposing a method that includes non-traditional approaches, this study will examine how the integration of religious and political perspectives may enrich social relations. Through this integration, both the religious and political realms may recognise the value of embracing a “complementary learning process” to discover their similarities within society.<sup>6</sup> Conversely, seven years of continuously branding American values and foreign policy to the Muslim world has created an audience that is, today, resistant to indirect communication. In order to determine a new way forward in US-Muslim world relations, this thesis challenges pre-existing approaches applied under the Bush administration by exploring how identity politics damage communicative relations.

In the case of the Obama administration, might non-conventional approaches be of benefit to its diplomatic strategy toward the Muslim world? Addressing this problem will require key Obama State Department officials such as Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Judith McHale, and the new

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<sup>6</sup> See Jürgen Habermas, *Notes on a post-secular society* [article online] available from <http://www.signandsight.com/features/1714.html>; Internet, accessed 10 January 2010.

Director General<sup>7</sup> of the US Foreign Service to a) comprehend the significance of post-secularism; b) take seriously the shortcomings of the previous “Brand America” campaign; c) appreciate how diplomatic communication stands as the cornerstone to assuring trusted relations with Muslim publics; and d) ensure that Clinton’s proposed use of *smart power*<sup>8</sup> is accompanied by a post-secular communication strategy. In determining a new way forward with regards to addressing the Muslim world communication problem under an Obama administration, serious consideration must be given to how an American history of political apprehensiveness toward religion and the personal and political ideology of President Bush contributed to a gross misreading of Islamic society. Both themes were instrumental in the creation of the Bush Doctrine, whose core objectives included: the endorsement of pre-emptive strikes against potential targets linked to terrorist activity, advancing military primacy, supporting a new multilateralism by establishing a coalition of the willing, and the spread of democracy to combat terrorist ideology within the Near East.<sup>9</sup>

Beyond staunch militarism, a lack of consideration toward direct communicative engagement, and the failure to have on board advisors or Foreign Service Officers trained in broad religious affairs has meant that both conservative academic and political ideals have fuelled misreadings of Islamic society (in the Oval Office, Department of Defense and Department of State). A misguided integration of various perspectives contributed to Bush’s lacklustre policies toward the religion of Islam, the treatment of Muslim detainees, and engagement efforts in the Muslim world. Political realism, on the whole, stimulated the

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<sup>7</sup> Recently, President Obama has nominated the current Director General Harry K. Thomas to become US Ambassador to the Philippines.

<sup>8</sup> Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Nomination Hearing to be Secretary of State* (13 January 2009) [online transcript]; available from <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/01/115196.htm>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

<sup>9</sup> Lamont Colucci, *Crusading Realism: The Bush Doctrine and American Core Values After 9/11* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2008).

debate of what is legitimate with regards to US relations and why the overall political discourse must remain in liberal-secular terms (i.e. power, economics and strategic defence). Hans Morgenthau's prescription was to ensure that "moral principles were not applied to the actions of the state".<sup>10</sup> This conservative reading toward legitimising the religious voice diminished opportunities to employ sacred-secular relations in the US political sphere. Maria J. Ryan acknowledges the impact of neo-conservatism as an additional source of impairment on US domestic and foreign policy during the Bush era<sup>11</sup>, however neo-conservatism also served as the spark that lead to the rise of compassionate conservatism, "the theory that the government should encourage the effective provision of social services without providing the service itself."<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, this conservative perspective led to the USG outsourcing religious outreach and peacemaking initiatives to local faith-based organisations, as opposed to employing its own cadre of Foreign Service Officers trained in broad religious affairs and conflict reconciliation.

Among these integrated forces, the conservative academic perspectives of confrontationalism influenced Bush's ideological position and foreign policy toward Islamic society. Though confrontationalism did not begin with the Bush administration, it was given academic ground both in discourse and theory in purported application by academics such as Daniel Pipes, Giles Kepel and scholars linked to the Oval Office including Bernard Lewis

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<sup>10</sup> Hans Morgenthau, "Six Principles of Political Realism", *Politics Among Nations* [article online]; available from <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/morg6.htm>; Internet, assessed 20 October 2008; see also Hans Morgenthau, eds., *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Revised (Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Education, 2005).

<sup>11</sup> Maria J. Ryan, *The Imperatives of Power: Neoconservatism, Unipolarism and the new American Century* (Ph.D. diss., University of Birmingham, 2007).

<sup>12</sup> Naomi Shaefer Riley, *Mr. Compassionate Conservatism* (21 October 2006) [article online]; available from <http://opinionjournal.com/editorial/feature.html?id=110009135>; Internet, accessed 20 October 2009.

and the late Samuel P. Huntington.<sup>13</sup> Their collective arguments suggest that the communication problem between the US and the Muslim world is framed around the notion that “liberal democracy is compatible neither with Islamic fundamentalism nor Islam itself.”<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, in order for US policy to be effective within the Muslim world, the religion of Islam must reform. This thesis takes issue with this vague assertion by siding with Fawaz A. Gerges: it is not the religion of Islam, but a hostile strand linked to a distorted view of Islamic fundamentalism, that may benefit from moderate perspectives. In essence, the Bush administration after 9/11 focused specifically and increasingly on exporting democracy and improving America’s image problem, while carrying out pre-emptive military strikes against a small segment of the Muslim world; the aim of the administration was to win the War on Terror by winning *the hearts and minds* of all Muslims via the “branding” of America.

Clearly, a form of diplomatic renewal is necessary in order to counteract the tension inherent in US-Muslim world relations, and this requires an enhancement of the mechanics of US diplomacy when engaging religious publics. In defining this new way forward, this thesis shall return to the origin of the problem – *communication*. To clarify my use of the term “US-Muslim world engagement”, its application throughout this study is applied in a communicative context. In order that we may better comprehend the approach taken to solve the general communication problem, this term is expressed in five modes:

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<sup>13</sup> See Fawaz A. Gerges, *America and Political Islam: Clash of Cultures or Clash of Interests* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999), 21-22.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 24.

**Table 2****Modes of US-Muslim World Communicative Engagement**

The first mode, <b>Acknowledgement</b> , welcomes activities relating to the proactive recognition of former political relations toward Muslim publics by the USG. In addition, the discovery of various trajectories to engage, through communication, the multiple ideas behind hostile actions are unveiled in this mode.
The second mode, <b>Pursuance</b> , is dedicated to understanding the practise of communication (which inevitably includes training and application rehearsal between religious and political officials).
The third mode, <b>Proficiency</b> , gives attention to critical language training. This recognises the often overlooked reality that after personal communication training, a working knowledge of the local language is a pre-eminent concern (i.e. Arabic, Farsi, Pashto, Turkish, Urdu, Swahili, Indonesian, etc.).
The fourth mode, <b>Policy Formation</b> , focuses entirely on the establishment of coherent US foreign policy-making with the Muslim world by adding the aspirations and perspectives of Muslim publics into the overall foreign policy discussion. This occurs most successfully when USG officials are personally and linguistically adept at communication. At this level, policy is established out of an awareness of the impact of the previous two levels, which hinge on communicative activity and an acute awareness of America's historical foreign policy relationship to Muslim publics.
The fifth and final mode, the <b>Resolution</b> , realises that attempts to counteract the tension caused by the US-Muslim world communication problem require the constant improvement of strategic partnerships with local networks. The emphasis in this mode is on assuring global coexistence by combining the previous elements (awareness, communication/language training, and coherent policy formation) to assure stability with international Muslim publics. <sup>15</sup>

With consideration to the setbacks in US diplomatic engagement with the Muslim world and this study's focus on communication, only the first two modes (*Acknowledgement* and *Pursuance*), which relate to communication training and diplomatic renewal, are explored in this thesis. While the thesis will not address the last three modes in detail (*Proficiency*, *Policy Formation*, and *Resolution*) though equally essential, this study makes clear that its recommendations, on their own, may only go so far unless there is a complimentary interaction within the USG between the support of a progressive US foreign policy and a strategic approach to engage the Muslim world. In doing so, this study makes

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<sup>15</sup> These four preparational levels to US-Muslim world engagement resemble (in a unique way) the organisation of John Coltrane's popular 1965 jazz composition, "A Love Supreme". Coltrane's composition is separated into three themes (Acknowledgement, Resolution, Pursuance/Psalm). As with America's historical relationship to the Muslim world, "A Love Supreme" speaks of a struggle relating to the engagement process by depicting the epic battle of two lovers attempting to reach harmony. This activity parallels the current relationship between the US and the Muslim world and the US's attempt to strike a balance and achieve global coexistence. For further insight on "A Love Supreme", see Ashley Kahn, *A Love Supreme: The Story of John Coltrane's Signature Album* (New York: Viking Press, 2002).

clear the awareness of post-secularism in the US diplomatic arena and the impact communication training is likely to have on introducing the aspirations and perspectives of moderate Muslims into the larger US foreign policy debate. This study does not set out to identify a new way forward solely to improve America's image problem in the Muslim world, but is rather concerned with revitalising a component of the State Department's communication process to ensure non-secular aspirations from the Muslim world are incorporated into the larger US foreign policy debate.

The decision to address the first two modes of US-Muslim World Communicative Engagement are taken up given the current US foreign policy direction and the commitment by the Obama administration to restore US foreign relations with international Muslim communities. While proposing this communication approach, this study recognises that elements related to the practise of interfaith dialogue (which convenes sacred and secular players together to promote mutual interest and mutual understanding) offer a favourable trajectory that underpins two-way communication for restoring trusted relations between the US government and religious communities. This study recognises that within this proposal a caveat is imperative that in order to function there needs to be a US foreign policy that is complimentary to the two-way communication applied in interfaith dialogue and in future USG projects that consider this approach.

This will be a change from the experience of US agencies, notably the US Department of Defense, applying a one-way communication approach to interacting with Muslim communities. While proposing this forward thinking project, a series of challenges surface, the first of which are related to the convergence with and consistency of US foreign policy. Clearly, the most successful US government project promoting dialogue with the Muslim

world will be hampered if the US's overall foreign policy is interpreted as being adverse to Muslims. In order for a forward-thinking project that promotes two-way communication with Muslims to materialize, US foreign policy must move in a direction complementary to prospective government projects that are *understanding-over-success* oriented.

Beyond these broad policy issues stands the second limitation, related to existing bureaucratic maneuvers which may reinforce the support of one-way communication. Though the State Department and Pentagon have often worked in collaboration on critical issues as confronting US national security, various limits are set which may stymie prospective State Department communication projects that seek to promote two-way communication to restore relations with Muslims. This includes the Pentagon's success oriented agenda to distort information operations, by promoting highly successful propaganda campaigns. In addition, its ability to reach Muslim audiences quicker and more skilfully (especially in combat zones) than the State Department is linked in part to its increasing budget over the last decade that has contributed to its dominant position in shaping US foreign policy in critical regions (as Central and South Asia). A striking financial comparison is recorded in the current White House's FY 2011 budget request with \$708.2 billion for the Pentagon and \$52.8 billion requested for the State Department and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> United States Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Request, "Overview-FY2011 Request" [document online] available from <http://comptroller.defense.gov/budget.html>; Internet accessed 9 April 2010.

“\$548.9 billion for the [Pentagon’s] base budget excludes costs related to overseas contingency operations [totalling 159.3 billion]. This is \$18.2 billion higher than \$530.7 billion enacted for FY 2010—an increase of about 3.4 percent.”<sup>17</sup> Considering the State Department’s fiscal allocation, Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources, Jacob J. Lew, indicates State and USAID’s, “total \$52.8 billion is a \$4.9 billion increase, \$3.6 billion for programs in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq. War-related spending represents a 7.5 percent increase in overall spending, and funding that is not war-related grows by \$1.3 billion, which is 2.7 percent above 2010 total spending.”<sup>18</sup>

A mammoth budget coupled by a foreign policy agenda to apply one-way communication, either to influence or coerce foreign publics, has great potential to obstruct future State Department efforts that will require US officials to build sacred-secular relations to promote a dialogue of understanding with Muslim communities. Giles Scott-Smith presents an accurate assessment that

“When referring to the dominance of the Pentagon, it is not just a matter of weaponry or the questionable deployment of US Marines. Looking to develop its role in the field of ‘strategic influence’, the military has also greatly expanded its activities in communication and media, with questionable consequences.” He insists, “The consistent under-funding of the State Department has led to a desperate shortage of trained embassy personnel, especially in languages, and a serious lack of morale. Meanwhile, under Bush the military establishment [took a lead role] in US diplomatic, public diplomacy, and assistance task across North Africa, the Middle East, Central and South Asia, and the Far East. In many regions the Pentagon is at the forefront in engaging with foreign public opinion, even though this remains, officially, the job of the State Department.”<sup>19</sup>

The Pentagon’s dominant position is flawed in that it makes a critical mistake in its approach to engage Muslim communities. Instead of recognising the value in applying an *understanding-over-success* posture, its vision is in fact *success-over-understanding* oriented. Following September 11, the Pentagon’s agenda, in this regard, was set by hiring private

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Jacob J. Lew, “President’s Proposal for the FY 2011 State Department Budget” [document online] available from <http://www.state.gov/s/dmr/remarks/2010/136358.htm>; Internet accessed 20 April 2010.

<sup>19</sup> Giles Scott-Smith, “Obama’s Challenge: Curbing the Pentagon” (29 November 2008) [article online] available from <http://enduringamerica.com/2008/11/29/obamas-challenge-curbing-the-pentagon/>; Internet accessed 20 April 2010; See also Giles Scott-Smith, “There is No More Outside” (24 September 2009) [article online] available from <http://www.neoamericanist.org/there-no-more-outside>; Internet accessed 20 April 2010.



contractors as the Lincoln Group and the Rendon Group to control the flow of information that either entered or circulated throughout Muslim countries of interest. These activities were regarded as US military Psychological Operations (PSYOP), “Planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence the emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals.”<sup>20</sup> While such efforts by the Pentagon are considered communication activities to “influence” foreign publics in Muslim countries, the truth stands that communication, in this case, would only obstruct the prospects of gathering insight while promoting mutual understanding. While PSYOP contractors are fulfilling their duties by distributing propaganda, the valuable opportunity of the USG to comprehend the many perspectives of Muslims is often tarnished due to this cavalier foreign policy agenda. Hence, this thesis recognises that the most effective of two-way communication models will not succeed if there is not consideration given to US foreign policymaking and the nature of the bureaucracy that implements it.

Bureaucratic recognition includes putting a two-way approach in the hands of US officials who are mostly capable of carrying out projects that are *understanding-over success* oriented (i.e. the US Department of State). A “feed-back loop” created by two-way dialogue introduces a Muslim perspective upon US foreign policy into the discussion. In addition, this study calls for a recognition by US policymakers that the policies they pursue should not be separate from this effort, for they are integral to the success or failure of this approach. Emphasis on the State Department brings out two crucial points: a) an *understanding-over-*

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<sup>20</sup> Mark Kilbane, “Military Psychological Operations as Public Diplomacy” in Nancy Snow and Phillip M. Taylor eds., *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 187-192.

*success* mode to engagement is more applicable within its constructs; and b.) its broad diplomatic framework (despite its minuscule budget) provides broader possibilities when promoting a two-way dialogue within a special post-secular political forum. Applying this type of activity by employing aspects of socio-political interfaith dialogue—*engagement between religious and political players to understand and resolve critical social issues*—ensures a greater opportunity, as an alternative to one-way communication, for restoring trusted relations with Muslims.

This thesis emerges as an interdisciplinary study integrating literature from the fields of theology and political science with communication theory. In comprehending how the State Department might approach the US-Muslim world communication problem more directly, the study considers the impact of faith-based organisations in brokering peace. Arguably, the 1990s was a key decade, since international organisations such as the United Nations, faith-based NGOs, and civil society pooled their resources in order to resolve widespread intractable conflicts, in the wake of many diplomatic failures. (Hence, the nation-state proved in this case that the strength would lie in symmetrical secular engagement with “legitimate” state powers, as opposed to direct engagement with non-state combatants to broker peace in conflict-prone settings.) In order to reconcile a decade of intractable religious and ethnic/tribal conflicts throughout the Balkans, Latin America, South-East Asia, and parts of Africa, faith-based NGOs including the World Conference of Religion for Peace and the Community of St. Egidio employed religious peacemaking to curb tension and convene hostile parties.<sup>21</sup> Prominent Western nations such as the US, Britain and France would later depend upon many of these organisations to resolve longstanding intractable conflicts, due to its poor communication resources and the failure to have on board trained FSOs. But, nearly two decades on, should this still be the case?

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<sup>21</sup> See David Smock, ed., *Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding* (Washington, USIP, 2002).

Reflecting on the many successes of these organisations, especially the momentum (as described by post-secular writers as Dostert<sup>22</sup>, Trigg<sup>23</sup>, Hauser<sup>24</sup> and Stout<sup>25</sup>) created in integrating the religious voice into public deliberations, offers insight to the US as to how to relax the tension with the Muslim world. In attempts to reconcile many of these events over the years in Mozambique, Nigeria, Northern Ireland and Kashmir, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) such as the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) regularly employ “interfaith dialogue forums”, which convene religious leaders of different faiths and traditions to explore how spiritual principles may influence the peacemaking process. USIP director of Religion and Peacemaking, David Smock, acknowledges in *Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding*:

Organising dialogue across religious boundaries enables people of faith to live out what most faith traditions considered a sacred duty to peacemakers. Interfaith dialogue carries with it the benefit of secular dialogue but also the potential for deeper and more meaningful engagement because of the possibility for spiritual encounter. This in turn may enhance the participant’s commitment to peace work and social change.<sup>26</sup>

It is elements within this unique communicative application that must be taken seriously as a first step to restoring US-Muslim world relations and regaining regional security. In contrast to convening merely religious players for inter-religious dialogue (in the case of religious peacemaking), the emphasis in this thesis is on thinking about how a type of socio-political dialogue that convenes both religious and political officials into a special

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<sup>22</sup> Troy Dostert, *Beyond Political Liberalism: Toward a Post-Secular Ethics of Public Life* (Notre Dame, Notre Dame Univ. Press, 2006).

<sup>23</sup> Roger Trigg, *Religion in Public Life: Must Faith be Privatized* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2007).

<sup>24</sup> Gerard A. Hauser, “The Public Voice of Vernacular Rhetoric”, *Vernacular Voice* (Columbia: South Carolina Press, 1999).

<sup>25</sup> Jeffrey Stout, *Democracy and Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2004).

<sup>26</sup> David Smock, *Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding*, 127-128.

space can be made possible. While, today, numerous books and research projects are less hesitant to investigate the *en vogue* topic of US-Muslim world engagement, my initial literature survey in 2005 unveiled limited resources (relating to interfaith relations and US diplomacy or how alternative communication strategies may restore trusted relations with Muslim publics). In order to convey the impact that the fields of both religion and politics might have on improving US diplomatic relations, various forms of interdisciplinary research were organised.

This Ph.D. study began as a pre-doctoral research project conducted in 2005, observing inter-religious relations in West Africa from a social standpoint. While surveying the US Department of State's diplomatic relationship with religious audiences and other groups in Senegal and The Gambia, four key points were identified:

- 1) Gaps in the US Government's (USG) diplomatic approach when engaging Muslim publics in Africa and South Asia;
- 2) Shortcomings in the US Foreign Service with regards to hiring diplomats versed in broad religious affairs;
- 3) Reluctance by the US Foreign Service Institute to train diplomats in a post-secular communication strategy; and
- 4) Consideration for how the aspirations and perspectives of religious and tribal leaders may play a fundamental role in restoring US-Muslim world relations and promoting public policy at a grassroots level.

Funding by the Nali Dinshaw Bursary and Roberts Fund supported additional field research in 2007 with the State Department's Bureau of International Organization Affairs and the William J. Clinton Foundation, to investigate these major developments further. Working with the State Department's Office of Peacekeeping, Sanctions and Counter-terrorism, additional projects included handling a diplomatic portfolio on Sudan and Lebanon UN peacekeeping missions. In addition, data was collected on how diplomats engaged

predominately Muslim countries and territories via Washington and US embassies. Here, I came into contact with “Brand America” and the setbacks experienced by diplomats in restoring relations with Muslim audiences via the State Department’s public diplomacy campaign. Recognising the limitations of “Brand America” and the inability of US diplomats to engage Muslim publics directly, a final project was conducted with the Clinton Foundation and University of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service, which included integrating initial findings to develop a practicable communication strategy to train new recruits in the US Foreign Service.

Based on the shortcomings of academics and think-tanks with regards to integrating inter-disciplinary literature (from the fields of communication theory, comparative religious studies and US foreign policy), this study is able to make a contribution by thinking more critically about how post-secular relations may improve US national security. However, in recent years many have handled the topic of US-Muslim world engagement through a narrow spectrum that either focuses on religious freedom issues or creating structural change in the State Department itself:

- The Brookings Institute, *The Need to Communicate: How to Improve US Public Diplomacy with the Islamic World*<sup>27</sup>
- Council on Foreign Relations, *Finding America’s Voice: A Strategy for Reinvigorating US Public Diplomacy*<sup>28</sup>
- Center for the Study of the Presidency, *Strengthening US-Muslim Communications*<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Hady Amr, *The Need to Communicate: How to Improve US Public Diplomacy with the Islamic World* (Washington, D.C.: Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution, 2004).

<sup>28</sup> Peter G. Peterson, et. al., *Finding America’s Voice: A Strategy for Reinvigorating US Public Diplomacy* [document online]; available from [www.cfr.org/content/publications/attachments/public\\_diplomacy.pdf](http://www.cfr.org/content/publications/attachments/public_diplomacy.pdf); Internet, accessed 10 January 2010.

<sup>29</sup> Phyllis d' Hoop, *An Initiative: Strengthening US -Muslim Communications* (Washington, D.C.: Center for the Study of the Presidency, 2003).

- Government Accountability Office, *US Public Diplomacy: State Department Expands Efforts but Faces Significant Challenges*<sup>30</sup>
- Heritage Foundation, *How to Reinvigorate US Public Diplomacy*<sup>31</sup>

In a real sense, prominent US officials and academics researching religion and US diplomacy have yet to take seriously the dynamics of communication, which would include employing a new type of Foreign Service Officer to restore trusted relations at a grassroots level. For example, former director of the Office of Religious Freedom, Thomas F. Farr, has focused attention in recent years on championing religious freedom and national security, asserting that “US diplomacy should move resolutely to make the defence and expansion of religious freedom a core component of US foreign policy. Doing so would give the United States a powerful new tool for advancing ordered liberty and for undermining religion-based extremism at a time when other strategies have proved inadequate”<sup>32</sup>. Former US diplomat John D. Stemple, however, suggests that the USG must recognise the strengths of both religion and diplomacy in order to curb religious violence, but dedicates much of his research to exploring the culture of diplomacy.<sup>33</sup> Walter A. McDougall, though wrestling with the history of religion and US diplomacy in a single essay, *Religion in Diplomatic History*, makes a unique observation, implying, “it is not difficult to imagine some of the reasons for the scarcity of literature on religion and international relations. First, very few scholars, much less pundits, theologians, or diplomats, display expertise in both fields. Some have a

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<sup>30</sup> US Government Accountability Office (GAO), Report to the Chairman, Subcommittee on Science, the Departments of State, Justice and Commerce and Related Agencies, House Committee on Appropriations, *US Public Diplomacy: State Department Efforts to Engage Muslim Audiences Lack Certain Communication Elements and Face Persistent Challenges*, GAO-06-535 (May 2006).

<sup>31</sup> Stephen Johnson and Helle Dale, *How to Reinvigorate US Public Diplomacy* [document online]; available from [http://www.heritage.org/Research/PublicDiplomacy/upload/bg\\_1645.pdf](http://www.heritage.org/Research/PublicDiplomacy/upload/bg_1645.pdf); Internet, accessed 22 January 2010.

<sup>32</sup> Thomas F. Farr, “Diplomacy in an Age of Faith”, *Foreign Affairs*, 87, No. 2: 110-124 (2008).

<sup>33</sup> John D. Stemple, *Faith and Diplomacy in the International System* [document online]; available from <http://www.uky.edu/~stempel/faith.htm>; Internet, accessed 20 January 2010.

profound understanding of one or more religious traditions, perhaps also a personal faith, but lack knowledge or experience of the rough and tumble of politics.”<sup>34</sup> However, this astute observation has not led to a practical treatment by fellow researchers in addressing the ongoing communication problem in a diplomatic context.

The closest attempt, thus far, is credited to the work of Ambassador John McDonald, whose research has focused on the value of Track 2 (NGO) peacemaking. McDonald has examined at length why State officials should look beyond traditional secular approaches to improve its overall relations with nation-states and traditional groups. By taking a “systems approach”, US diplomats are likely to tap into the core of society (i.e. business, private citizenry, academic research, activism, religion, fundraising and media relations).<sup>35</sup> While many US think-tanks are just beginning to broach the topic of US-Muslim world relations, this thesis breaks new ground in proposing how the State Department might improve the US communicative relationship with predominantly religious publics. To a degree, Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson’s study, *Religion: The Missing Dimension of Statecraft* (1994), could potentially have addressed this theme, but their research focused entirely on the impact of religion and the role of US foreign policy.<sup>36</sup> Despite the study’s shortcomings, Edward Luttwak’s recommendations warrant further review: Luttwak proposes that structural changes are made in the constructs of the State Department with the deployment of “religion attachés to diplomatic missions.”<sup>37</sup> Recognising its prospects, Douglas Johnston concurs by

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<sup>34</sup> Walter A. McDougall, *Religion in Diplomatic History* [document online]; available from <http://www.fpri.org/fpriwire/0603.199803.mcdougall.religionindiplomatichistory.html>; Internet, accessed 20 June 2010.

<sup>35</sup> Louise Diamond and Amb. John McDonald, *Multi-Track Diplomacy: A Systems Approach to Peace*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Connecticut: Kumarian Press, 1996).

<sup>36</sup> Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson, “The Missing Dimension”, *Religion: The Mission Dimension of Statecraft* (Oxford Press: Oxford, 1994),

<sup>37</sup> Edward Luttwak, “The Missing Dimension”, *Religion: The Mission Dimension of Statecraft*, Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson (Oxford Press: Oxford, 1994), 8-20.

picking this recommendation up a decade later in the essay, *Case for a Religion Attaché* (2004), and again in the study, *Faith-based Diplomacy: Trumpeting a Realpolitik*.<sup>38</sup> Additionally, Secretary of State Madeline Albright, in the text *Mighty and the Almighty* (2006) weighs in on this proposal, acknowledging, “the State Department should hire or train a core of specialists in religion to be deployed both in Washington and in key embassies overseas.”<sup>39</sup>

The real dimension that is missing from their exploration points back to the dynamics of a forgotten communication strategy that may support an integrated discourse between sacred and secular officials. Since little research has surveyed the rise of interfaith dialogue on a diplomatic basis for this task, we will explore this possibility by examining a new communication strategy in context with previous recommendations presented in the field. The treatment presented in this study covers training the proposed Johnston religion attaché model in a post-secular communication strategy (in order to relax tension and restore relations with Muslim audiences). The strategy developed in this study is the *Post-Secular Communication Strategy of Interfaith Diplomacy* (IFD<sup>2</sup>). It is a post-secular communication strategy which integrates elements taken from the contemporary interfaith movement (that include resolving intractable disputes non-violently, aiding public deliberation, embracing multi-religious options, and providing a safe space for plural engagement) with strategic communication. Since the latter part of the twentieth century, the faith-based NGO contributions linked to the contemporary interfaith movement, which sets out to promote

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<sup>38</sup> Douglas Johnston and Brian Cox, “Faith-based Diplomacy and Preventative Engagement”, in *Faith-Based Diplomacy: Trumpeting a Realpolitik*, Douglas Johnston, ed. (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2003); Douglas M. Johnston, “The Case for a Religion Attaché”, *Foreign Service Journal* (February 2002).

<sup>39</sup> Madeline Albright and Bill Woodward, *The Mighty & The Almighty: Reflections on Power, God, and World Affairs* (London: MacMillan, 2006), 73.



international peacemaking among religious groups, shed light on why and how the current State Department must implement its change in course when dealing with socially-constructed religious audiences in the Muslim world. IFD<sup>2</sup> is a *smart communication strategy* applicable to Secretary Clinton's *smart power* to resolve a number of diplomatic shortcomings that might occur. Thus, extensive forms of engagement beyond Obama's Oval Office diplomacy are required and have yet to be explored.

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This thesis will investigate a new way forward in three parts: Part 1, *Possibilities of a Coexistent Future*, reviews several interdisciplinary approaches to enhancing US-Muslim world communicative engagement. Part 2, *Practises in US-Muslim World Engagement (2001-2008)*, explores how America's political apprehensiveness has manifested in US foreign policy after 9/11, and the hope of broader forms of engagement. Part 3, *When Possibility Meets Practise*, considers this new way forward under a new presidency by illustrating how both sacred and secular players may engage in direct communication within the political arena to restore relations and enhance regional security.

Chapter 1 sets the stage by calling into question President Bush's political manoeuvring toward the Muslim world, reviewing his inability to support a strategy for direct communication. In addition, a review is taken of the State Department's reliance on its "Brand America" campaign and the lack of success it had with regards to improving America's image in the Muslim world. A post-9/11 eagerness by key State Department officials to employ robust public diplomacy measures points to a larger fear toward religion held by many within the American political system. Chapter 2 opens up this tension by

examining the impact of post-secularism. Here, we will explore both contributions (that welcome the religious voice into the public sphere) and the sacred-secular discord it often brings. Chapter 3 takes into account the political apprehensiveness of the American political system by considering a non-conventional mode of engagement that welcomes both sacred and secular players to restore trusted relations. In re-reading the impact of the contemporary interfaith movement, we draw upon the practicable traditions that are likely to have an impact on US relations. Socio-political interfaith dialogue is unveiled in this chapter as a progressive form of engagement for promoting direct communicative relations between USG officials and Muslims.

In reviewing this theme, Chapters 4 and 5 handle the impact of the Bush Doctrine and its influence on US diplomacy. At this point, the reason why key State officials would advise against sacred-secular engagement on all levels after 9/11 becomes clear. In addition, we examine what happens when broad international religious affairs are not examined by top USG agencies, and the general outcome of US-Muslim world relations when a communication strategy is not integrated into the diplomatic process. Moving beyond the setbacks of US diplomacy, Chapter 6 incorporates qualitative research findings gathered while working at the State Department and surrounding agencies. A review of various recommendations by seasoned diplomats and military commanders supportive of direct engagement with religious publics is considered. The chief recommendation, however, recommends the recruitment of a new type of Foreign Service Officer (religion attaché) into the US Foreign Service.

Chapter 7 explores President Obama's current communicative approach to engaging the Muslim world, which (as of late) is through direct Oval Office diplomacy. While executive-level engagement is instrumental in relaxing tension with the Muslim world, this chapter will argue that a more direct and concrete approach by US diplomats at a grassroots level is required. Reflecting upon this possibility, Chapter 8 revisits earlier recommendations calling for the recruitment of a religion attaché into the US Foreign Service. Douglas Johnston's (2004) religion attaché model is considered, but attention is given to its communicative shortcomings. While focusing here on the possibilities of integrating the contributions of post-secularism, socio-political interfaith dialogue and communication theory, the final chapter introduces into the Johnston religion attaché model the *Post-Secular Communication Strategy of Interfaith Diplomacy* (IFD<sup>2</sup>). Though this communication strategy is not considered to be the last word in resolving the ongoing US-Muslim world communication problem, it stands as a principle component in communication training for future US Foreign Service Officers.

## **Part 1**

### **Possibilities of a coexistent future**

## Chapter 1

### Assessing the tension in US-Muslim world relations after 9/11

#### 1.1. Introduction: “*Why do they hate us?*”

In presenting a declaration of war (which inevitably became the cornerstone of the proverbial Bush Doctrine) at a joint session of the US Congress on 20 September 2001, President George W. Bush raised the profound question which would go on to shape America’s perception of the global war on terror, “Why do they hate us?”. Providing a subjective rationale which he hoped America would grow to accept, he answered:

They hate what they see right here in this chamber: a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms: our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other. They want to overthrow existing governments in many Muslim countries such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Jordan. They want to drive Israel out of the Middle East. They want to drive Christians and Jews out of vast regions of Asia and Africa. These terrorists kill not merely to end lives, but to disrupt and end a way of life. With every atrocity, they hope that America grows fearful, retreating from the world and forsaking our friends. They stand against us because we stand in their way.<sup>40</sup>

When Bush delivered what would become one of the most defining addresses of his presidency, the Muslim world (like America) listened, possibly pondering the United States Government’s (USG) aim in bringing to justice those responsible for the 9/11 attacks. *Young, male, Muslim, educated* and *from well-to-do families* would become familiar terms in the

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<sup>40</sup> George W. Bush, *Transcript of President Bush's address to a joint session of Congress on Thursday night, September 20, 2001*, CNN.com [article online]; available from <http://edition.cnn.com/2001/US/09/20/gen.bush.transcript/>; Internet, accessed 20 January 2009; see also Lamont Colucci, *Crusading Realism: The Bush Doctrine and American Core Values after 9/11* (Maryland: Univ. Press of America, 2008).

ensuing weeks to describe the 9/11 hijackers. But another element, visible to the international eye, which appeared more hostile, rugged and eager to defeat the US (with its Western allies) in its efforts to combat the power of the Afghan Taliban, would define the new portrait of Islamic extremism and become the scapegoat for prolonging both the war in Afghanistan and that in Iraq. In outlining the Bush administration's demands, the ten years of fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq are evidence that its hearers were not swayed by its non-negotiable requests to:

- Deliver to United States authorities all of the leaders of Al Qaeda who hide in your land;
- Release all foreign nationals, including American citizens you have unjustly imprisoned;
- Protect foreign journalists, diplomats and aid workers in your country;
- Close immediately and permanently every terrorist training camp in Afghanistan, and hand over every terrorist and every person and their support structure to the appropriate authorities; [and]
- Give the United States full access to terrorist training camps, so we can make sure they are no longer operating.<sup>41</sup>

Under Bush's presidency, the Afghan Taliban and Al Qaeda became the symbolic example of forces whom US foreign policies would attempt to protect the world from (even though innocent civilians similar in character would be the victims of US human rights violations, such as extraordinary rendition and torture).<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> George W. Bush, *Transcript of President Bush's address to a joint session of Congress on Thursday night, September 20, 2001*, CNN.com [article online]; available from <http://edition.cnn.com/2001/US/09/20/gen.bush.transcript/>; Internet, accessed 20 January 2009.

<sup>42</sup> Jay S. Bybee, Steven Bradbury, and John Anthony Rizzo, et al., *The Secret Torture Memos: Bush Administration Memos on Torture As Released by the United States Department of Justice, April 16, 2009* (Maryland: Arc Manor, 2009); Phillippe Sands, *Torture Team: Rumsfeld's Memo and the Betrayal of American Values* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

Two points are apparent from this. First, at the core of Bush's address is a tension which now characterises aspects of America's foreign policy with the Muslim world. Beginning with Bush's enquiry "why do they hate us?", this tension later matured within an American political environment susceptible to the creation of *culture wars*. This tension is bound up with the USG's interpretation over the next decade of the notion of "they" and, in turn, how the Muslim world came to stand accused of breeding an extreme element that was at odds with US national security. At a deeper level, within Bush's address (and numerous succeeding speeches), the President clearly did not distinguish between Muslims who apparently hate the US (those willing to inflict violence in pursuit of their ends) and the vast majority of Muslims, who are not entirely at odds with America. The political manoeuvring that arose from this perception bound the entire conception of the Muslim world together with the minute elements of extremism which gained public prominence. The fixed attitude of the Bush administration (which inevitably developed over the course of his administration) interpreted the religion of Islam as the central problem, Islamic fundamentalism as its source, and Islamic militants as the extreme combatants.

Secondly, this tension developed into an unwillingness by the President to outline a plan of action to engage with the resurgence of political activity linked to religion in the public sphere (post-secularism) after 9/11. Bush's treatment of the post-secular was at best ambiguous and lacklustre. His treatment of this mounting resurgence of religious attitudes within the public sphere, and the USG's attempt to combat symbolic examples of it, seems to be, on the one hand, a declaration of war from Bush to the Taliban and Al Qaeda and, on the other, a colourless appeal to all Muslims in the claim "America is not at war with Islam, nor

the Arab world.”<sup>43</sup> Thus, Bush’s timid vacillation marked the beginning of an imbalance which shaped international public opinion toward America. Though the President outlined a plan to combat terror and Islamic extremism with staunch military force, unfortunately he failed to outline a strategic plan of action to directly engage the vast majority of the Muslim world which was not at odds with American society.

The general debate over the last decade concludes that the failure of American foreign policy in the Muslim world relates solely to the USG’s national security and energy interests within the Middle East and Iran. Chapter 1 will move beyond this argument to establish a new conversation on the question of communication as considered, developed and even pursued (at the diplomatic level) within the US Department of State between 2001 and 2008. In making this exploration, important evidence surfaced with regards to the reason why public diplomacy and nation-branding became (though indirectly) the US Department of State’s central tactic in spreading the USG’s foreign policy message. A space where discourse, dialogue and engagement to address issues relating to post-secularism might be constructively pursued in public between US secular and religious spokespersons did not receive due consideration.

Before examining the setbacks in US diplomatic communication under the Bush administration, it is imperative we turn our attention, first, to comprehending how elements of American foreign policy has contributed to less than favourable perceptions held by Muslims. In briefly exploring this matter, we comprehend how the historical background of American intervention (especially within the Middle East) intersects with the development of America’s image problem after 2001. This study suspects, however, that America’s inability

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<sup>43</sup> George W. Bush, *Transcript of President Bush's address to a joint session of Congress on Thursday night, September 20, 2001*, CNN.com [article online]; available from <http://edition.cnn.com/2001/US/09/20/gen.bush.transcript/>; Internet, accessed 20 January 2009.



to withstand a period of consistent positive interchange with the Muslim world and international Muslim communities has inevitably contributed to the longstanding decline in public perceptions toward American foreign policy and American leadership by Muslims.

## 1.2. Complicating US foreign relations with Muslims

US foreign policy in the Middle East has gained many economic, diplomatic, and military successes at the expense of complicating relations with international Muslim communities. While key leaders in the Middle East may readily embrace America's presence in the region (through foreign aid or military assistance) there are others, as non-elites, (belonging to the private sector) that regard an American military presence or the US's political influence as problematic. Some fear this arrangement has the potential to contribute to the spread of an American hegemony throughout the region.<sup>44</sup> This challenge to the American approach interacts with an uneven U.S. foreign policy, based upon bilateral relationships with Israel and Saudi Arabia, two regional pillars presenting different agendas.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Noam Chomsky takes up this position from an academic standpoint suggesting, "The expectation I presume is that the United States will end up with military bases in Iraq, stable bases right at the heart of the oil producing region for the first time, in a client state, a state which will be called free and independent and even democratic, but in secret will be described the way the British in secret described their colonial domains. It will be run by what the British called an Arab façade, behind which Britain effectively ruled. That's pretty much the way the United States has run its own backyard, Central America and Caribbean, for a hundred years, and it's familiar in the history of imperialism. Noam Chomsky "The Dilemmas of Dominance" in Boron, Atilio New Worldwide Hegemony – alternatives for change and social movements 2004 (Buenos Aires: CLACSO); See also Noam Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2003).

<sup>45</sup> See Noam Chomsky, Gilbert Achcar, and Stephen Rosskamm Shalom. *Perilous Power: The Middle East & U.S. Foreign Policy: Dialogues on Terror, Democracy, War, and Justice* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2007). See also John L Esposito, *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam* (Oxford: OUP, 2002); Noam Chomsky, *The Fateful Triangle: The United States, Israel and the Palestinians* (London: Pluto Press, 1999).

The context for the growing scepticism held by Muslims toward the US government includes: *Resistance toward modernisation introduced by interaction with Western nations as the United States, the prospects of spreading America's growing political and ideological influence on Islamic society, and America's ardent support for the state of Israel as a "strategic asset" in the Middle East.*<sup>46</sup> Each concern is shaped out of an acute awareness by Muslims that the US since WW II has become a dominant power in the Middle East and that its foreign policy is essentially crafted remote from the many aspirations and perspectives of non-elite Muslims in the region. Michael C. Hudson acknowledges this point in the essay, *To Play the Hegemon*, asserting, "Today, the American President can summon the leader from most Middle Eastern governments to endorse his regional (and domestic) political agenda. American financial officials can write the domestic economic policy for most governments in the region. [And] The U.S. military enjoys unprecedented access and acceptance from North Africa to the [Persian] Gulf."<sup>47</sup>

Since 1933, when King Abdel Aziz granted American oil countries entrance into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the USG has built a relationship to fulfill its oil interest (and after 1945) to establish a geo-political position against the Soviet Union to combat the spread of communism.<sup>48</sup> In achieving its contemporary goals, the US has to deal with a set of issues which may complicate or support its current foreign policy approach: Security in the post-war

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<sup>46</sup> P. W. Singer, M. J. Akbar, and Kurt M. Campbell, "A Strategic Look at US-Muslim World Relations", *Brookings Project on US Relations with the Islamic World* (Washington, D.C.: Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution, 2008); Morris Mehrdad Mottale, *The Origins of the Gulf Wars* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2001).

<sup>47</sup> Michael C. Hudson, "To Play the Hegemon: Fifty Years of US Policy Toward the Middle East." *The Middle East Journal*. (1996) no. 3: 329-343.

<sup>48</sup> Regarding the US-Saudi relationship and the tension (since September 11) that has surfaced between the two see, Craig Unger, House of Bush, *House of Saud: The Secret Relationship between the World's Two Most Powerful Dynasties* (New York: Scribner, 2004); Parker T. Hart and David E Long, "Saudi Arabia and the United States: Birth of a Security Partnership" in *The Middle East Journal* no. 4 (2000); see also Rachel Bronson, *Thicker Than Oil: America's Uneasy Partnership with Saudi Arabia* (Oxford: OUP, 2006).

Gulf region, the Saudi position on the Arab-Israeli conflict, arms transfers to Saudi Arabia, Saudi external aid programs, bilateral trade relationships and oil production, and Saudi policies involving human rights and democracy.<sup>49</sup> A lucrative relationship between the USG and Saudi elites has prospered at times at the expense of ignoring the lack of consensus of hostile non-elite Muslims in the Saudi private sphere.<sup>50</sup> “Since the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, some commentators have maintained that Saudi domestic and foreign policies [with the US] have created a climate that may have contributed to terrorist acts by Islamic radicals.”<sup>51</sup>

There have been parallel tension in the US’s relationship with Saudi Arabia and the state of Israel. Since recognising the state of Israel in 1948, the US and Israel have maintained an alliance based on strong US domestic support for Israel; shared democratic values; and largely shared strategic goals in the Middle East (i.e. concern over Iran, Syria, and Islamic extremism).<sup>52</sup> While the US may of played both sides of the US foreign policy table with Israel and Arab allies to fulfill its self-interest, grievances of many Muslims in the region have been fueled by the US’s relationship with the Jewish state (especially since the

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<sup>49</sup> Alfred B Prados, *Saudi Arabia Current Issues and U.S. Relations*, (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 2006). According to Juan Cole on America’s demand for Middle Eastern oil, he writes, “The United States is far more dependent on Islamic oil today than it was thirty years ago. In 2007 the United States was consuming over 20 million barrels per day of petroleum and other liquefied fuels, mainly in its transportation sector, but producing only a little over 5 million barrels of petroleum per day. It was producing 3 million barrels per day of other liquefied fuels, including ethanol. American oil reserves are limited, so the conclusion is simple mathematics. The United States needs about 12 million barrels a day of petroleum or other liquefied fuels from somewhere else if it is to maintain its present way of life.” Juan Cole, *Engaging the Muslim World* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 21.

<sup>50</sup> Regarding this vocal opposition toward US foreign policy and the recruitment of terrorist in Saudi Arabia see, Thomas Hegghammer, “Terrorist Recruitment and Radicalization in Saudi Arabia” in *The Journal of Middle East Policy* no 4 (Winter 2006): 39-60.

<sup>51</sup> Alfred B. Prados, *Suadi Arabia Current Issues and U.S. Relations*.

<sup>52</sup> Jeremy M. Sharp, *U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel*: CRS report for Congress (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2006).

Six-Day War of 1967).<sup>53</sup> Since this period, US foreign aid has led to Israel's military strength "transforming Israel's armed forces into one of the most technologically sophisticated military in the world".<sup>54</sup> (US foreign aid to Israel in 2010 reached nearly \$3 billion and according to the Bush administration's 10 Year Aid Agreement (2007), it is set to increase this contribution by \$6 billion over the next decade).<sup>55</sup> Muslims presenting vocal opposition to the US's foreign aid policy with Israel sees its financial support to the Jewish state as an instrument aiding the Arab-Israeli conflict. For many, this stands as a direct contradiction to the relationship that the USG fosters with Arab nations.

One of the most recent attempts to assess the tension between US foreign policy and its reception by Muslim communities was the US-Muslim Engagement Project (led by former US Secretary of State Madeline Albright and Richard Armitage) which acknowledge varied US foreign policy activities and critical events occurring that colour Muslim world perceptions of American leadership and American foreign policy.<sup>56</sup> The first, notably, is marked by America's intervention and participation (in 1948) in recognising a homeland for Jewish settlers in Palestine, openly leading to wide suspicion of the US among key Arab nation states. By 1953, Operation Ajax (the CIA-sponsored coup of Mohammad Mossadegh to install Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi in Iran) caused tension among religious leaders in

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<sup>53</sup> "One might argue that Israel was an asset during the Cold War. By serving as America's proxy after 1967, it helped contain Soviet expansion in the region and inflicted humiliating defeats on Soviet clients like Egypt and Syria. It occasionally helped protect other US allies (like King Hussein of Jordan) and its military prowess forced Moscow to spend more on backing its own client states. It also provided useful intelligence about Soviet capabilities." John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, "The Israel Lobby" in *The London Review of Books* no 6 (March 2006).

<sup>54</sup> Jeremy M. Sharp, *U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel*: CRS report for Congress (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2006), 1.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> US-Muslim Engagement Project, *Changing Course A New Direction for US Relations with the Muslim World* (Washington, DC: US-Muslim Engagement Project, 2008).

Iran and set the stage for political Islam to emerge two decades later.<sup>57</sup> Ending Eisenhower's first term, in 1957, the Suez Crisis would make the US an unlikely superpower in the region when it brokered a peaceful accord between Egypt, France and Britain in an effort to restore international control to the Suez Canal.<sup>58</sup>

The 1960s saw its share of US-Middle East foreign policy initiatives, beginning with President Kennedy's affirmation in 1961 that America was "committed to Israel's right to exist, while at the same time [assuring America's] access to Arab oil"<sup>59</sup> (especially for America's European allies, which depended on the region for three quarters of their petroleum). After Kennedy's assassination and Johnson's succession in 1963, mounting tension led to the Six Day War in 1967 where American intervention proved one-sided in settling the discord between Syria, Egypt, Jordan and Israel.<sup>60</sup> Like the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, by 1972 the Nixon administration was forced to confront the Middle East as well, owing to the counterattack on Israel by the Syrians and Egyptians over the Golan Heights and the Suez Canal.<sup>61</sup>

However, if ever a period rose where US foreign policy experienced great challenges in the Middle East, it was during the Carter administration.<sup>62</sup> Upon taking office, President

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<sup>57</sup> See Stephen Kinzer, *All the Shah's Men: An American Coup and the Roots of Middle East Terror* (Hoboken: J. Wiley & Sons, 2003).

<sup>58</sup> In addition, tension flared during this period in 1955 surrounding the Aswan Dam between the US (Dulles), Egypt (Nasser) and Russia; See Charles D. Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2007).

<sup>59</sup> T.G. Fraser and Donette Murray, *America and the World since 1945*, 104.

<sup>60</sup> Moshe Shemesh, *Arab Politics, Palestinian Nationalism and the Six Day War: The Crystallization of Arab Strategy and Nasser's Descent to War, 1957-1967* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2008).

<sup>61</sup> Scholars thus argued that Henry Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy contributed to a cease fire in the region by 1974; Robert Dallek, *Nixon and Kissinger: Partners in Power* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007); see also Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994).

<sup>62</sup> Scott Kaufman, *Plans Unraveled: The Foreign Policy of the Carter Administration*

Carter presented a public appeal for a Palestinian homeland, which prompted a backlash by US Jewish lobbyists and pro-Israeli supporters throughout his administration. This challenge continued throughout his presidency, and throughout America's efforts to dispel the tension in the Middle East following the Six Day War, by maintaining stability between Egypt and Israel up to 1977. Beyond doubt, the Iranian Revolution in 1979 and the hostage crisis thereafter became a further tipping point for Carter's presidency and American credibility throughout the Middle East. In reaction to the mounting pressure from American and British interests in the Middle East, by the 1970s political Islam would take precedence as a religio-political ideology, creating an unmanageable tension in US-Iranian relations.<sup>63</sup>

In this case, if the 1980s were given a title it might read: *the decade when the US made friends out of enemies and enemies out of friends*. This decade saw the USG covertly supporting Islamic factions and governments whom, today, it is forced to confront (for example, the Afghan Mujahedeen [later becoming the Taliban] in the US's proxy war against the Soviets) as it sought to contain communism. During this period, the Reagan administration took centre stage in carrying out its implicit foreign policy objectives to contain communism in Central and South Asia, even if it meant funding the militant Mujahedeen and openly regarding the faction as "freedom fighters".<sup>64</sup> The events that occurred during the Reagan administration would include Israel's withdrawal from the Sinai in 1982, the same year as its invasion of Lebanon; the failure of the Middle East peace process in the early 1980s; the rise of Hezbollah in 1983; and, unforgettably, the Iran-Contra Affair. By the time George H. W. Bush took office in 1989, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and

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(DeKalb: Northern Illinois UP, 2008).

<sup>63</sup> Based on the social theory that Muslim governments should rule according to Islamic law (*Sharia*), political Islam gained a unique popularity throughout the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia, as a way to express opposition to authoritarian governments.

<sup>64</sup> See Lawrence Freedman, *A Choice of Enemies: America Confronts the Middle East* (New York: Public Affairs, 2008).

America's Gulf War military intervention in Iraq contributed to generating negative perceptions held by Iraqis toward the US. "Regardless of whether or not the Iraqi masses agreed with Hussein's decision to invade Kuwait, most Iraqis hoped for a negotiated settlement to avoid war, and they formed critical opinions of the US when it did launch a war which devastated their nation yet kept their dictator intact."<sup>65</sup>

Arguably, the 1990s would become the most hostile decade of the twentieth century for the US, and one in which its solid relations with some Muslim countries, their dictators and Islamic fundamentalist factions such as the Taliban and Iraq's Saddam Hussein, would become tenuous.<sup>66</sup> During this period, Muslim extremist movements were not as successful as before in toppling governments in such countries as Algeria, Uzbekistan and Chechnya. With many of these countries perturbed by American dominance<sup>67</sup> in Muslim countries, Muslim extremist groups

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<sup>65</sup> Ibrahim Al-Marashi and Katherine Durlacher, *Iraqi Perceptions of UK and American Policy in Post-Saddam Iraq* [document online] available from <http://www.foreignpolicysociety.org/iraq.pdf>; Internet accessed 10 May 2010; Al-Marashi and Durlacher acknowledge, "Iraqi perceptions of the US were effected by certain events that were shared by other Arabs who hold critical views of American foreign policy. The first factor is American support for Israel, which became US policy after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and continues to the present. Iraqis seem to express almost equal hostility towards Israel and the US support for this country. The second factor that formed Iraqi perceptions of the US was the 1991 Gulf war. Regardless of whether or not the Iraqi masses agreed with Hussein's decision to invade Kuwait, most Iraqis hoped for a negotiated settlement to avoid war, and they formed critical opinions of the US when it did launch a war which devastated their nation yet kept their dictator intact. Lastly, whether Iraqis supported the Hussein regime or not, they universally suffered under UN imposed sanctions. During this period, many Iraqis blamed America for perpetuating these sanctions that hurt the Iraqi people and did nothing to their regime." Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Examples include the shift in relations with Saddam Hussein after 1992 and the US Gulf War; the US expansion of bases throughout parts of Saudi Arabia and other Muslim countries; and tension inside such countries as Algeria, Uzbekistan and Chechnya, which all claimed to be struggling against Western influence within the region.

<sup>67</sup> The American dominance witnessed under the Bush administration is synonymous to the "Brinkmanship" foreign policy activity taken by Joseph Forster Dulles. Dulles' policy hinged, however on pushing a hostile situation to the verge of disaster in order to receive a beneficial outcome by a party. See Thomas Cromble Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge, HUP, 1980), 200.

Began to shift their strategy toward attacking the US and other Western nations. Al-Qaeda affiliates were involved in attacks on the World Trade Center in 1993, US embassies in East Africa in 1998, and the USS Cole in 2000. Their core justification for attacking the US was to free the Muslim world – particularly the Arab lands that house Islam’s sacred sites – from what they saw as Western domination. Pushing the West out of Muslim lands was to be the first step toward overthrowing the governments they saw as illegitimate, and establishing true Islamic states.<sup>68</sup>

By the 1990s the Clinton administration showed some promise in its landmark success with the Oslo Accords (though feebly signed between Israel’s Yitzak Rabin and Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Palestinian Liberation Movement). The legacy of Camp David II in July 2000, where a settlement between the US, Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat was broached, established a workable framework for George W. Bush’s administration.

America’s image problem did not begin after September 11, 2001. The problem arose from the US’s ascendancy in the Middle East after WW II. Based on fulfilling the US’s foreign interest, US policymakers have often overlooked the perspectives and aspirations of non-elites living within the Middle East. This in turn shapes negative perceptions towards American foreign policy and American leadership. The outcome is an inconsistency in America’s foreign relations with Muslim countries diminishing any form of US credibility that might facilitate the promotion of US-Muslim world relations.

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<sup>68</sup> *US-Muslim Engagement Project*, 108.



### 1.2.1. Muslim world perceptions

Since the US-led invasion of Afghanistan (October 7, 2001), maintaining the US's favourable and credible standing throughout the Muslim world has proven a hard task. In a Pew Forum sub-study on anti-Americanism and favourable opinions of US perceptions, (polling 17,000 people from 15 different nations) US favourability was found not only to have slipped among the five Muslim countries polled, but was still drastically declining.<sup>69</sup> US favourability among the general population of the five Muslim countries polled indicated ratings set at: Indonesia 30%, Egypt 30%, Pakistan 27%, Jordan 15% and Turkey 12%.<sup>70</sup> As an indicator, each country's rating had consistently fallen below 50% since polling began in 2002. Strangely, each Muslim country polled since 2001 had maintained something of a diplomatic relationship with the USG since the attacks of 9/11 and the entry of Western allied forces into Afghanistan and Iraq. However, if we look closely at these findings, we observe that the general population, as opposed to the government in each country, was growing indifferent to the US political agenda and American leadership in the Muslim world.<sup>71</sup>

According to the Pew Forum president Andrew Kohut, in his 2007 testimony on Foreign Affairs – US House of Representatives, which was presented to the Subcommittee on

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<sup>69</sup> The overall study between 2001-2006 polled more than 110,000 people in 50 countries.

<sup>70</sup> Carroll Doherty, ed., "America's Image Slips, But Allies Share US Concerns Over Iran, Hamas", by *The Pew Global Attitudes Project* (Washington, Pew Forum, 2006); see also Pew Forum, *America's Image in the World: Findings from the Pew Global Attitudes Project Testimony of Andrew Kohut* [document online]; available from <http://pewglobal.org/commentary/pdf/1019.pdf>; Internet, accessed 20 May 2009.

<sup>71</sup> These findings indicate a "visible problem". Although the USG relationship with some predominantly Muslim countries is often used to send a symbolic message to Muslim audiences, I suggest that this "visible gap" between the Muslim public's view of the US and the open relationship between their country and the USG is apparent from the low ratings in this poll of the general public in each country. This raises the question, "*Is constructing a visible conversation with the heads of state of a predominantly Muslim country more important than building a trusted relationship among its general public?*" I argue that both sectors share equal importance, but the techniques targeted at addressing heads of state may not be equally as successful when "addressing" or "engaging" its general public.

International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight (March 2007), findings of polls stretching back to 2002 reveal that in:<sup>72</sup>

- December 2002 – America’s image slips, although goodwill towards the US remains.
- June 2003 – US image plunges, in the wake of the Iraq war.
- March 2004 – No improvement in US image, some worsening in Europe.
- June 2005 – US image improves slightly, although still negative in most places; anti-Americanism is becoming increasingly entrenched.
- June 2006 – Little progress – in fact, some backsliding, even though the publics of the world concurred with the Americans on many global problems.

A rapid sense of global distrust of American leadership (and its unilateral foreign policy) formulated between 2001 and 2002 was identified as the cause of this continuing wane by 2007 in a similar study entitled *America’s Image Slips, But Allies Share US Concern Over Iran, and Hamas* (2007).<sup>73</sup> In its polling of ten predominantly Muslim countries, each openly expressed its discontent with the US. The 2007 report stated that:

Not only is there worldwide support for a withdrawal of US troops from Iraq, but there also is considerable opposition to US and NATO operations in Afghanistan... In nearly every predominantly Muslim country, overwhelming majorities want US and NATO troops withdrawn from Afghanistan as soon as possible. In addition, global support for the US-led war on terrorism ebbs ever lower.<sup>74</sup>

Confounding variables linked to this decline in US favourability were associated with additional polled reactions to American leadership throughout the Muslim world. These

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<sup>72</sup> Pew Forum, “America’s Image in the World: Findings from the Pew Global Attitudes Project Testimony of Andrew Kohut” [document online] available from <http://pewglobal.org/commentary/pdf/1019.pdf>; Internet, accessed 20 May 2009.

<sup>73</sup> Juliana Menasce Horowitz, ed. “Global Unease with Major World Powers”, by *The Pew Global Attitudes Project* (Washington, Pew Forum, 2006).

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 5.

views were expressed further in the overwhelmingly unfavourable ratings captured in these ten predominantly Muslim countries (see below).

**Table 3**

**Pew Poll, “Views of the US and American Foreign Policy”  
Snapshot of Muslim countries polled, 2007<sup>75</sup>**

<i>Nation</i>	<i>Favourable</i>	<i>Unfavourable</i>
Kuwait	46	46
Lebanon	47	52
Indonesia	29	66
Malaysia	27	69
Egypt	21	78
Jordan	20	78
Morocco	15	56
Pakistan	15	68
Palestinian Ter.	13	86
Turkey	9	83

By comparing the findings taken from the 2006 study with those of the 2007 study, we can see that US favourability continued to fall to a degree in four out of five Muslim countries. For example, the 2007 study reveals that Indonesian perceptions of the US had fallen from 30% to 29%; Egypt 30% to 21%; Pakistan 27% to 15%; and Turkey 12% to 9%. An uneventful 5% spike from 15% to 20% showed in Jordan, but countries with close ties to the USG such as Pakistan, Kuwait, Lebanon and Morocco each contributed favourability figures below 50%.

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<sup>75</sup> Juliana Menasce Horowitz, ed. “Global Unease with Major World Powers”, by *The Pew Global Attitudes Project* (Washington, Pew Forum, 2006), 5. Note: Sum rows will not equal 100% because many polled expressed no opinion.

### 1.2.2. Revisiting the US-Muslim world communicative problem

Considering the fluctuation in American foreign policy from interchange to dominance over the last half-century, the USG's vacillation explains its image decline in the Muslim world. Evidently, by 2001 the Bush administration's foreign policy platform would go on to exacerbate a previous scepticism by Muslims towards the United States. The decline in US favourability and the rise in animosity and Islamic anxiety support the argument that aspects of US foreign policymaking under the Bush administration contributed at great length to America's image problem after 2001 and the widespread distrust of US foreign policymaking over the course of a decade. The Bush administration's foreign policy platform was driven by exceptionalism; to all intents and purposes, it set out to convince all Muslims of America's superiority to any other nation by presenting an exceptionalist agenda to eradicate an extreme element within the Muslim world.

As Howard Zinn points out, this tone was introduced through a body of US foreign policies which sought to enforce an idea of the US's disregard during the global war on terror for such things as multilateral organisations and international laws, in order to reach its national security objectives.<sup>76</sup> Take David Malone's argument, for example, that after 9/11 (with such organisations as the United Nations) "where US inspired norms have come to be broadly accepted at the international level – as is the case with norms concerning war crimes and human rights violations – the United States has not always been prepared to craft or support new doctrines binding of itself."<sup>77</sup> At this time, it was evident that the USG was

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<sup>76</sup> Howard Zinn, *The Power and the Glory: Myth of American Exceptionalism* [article online]; <http://bostonreview.net/BR30.3/zinn.html>; Internet, accessed 20 June 2009; see also Howard Zinn and Anthony Arnove, *Terrorism and War* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2002).

<sup>77</sup> David M. Malone and Yuen Foong Khong, *Unilateralism and US Foreign Policy: International Perspectives* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 20.

unwilling to adhere to documents and treaties which would bind it to the rule of law and ensure that, if key players were to violate human rights (extraordinary rendition or torture), they would suffer criminal prosecution.<sup>78</sup>

The fear that gripped the Bush administration after 9/11 was part of the reaction to protect America's most fundamental ideals, including its luxuries and, above all, American "liberties" and "freedom". By October 2002 the stage was set, and ensuring that US national security interest were met, Bush's foreign policy included the caveat of *American exceptionalism*, which today has left the US in a compromised position in the Muslim world.

Malone affirms that:

Like the inhabitants of some other countries, Americans tend to view their own sovereignty as paramount, that of others as peripheral. Within its own hemisphere, certainly, the United States throughout its history has successfully asserted its sovereignty largely unchallenged while it also, through skilful norm-building during the twentieth century, helped to define the content of the sovereignty of others – without necessarily internalising norms it has expected others to adopt completely.<sup>79</sup>

The risk of losing America's "freedoms" to an emerging religio-political ideology fuelled its fierce need to contain the extreme elements within the Muslim world; it had to ensure that US foreign and national security interests were protected by whatever means necessary – whether legal or illegal under international law.<sup>80</sup> In Bush's view, to assure the protection of "America's liberties", lines would have to be crossed and longstanding favourable perceptions of the US would inevitably decline (which will, it could be argued, take years if not another decade to restore).

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<sup>78</sup> Steven Grey, *Ghost Plane: The True Story of the CIA Torture Program* (New York: St. Martin Press, 2006); see also Michael Moore, *Fahrenheit 9/11* (Culver City, Calif: Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment, 2004).

<sup>79</sup> Malone and Khong, *Unilateralism and US Foreign Policy: International Perspective*, 20.

<sup>80</sup> See, Jay S. Bybee, Steven Bradbury, and John Anthony Rizzo, *The Secret Torture Memos: Bush Administration Memos on Torture As Released by the United States Department of Justice, April 16, 2009* (Rockville: Arc Manor, 2009).

Therefore, a unique perspective in this study, which invites a more extensive examination, relates first to Bush's missed communication opportunity in his 20 September foreign policy address to a joint session of congress. More concisely, it relates to the administration's disregard for the vast majority of Muslims, who were not at extreme odds with America. Clearly, the administration never outlined a strategy for effectively engaging and building relations with the majority of Muslims, compared with the attention given to combating terror. Efforts to communicate the US foreign policy message were geared toward employing public diplomacy in order to raise US favourability and nation-branding to market American values throughout the Muslim world by the State Department (between 2001 and 2008).

The focus of the administration's approach was clearly not on building a basis of direct communicative relations with the majority of Muslims, but on improving its image while carrying out its pre-emptive military objectives. After 9/11, to implement this approach, the US Department of State (to the surprise of the Muslim world [according to the evidence]) reintroduced an already established programme of public diplomacy and nation-branding with the purpose of improving relations by winning favourability, and thus containing the spread of terrorism throughout Muslim countries.

Five months before 9/11, preparations to restore the US's ailing image within the Muslim world had begun, under the direction of then Secretary of State Colin Powell's *Diplomatic Readiness Initiative*, which promoted a recognisable nation-branding campaign

entitled *Brand America*.<sup>81</sup> Powell's objective was not only related to selling US foreign policy, as he later recalled, in "the old USIA way [but] branding foreign policy, marketing the department, and marketing American values to the world."<sup>82</sup> By late 2001, the above Pew findings indicated that the State Department faced a three-fold problem in raising US favourability ratings, which was linked to: i) intervention and containment leading to a growing distrust of the US; ii) the US's position in the global war on terror; and iii) impressions of American political exceptionalism for the sake of its "freedom", despite its preemptive actions and violations of international human rights.

This three-way problem impels one to agree with Wolfe and Rosen's study, *Public Diplomacy: How to Think About and Improve It* (2004), which acknowledges that "America has an image problem. The problem is global [in that] even the leaders of some traditional American allies have found it convenient and politically advantageous to disparage America. [Thus] the problem is especially acute in the Middle East and among predominantly Muslim populations."<sup>83</sup> They add that it is based upon the historical background of American intervention and containment intended to foster a liberal-secular outlook in parts of the

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<sup>81</sup> Colin Powell, *Diplomatic Readiness Initiative: The Human Resource Strategy* [document online]; available from <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/13742.pdf>; Internet, accessed March 2008. "Brand America" is often taken to mean a US foreign policy document or initiative employed by the Bush Administration after September 11. In principle, "Brand America" is a national marketing effort employed five months before September 11 by State Department officials (former Secretary of State Colin Powell and Undersecretary Charlotte Beers) to address the image of the United States among foreign audiences and, more specifically, among Muslim audiences. Since this time, most marketing or public diplomacy campaigns which emphasise US values, foreign policy, or how best to raise the morale of the US abroad are often quoted by writers as efforts to "Brand America". See Simon Anholt and Jeremy Hildreth, *Brand America: The Mother of all Brands* (United Kingdom: Cyan Books, 2004); Dick Martin, *Rebuilding Brand America: What we Must Do to Restore our Reputation and Safeguard the Future of American Business Abroad* (New York: AMACOM Books, 2007).

<sup>82</sup> Jami A. Fullerton and Alice Kendrick, *Advertising's War on Terrorism: The Story of the US State Department's Shared Values Initiative* (Spokane: Marquette Books, 2006), 14.

<sup>83</sup> Charles Wolfe, Jr. and Brian Rosen, "Public Diplomacy: How to Think About and Improve It", *Occasional Paper-RAND Corporation* (2004) [article online]; available from [http://www.rand.org/pubs/occasional\\_papers/2004/RAND\\_OP134.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/occasional_papers/2004/RAND_OP134.pdf); Internet, accessed 22 March 2008.

Middle East which has provoked animosity, driving down perceptions of the US to a degree which, today, warrants a search for a foreign policy of direct communication with Muslim audiences. Secretary Powell's proposed marketing approach (which served as the central form of communication between the US and Muslim audiences after 9/11) was in effect not the correct approach for the US, given the shift in the religious and political climate throughout the Muslim world after the 1970s.<sup>84</sup> Instead, what was needed to improve relations was direct engagement with Muslim audiences, even more so than with their governments – though their governments also deserve attention.

Powell's proposed approach proved deeply problematic and not nearly mindful enough of the reason for the low reputation of the US. As the Wolfe and Rosen study affirms, "It is fanciful to believe that redeploying American "marketing talent", even when supplemented [for example] by the \$62 million appropriated to launch a new Middle East television network, would significantly diminish the prevalence of anti-Americanism."<sup>85</sup> But this neither improved nor very much raised the country's favourability. *In this respect, what could have been the State Department's reason for its cavalier approach?* The straightforward answer lies with the Bush administration's unwillingness to recognise publically the perspectives and aspirations of Muslims. This posture became manifest through unilateral behaviour cultivated by an American exceptionalism. In this special case, a US foreign policy agenda which projected stalwart militarism on a few, but would inevitably create intense anxiety among the many, could only be successful if an identity politic were established. By 2001, this would promote a new culture war to help the US reach its national

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<sup>84</sup> See William A. Rugh, *American Encounters with Arabs: The "Soft Power" of US Public Diplomacy in the Middle East* (Connecticut: Praeger Security International, 2006); see also Robert B. Satloff, *The Battle of Ideas in the War on Terror: Essays on US Public Diplomacy in the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2004).

<sup>85</sup> Wolfe and Rosen, 5.



security and foreign policy objectives.

Initially, for the Bush administration, its foreign policy was established to protect US sovereignty and the security of Americans at home and abroad. After entering Afghanistan in 2001 and realising the possibility of losing American sovereignty to non-state combatants, a foreign policy of American exceptionalism manifested itself in order to convince Muslim publics of America's superiority. Unfortunately, this foreign policy of exceptionalism distorted US communications with the Muslim world, as it adopted commercial marketing tactics to raise US favourability. Instead of the USG creating an avenue to feed back into the US foreign policy discussion the aspirations and perspectives of Muslims and their various grassroots networks, America's foreign policy of exceptionalism upstaged the other opportunities presented.

In addition, this explains why historical attitudes towards America (due to its vacillating foreign policy of interchange and dominance) remained the same or dwindled further by 2001 in Muslim publics. This has also contributed to the many abstract views of the Muslim world by USG officials. In moving to a more assertive understanding of this argument, let us observe how a foreign policy of American exceptionalism transpiring under the Bush administration became an exceptional issue of identity politics. This manoeuvring would go on to block US-Muslim world communicative interchange by promoting the academic confrontationalist agenda that Islamic society needed to reform. This academic position is best understood through Mary Kaldor's reading of "new wars" and the way in which identity politics examined through both confrontationalism and Islamic fundamentalism shaped the Bush administration's foreign policy agenda.

### 1.3. Playing identity politics: *From Lewis to Islamic fundamentalism*

Mary Kaldor, of the London School of Economics, saw “new wars” first emerging in the latter part of the twentieth century grow out of the disunification of the Soviet bloc in Eastern Europe and appear even in former West and Central Africa.<sup>86</sup> These “new wars” would especially emerge out of an erosion of the “autonomy of the state and in some extreme cases, the disintegration of the state” caused by activities related to hostile factions and corrupt regimes.<sup>87</sup> A rise in global technology brought closer the effects of these wars on innocent civilians, exposing human rights violations and even mass killings based on ethnicity, as seen in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rwanda and Sri Lanka.<sup>88</sup> An international playing field overrun with “new wars”, often comprising new players who were mostly hostile in character, as well as those recognised as neutral, converged on it from different arenas (i.e. NGOs, multilateral bodies and international security agencies).

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<sup>86</sup> Kaldor’s findings lead her to argue that “during the 1980s and 1990s, a new type of organised violence has developed, especially in Africa and Eastern Europe, which is one aspect of the current globalised era.” Kaldor’s approach makes a distinction between old wars (or traditional wars) and new wars. Old wars are recognised as war with a central goal of seizing territory or advancing a nation-state’s objectives. They are wars funded by the state with funds collected from citizen taxation or through transparent borrowing from allies to fund its war campaign. Its purposes of engaging in war are “linked to a notion of state interest or to some forward-looking project – ideas about how society should be organised.” In contrast, Kaldor asserts that “new wars” must be understood in a context related to the process of globalisation. Thus, a rise in globalisation has brought about a rise in technology and an “intensification of global interconnectedness” which summarily aids the transportation of new ideals (or what the RAND study “Exploring Religious Conflict” regards as *new religious movements* – making these new activities transnational, en vogue and wide spread). Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (California: Stanford UP, 1999), 1; see also Peter J. Hoffman and Thomas George Weiss, ed. *Sword & Salve: Confronting New Wars and Humanitarian Crises* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006); Gregory F. Treverton, Heather S. Gregg, Daniel K. Gibran, et. al, *Exploring Religious Conflict* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2005).

<sup>87</sup> Kaldor, *New & Old Wars*, 4; see also Paul Gilbert, *New Terror, New Wars* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown UP, 2003).

<sup>88</sup> See Alex J. Bellamy, Paul Williams, and Stuart Griffin. *Understanding Peacekeeping* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004).

Alongside this erosion and failure of the state has emerged what Kaldor identifies as a level of “organised violence” led by a criminal element comprised of non-state actors who generally contribute to the localised, low-intensity conflicts (i.e. guerrilla warfare or terrorism) most common today. Remarking on these “new wars”, Kaldor asserts that:

In situations in which state revenues decline because of the economy as well as the spread of criminality, corruption and inefficiency, violence is increasingly privatised both as a result of growing organised crime and the emergence of paramilitary groups, and political legitimacy is disappearing. Thus the distinctions between external barbarity and domestic civility, between the combatant as the legitimate bearer of arms and the non-combatant, between the soldier or policeman and the criminal, are breaking down.<sup>89</sup>

But, in comprehending where this violence originates and what exactly contributes to its motivation, we must examine its relationship to ideology. In contrast to the geopolitical (or ideological) goals of old wars, the forces in new wars base their “claim to power on the basis of a particular identity – be it national, clan, religious or linguistic”, picking up strength by weaving a transnational thread and creating networks to spread its extreme ideologies.<sup>90</sup> Its motivation is often noted as being disbursed by these new players within a hostile environment, but is not limited to this community alone, and is named by Kaldor as “identity

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<sup>89</sup> Kaldor, 5. Unlike old wars, these new types of conflicts have a new player who is often recognised as hostile in character and who has caused a rise in casualties in recent years. Old wars were sponsored entirely by the state through the taxation of its citizens and involved professional/mass military forces which most often fought an opposing military (thus maintaining low civilian casualties). Today, hostile players in the shape of non-state combatants are also characterised “as paramilitary units, local war lords, criminal gangs, police forces, mercenary groups and also regular armies including breakaway units of regular armies”, Ibid. 8. Her findings suggest that “80% of victims in the current new wars are civilians, whereas roughly 80% of casualties in old wars during the twentieth century were military casualties.” In this respect, a dynamic shift has changed the nature of warfare and the aims of the international community to address this new type of organised violence. “The pattern of violence in the new type of warfare is confirmed by the statistics of the new wars. The tendency to avoid battle and to direct most violence against civilians is evidenced by the dramatic increase in the ratio of civilian to military casualties. At the beginning of the twentieth century, 85-90 per cent of casualties in war were military. In World War II, approximately half of all war deaths were civilian. By the late 1990s, the proportions of a hundred years ago have been almost exactly reversed, so that nowadays approximately 80 percent of all casualties in wars are civilian.” Kaldor, 100; see also, Barry S. Levy and Victor W. Sidel. *War and Public Health* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2008).

<sup>90</sup> Kaldor, *New and Old Wars*, 6.

politics”. Therefore, over the last decade this type of motivation to meet US national security objectives spread well into US political thought and influenced US foreign policymaking under the Bush administration. As Kaldor stated:

The new identity politics is about the claim to power on the basis of labels – in so far as there are ideas about political or social change, they tend to relate to an idealised nostalgic representation of the past. It is often claimed that the new war of identity politics is more a throwback to the past, a resurgence of ancient hatred kept under control by colonialism and/or the Cold War. While it is true that the narratives of identity politics depend on memory and tradition, it is also the case that these are “reinvented” in the context of the failure or the corrosion of other sources of political legitimacy – the discrediting of socialism or the nation-building rhetoric of the first generation of post-colonial leaders.<sup>91</sup>

Bush’s American foreign policy of exceptionalism inscribed into the international debate a set of identity politics that physically set apart the idea of America from that of the Muslim world. This inevitably contributed to confrontationalist behaviour and a distortion in US-Muslim world communicative relations, making way for a broader tension. Kaldor’s examination better identifies the motivation and rationale behind the USG’s position toward the Muslim world and how an extreme element within the Muslim world reacted to US foreign policy by employing aspects of its own set of identity politics – namely Islamic fundamentalism – with regards to its encounter with US confrontationalist political behaviour.

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 7.

### 1.3.1. Confrontationalism

Though confrontationalism did not start with the Bush administration, it was given an academic grounding both in discourse and in theory in purported application by such academics as Daniel Pipes<sup>92</sup>, Giles Kepel<sup>93</sup> and, most notably, Bernard Lewis<sup>94</sup>. Their collective arguments on confrontationalism suggest that, in terms of the unique tension over the West's (or the US in our case) engagement with Islam, "liberal democracy is compatible neither with Islamic fundamentalism nor Islam itself."<sup>95</sup> For this reason, in order for US liberal secular policy to be effective within the Muslim world, Islam is recommended to reform so that the USG can secure its national security and foreign policy interests. In understanding these influential actors in US political thought, Fawaz A. Gerges identifies that "confrontationalists contend further that the struggle between Islam and the West is not just about material and political interest; it is a clash of cultures and civilisations... In this context, they draw a parallel between the Communist threat and Islam's: like Communism, Islamic resurgence is not only a proselytising ideology but also revisionist." It is, according to Daniel Pipes, "a militant, atavistic force driven by hatred of Western political thought, harking back to age-old grievances against Christendom." In the words of Mortimer Zuckerman, "We are in the front line of a struggle that goes back hundreds of years, the

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<sup>92</sup> Daniel Pipes is an American academic who has held posts at the University of Chicago, Harvard and Pepperdine University. His research focuses primarily on the Middle East and Islam. See *Daniel Pipes* [webpage]; available from <http://www.danielpipes.org>; Internet, 18 November 2009.

<sup>93</sup> Giles Kepel is a French political analyst. He currently holds an academic post at the London School of Economics in diplomacy and strategy.

<sup>94</sup> Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage", *The Atlantic* (September 1990) [article online]; available from <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/199009/muslim-rage>; Internet, accessed 20 August 2008.

<sup>95</sup> Fawaz A. Gerges, *America and Political Islam: Clash of Cultures or Clash of Interests* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999), 21-22.

principal obstacle to the extremists' desire to drive nefarious Western values into the sea, just as they once did with the Crusaders.”<sup>96</sup>

This confrontationalists' world view and identity politics which influenced Bush foreign policymaking toward the Muslim world is largely that of the Princeton University historian of Middle Eastern studies, Bernard Lewis. Lewis's perspective indicates that aspects of Islam are inherently problematic to Western democracy and its Judeo-Christian heritage. This narrow vision, which, after 2001, became instrumental in shaping American foreign policy, was expressed through Bush's narrow focus on those Muslims “that hate us”. They were held to be ready to lead an inevitable clash of civilisations, which would and must be addressed through pre-emptive military action.<sup>97</sup> Lewis indicated this position first in an essay in *The Atlantic* (September 1990) entitled “The Roots of Muslim Rage”, suggesting that the anger of Muslims derives from hidden tension within Islamic society over secularism (as opposed to its open rejection of the history of American intervention and containment within the region). For Lewis and other confrontationalists, American foreign policy in itself neither created the atmosphere nor supplied the ammunition for the rage unfolding at present.<sup>98</sup> In fact, Lewis's implausible *Atlantic* argument posits that it is the selfish reaction of Islamic society to America's relationship with Israel, and America's extended relations with Europe that foments this anti-Americanism. Lewis asserts:

If we turn from the general to the specific, there is no lack of individual policies and actions, pursued and taken by individual Western governments, that have aroused the passionate anger of Middle Eastern and other Islamic peoples. Yet all too often, when these policies are abandoned and the problems resolved, there is only a local and temporary alleviation. The

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<sup>96</sup>Ibid., 24.

<sup>97</sup>See Richard Bonney, *False Prophets: The 'Clash of Civilizations' and the Global War on Terror* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2008).

<sup>98</sup> This point is reintroduced in 2003 in Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (New York: Modern Library, 2003).

French have left Algeria, the British have left Egypt, the Western oil companies have left their oil wells, the westernising Shah has left Iran – yet the generalised resentment [of fundamentalists] in particular against the West remains and grows and is not appeased. Clearly something deeper is involved than these specific grievances, numerous and important as they may be – something deeper that turns every disagreement into a problem and makes every problem insoluble.<sup>99</sup>

Shifting the blame for the tension to Islamic society, Lewis argues that Islamic fundamentalism is responsible and that a reform of Islam's core beliefs must occur, rather than a shift in US foreign policymaking and its view of religion in the Muslim world.<sup>100</sup>

This tension often emerges out of an ongoing debate on both sides between American exceptionalism and Islamic fundamentalism, where exceptionalism is often held up as universal. For example, this was the case in the Bush administration's foreign policy. American exceptionalism holds the position that it is distinct, that its unique value system has not occurred in another country, and that it offers an exceptional framework distinctive to the United States. In contrast, some hardcore supporters of Islam defend the idea that their religion may be held as exceptional in that it promotes universal values and ideals that lead to a better way of life. In this standoff, a distinct tension forms between American exceptionalism and hard-line Islamic fundamentalists. Generally, this is why there is one side that challenges the other to embrace reform. Between 2001 and 2008, Lewis's academic

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<sup>99</sup> Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage", *The Atlantic* (September 1990) [article online]; available from <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/199009/muslim-rage>; Internet, accessed 20 August 2008.

<sup>100</sup> Lewis further states that "Ultimately, the struggle of the fundamentalists is against two enemies, secularism and modernism. The war against secularism is conscious and explicit, and there is by now a whole literature denouncing secularism as an evil neo-pagan force in the modern world and attributing it variously to the Jews, the West, and the United States... [Hence] It should by now be clear that we are facing a mood and a movement far transcending the level of issues and policies and the governments that pursue them... This is no less than a clash of civilisations – the perhaps irrational but surely historic reaction of an ancient rival against our Judeo-Christian heritage, our secular present, and the worldwide expansion of both." Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage", *The Atlantic* (September 1990) [article online]; available from <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/199009/muslim-rage>; Internet, accessed 20 August 2008.

confrontationalist argument would go on to influence USG foreign policymaking, convincing US officials to advocate that Muslim publics embrace such reform.

Pakistani scholar Fuad Naeem of Duke University expresses his dismay at views presented by such confrontationalists as Lewis and Pipes (and even Salman Rushdie), who propose that if the religion of Islam and Islamic society are to flourish and be respected as a political-religious system in the present age, reform is inevitable.<sup>101</sup> Scholars such as Naeem have countered this by asking, “*Why should Islam reform itself in order to meet Western standards?*”. While Naeem’s work adopts a traditional Islamic perspective, he, along with such thinkers as Maulana Ashraf ‘Ali Thanwi<sup>102</sup>, believes that if reform is needed, more emphasis should be given to restoring the intellectual, moral and truth-related facets of Islam to Islamic society and less to reforming Islam’s fundamentalist principles and political and religious ideals for the sake of better Islamic-Western relations.<sup>103</sup> Naeem makes it clear that those adopting such a perspective are the first to suggest that Islam must first help itself, before bending to the will of the West.

These identity politics of confrontationalism from Lewis and other Americans evidently shaped the US’s foreign policy toward the Muslim world and its expectations of

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<sup>101</sup> Fuad S. Naeem, “A Traditional Islamic Response to the Rise of Modernism, in Islam”, *Fundamentalism, and the Betrayal of Tradition* by Joseph E.B. Lombard (Bloomington: World Wisdom 2004), 82; see also Salman Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses* (New York: Viking, 1988).

<sup>102</sup> See Maulana Ashraf ‘Ali Thanwi, *Answer to Modernism*, trans. Muhammad Hasan Askari and Karrar Husain (Karachi: Maktaba Darululoom, 1976; reprint, Delhi, 1981).

<sup>103</sup> Naeem affirms, “Islam’s traditional understanding of itself as a message of salvation that affirms the primacy of God, and seeks to awaken men and women to their true spiritual nature and make possible the actualisation of their God-given possibilities, stands in stark contrast to an anthropocentric, rationalistic, and materialistic framework which relegates the sacred to the private sphere – the very framework that determines much of modern Western civilisation. This is why Islam does not need to be reformed or modernised; it already contains within itself the principles necessary for renewal from within. These principles provide the discernment to both integrate truth wherever it is found and to reject falsehood decisively,” Naeem, 82-83.



how Muslims should approach political decisions which affect US foreign and national security interests. Clearly, Lewis's approach of blaming the religion of Islam itself influenced the Bush administration, with the result that US foreign policy excluded the religio-political voice on the basis of Western perceptions of Islamic fundamentalism and aspects of its extreme behaviour toward the US and its European allies. Truly, religion within the *umma* (Islamic society) is interconnected and centralised, spanning every level of society and binding communal, social, political and economic relations. Efforts to remove (or desacrilise) religion from the *umma* in order to suit Western foreign interests – as in the case of the USG liberal secular foreign policy objectives in Afghanistan and Iraq – have, in the end, aroused uniform hostility from the many players within the *umma* who oppose it. In this event, the challenge for US political actors may in fact be that of grasping that Islamic fundamentalism is, on the whole, not entirely problematic, but contains a particularly troublesome strand exploited by religious extremists, which as well has called for America's reform.

### 1.3.2. Islamic fundamentalism

What is problematic at this stage is the fact that Islamic fundamentalism, on the whole, is recognised not as legitimate by Western political sources, but as an extreme ideology in contradiction to Western interests (i.e. liberal secular democracy).<sup>104</sup> Confrontationalists such as Lewis and some US political officials are reluctant to recognise that it is a *strand* of the traditional voice of Islam that is, today, exploited by Islamic extremists who have transcended traditional principles into unforeseeable identity politics. This point may well explain the reluctance by the Bush administration to engage at the outset the core of Islamic society and the traditional voice of Islam (as Naeem indicates) in both

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<sup>104</sup> See Zahid Hussain, *Frontline Pakistan: The Struggle with Militant Islam* (New York: Columbia UP, 2007).

Afghanistan and Iraq – and even throughout the Muslim world during its public diplomacy campaign to connect with Muslims – due to Western perceptions of Islam within the public sphere.<sup>105</sup> Whether or not Western political researchers accept aspects of Islamic fundamentalism as a genuine source which may or may not aid their foreign interests, I argue that it is a critical variable (though interpreted as an aiding form of identity politics for those Muslims at odds with America), which at some point must be taken on board and addressed respectfully by secular players.

Harvard University law professor Noah Feldman aids this assessment, affirming that the standard view of scholars/experts in and outside of the Muslim world that the “classical Islamic state had failed” were misguided.<sup>106</sup> With a rise in modernisation came the belief that in the Western world religion and its influence on society would decline. Surprisingly, “new religious movements” relating to political Islam emerged, and were conspicuous throughout the Muslim nations and well into the Western world. At present, standing on opposite sides are two differing positions relating to the motivation behind Islamic fundamentalism, each linked to a different interpretation of Islamic law and the way in which it should be implemented both within society and among those outside the *umma*.

This distinction is made in connection with the idea of *Islamist Sharia* and *Islamic Sharia* and the quest of both to assure justice within the *umma* and between Muslims and the rest of the world. Feldman points out that “Islam, according to this view, is the thing that makes Islamism into a distinctive approach to the reform of government and society. It is the engine meant to restore Muslim societies to world prominence and power. When called upon

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<sup>105</sup> Sean Hannity, *Deliver Us from Evil: Defeating Terrorism, Despotism, and Liberalism* (New York: Regan Books, 2004).

<sup>106</sup> Noah Feldman, *The Fall and Rise of the Islamic State* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2008), 19.

to define the Islamic character of the state as they envision it, Islamists typically say that what makes the state Islamic is that it is governed through Islamic law and Islamic values.”<sup>107</sup> This point is particularly important to US-Muslim world engagement, in the sense that it opens up a possible treatment when engaging Muslims on common ground. Moreover, it is clear about the true intention of Islamic extremists toward those outside Islamic society, in implementing what it sees as the rule of law within its society.

In considering the meaning behind Islamic fundamentalism, let us consider the position of Youssef Choueiri, for example. What is referred to as the “extremist strand” of Islamic fundamentalism is recognised here as an extreme religious ideology with political claims that are based on traditional Islamic doctrines rooted in a direct rejection of Western political influence and aspects of Western secularism within Islamic society.<sup>108</sup> Choueiri affirms that this growing revivalist movement is not a new response directed at the pro-Western alliance in Europe or predominantly secularist countries, but a conventional response to regain what Islamic society sees as a loss of identity, values, traditional customs and religious authenticity, due in part to the West’s preoccupation with its foreign interests in the Muslim world.<sup>109</sup> Or, if we acknowledge Lawrence Davidson’s position regarding

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 111.

<sup>108</sup> Youssef M Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1990); South Asia, for example, is recognised here as a developing concern. Home to the largest concentration of Muslims on earth, it presents new implications for US foreign interests abroad. In South Asia alone (including Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal) there are 1.5 billion Muslims who in the last decade have reacted to the direction of US foreign policies in their region and more widely to policies directed at its neighbouring region, the Middle East – notably, at Iran, Saudi Arabia, Palestine and Syria. US foreign policies directed at this region have sent a pulse throughout Muslim Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Egypt, as far as Russia’s growing Islamic fundamentalist movement (attracting tension between Chechnyan Muslims, Russian nationalists and Orthodox Christians). See Dmitry Shlapentokh, *The Spread of Islamic Fundamentalism in Russia* [article online]; available from <http://www.watchdog.cz/?show=000000-000004-000002-000029&lang=1>; Internet, accessed 20 August 2008. See also Jere Van Dyk, “Islamic Fundamentalism in South Asia”, *Army War College Strategic Studies Institute*, Ft. Belvoir Defense Technical Information Centre (July 19, 2007).

<sup>109</sup> Youssef M Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1990).

Napoleon's fixation with the Middle East and France's invasion of Egypt in 1798, the response to Westernisation and Western secular influence has been unfavourable and linked to historical agitation since the onset of Western imperialism in the Middle East.<sup>110</sup>

Despite the recent surge in military activity in both Afghanistan and Iraq, on the whole the USG has had trouble in the past in addressing the central motivator behind these "new wars" in South Asia and parts of the Middle East. This study argues that a body of inconsistent American foreign policy instigates the core causes of these events, vacillating between interchange and dominance. Trying to suppress these "new wars" under the Bush administration with western allied sponsored military action (and nation-branding) proved impossible, because of the USG's unwillingness to broaden its foreign policy reach to directly engage the aspirations and perspectives of Islamic fundamentalists in its foreign policy discourse. Naeem's description is on par, as he suggests that "attempting to correct accidents without addressing their core causes is akin to treating symptoms without treating the internal disease that produces them... Such analyses stop at the most superficial aspect of the problem and do not penetrate to the roots of either modern Western civilisation or Islam, nor of the various political and social reformist and revivalist movements labelled 'fundamentalist'".<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> See Lawrence Davidson, *Islamic Fundamentalism: An Introduction* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2003), 10.

<sup>111</sup> Fuad S. Naeem, "A Traditional Islamic Response to the Rise of Modernism", *Islam Fundamentalism and the Betrayal of Tradition: Essays by Western Muslim Scholars*, Joseph B. Lumbard, ed. (Indiana: World Wisdom, 2005), 79. Evidence proves that the rise in Western secular influence brought by Western colonialism, nineteenth and twentieth century oil interests and present US foreign policy in the Middle Eastern and South Asian regions contributed to a rise in fundamentalist movements, putting Islamic societies (as some would argue) on the defensive to maintain their traditional customs and posture. As Davidson contends, a quest to maintain this protective posture has also strained the voice and relations between, for example, rising *Islamic modernists* (the intelligentsia) and traditional religious leadership in Islamic societies (the *ulama*). The end (as in the case of Afghanistan with the Taliban) and throughout parts of the Muslim world, has been a constant failure to maintain a level of peace between religious sects, worsened by reforming

To comprehend the fundamentalists' rationale to employ Islamic fundamentalism as a form of identity politics, let us turn to Davidson's description of their universal beliefs. The justification behind their actions includes the following four points:<sup>112</sup>

**Table 4**

**Common Assumptions Shared by Most Islamic Fundamentalists**

1) The Muslim world is in a state of disorder brought on by centuries of political and moral decay.
2) This decay was possibly caused by Western intrusion which, to all intents and purposes, infected the Muslim world with an alien set of immoral, secularist values and behaviours based on the defining concepts of materialism and (in terms of politics) nationalism.
3) In order to combat this perceived decay and infection, the Muslim world must be re-Islamised.
4) The only way to re-Islamise society is to re-politicise Islam itself. As fundamentalist reasoning goes, Islam began as a religion which preached the rejection of false gods and corrupt practices. The West and Westernisers now represent these evils... This, in turn will inevitably lead to the solving of the problems of corruption and spiritual vacuousness which now seem to pervade society.

Consequently, this brand of Islamic fundamentalism as a type of identity politics emerges not as a collective belief or practice by all Muslims, but comes from a small minority within Islamic society – those who interpret the Muslim world's decline in Islamic values as brought about by the West. Akbar Ahmed expresses, in *Islam Under Siege*, that the rise in this brand of Islamic fundamentalism by non-state combatants in most cases emerges out of a breakdown in Islamic society and its social cohesion (*asabiyya*), as described by the noted Islamic scholar, Ibn Khaldun.<sup>113</sup> The *asabiyya*, which provides a central interconnected support system of social cohesion within Islamic society, according to Ahmed, has

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ideologies and contradictory political beliefs about the role and influence of the West in Islamic society.

<sup>112</sup> Lawrence Davidson, *Islamic Fundamentalism: An Introduction* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2003), 12-13.

<sup>113</sup> Akbar S. Ahmed, *Islam Under Siege* (Cambridge: Polity, 2003), 78.

succumbed to dishonour and fragmentation under Western secular influence – thus explaining why non-state actors embracing this programme have invested in “new wars”. Akbar affirms that “the dangerously ambiguous notion of honour – and the ever-more dangerous ideas of the loss of honour – propel men to violence. Simply put, global developments have robbed many people of honour, [whereas] rapid global changes are shaking the structures of traditional societies.”<sup>114</sup> In an effort to regain what was lost, *hyper-asabiyya*, as described by Khaldun (“exaggerated tribal and religious loyalties resulting in extreme cohesion” i.e., terrorist cells such as Al Qaeda, which contribute to “new wars”), emerge in a sudden effort to restore what was lost under Western secular influence and its foreign interests in the Muslim world.<sup>115</sup>

Ahmed handles the emergence of this central motivation and where it arrives from clearly. It seemed that in 2001 the Bush administration pitted itself in an historical struggle transcending history, borders, policies and a breakdown not only in communication between the US and the Muslim world, but in the fabric of social cohesion within the *umma*. *The question arises here as to whether those practising Islamic fundamentalism must change their traditional posture and ideals in order that engagement between the US and the Muslim world might occur?* No: what is required is a type of social democracy that connects political

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 14-15.

<sup>115</sup> In this sense, J.G. Jansen contends that Islamic fundamentalism becomes its own religion within itself, with its own religious imagination, religious dream and theology, calling forth non-state actors to embrace a religio-political ideology of social emancipation. In both the imaginative and religious dream world of Islamic fundamentalism, the principal concern, as expressed in the Iranian revolution of 1979, is to oppose (or unravel, by any means available) the present political system, which is tainted by Western political and social ideals by basing one's actions on an ideology rooted in religious ideals. Its aim, in consequence, is to pointlessly replace this system by a subversive one which is, as Jansen states, “in imitation of the secular regimes... The different fundamentalist movements the very power which the governments they oppose exercise: total power, complete power, supreme power, over anyone or anything that even contemplates resisting them,” Johannes J.G. Jansen G, *The Dual Nature of Islamic Fundamentalism* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1997), 2.

and religious ideals within a special arena for the purpose of improving sacred-secular relations in this era. US foreign policy, at some level, must address – or at least indicate – its knowledge of these underlying tensions in order to restore or revive future relations. Naeem is correct in asserting that the most appropriate treatment for addressing the core of this problem begins with the USG looking into its policies and with Islamic society looking within itself to ensure stability.

Both sides used identity politics before 2001. US policymakers under the Bush administration, however, crafted their foreign policy out of the confrontationalist argument used by Lewis and others that, in order to eradicate the proselytising ideology of Islamic extremism, military action must be implemented in an effort to halt an inevitable clash of civilisations between the US and the Muslim world. In this case, the US did not blame itself for the vehemence of the Islamic reaction, or imagine that the growing tension came from the dismay among Islamic extremists over secularism and America's alliance with Europe and Israel. At the same time, an extreme few within the Muslim world (at odds with America) would interpret the problem as being related to a perceived decay of Islamic values brought on by fifty years of Western intrusion and inconsistent American foreign policy. Furthermore, in the view of this minority segment, the only way of addressing this decay would be to use the identity politics involved in re-Islamising the Muslim world. While opinions on both sides of the court still differ, colouring the last decade has been a body of miscommunication distorting favourable perceptions and the potential of future relations.

## 1.4. Conclusion

Despite the rapid growth in levels of hostility between the US and Muslim world after September 11, 2001, the Bush administration's principle approach was a three-fold fixation which interpreted the religion of Islam as being the problem itself, with Islamic fundamentalism as the source and the Islamic militant as the extreme combatant. Such a narrow view explains why the administration adopted a shallow approach to engaging the Muslim world; an approach that did not offer equal attention to the vast majority along with its minority segment. This study acknowledges that two essential points are evident. First, based on the Bush administration's hesitation to engage the vast majority of the Muslim world, the USG, at present, has no alternative other than to move beyond its division of the sacred and secular in American politics. This in turn means welcoming a more integrated approach that ensures communicative interchange to assure that the perspectives and aspirations of key players and grassroots' networks are included in the overall foreign policy discourse. This will call for the USG taking seriously the religious voice, as Princeton University Professor of Religion Jeffrey Stout writes:

[The USG will need to] encourage religiously committed citizens to make use of their basic freedoms by expressing their premises in as much depth and detail as they see fit when trading reasons with the rest of us on issues of concern to the body politic. If they are discouraged from speaking up in this way, we will remain ignorant of the real reason that many of our fellow citizens have for reaching some of the ethic and political conclusions they do.<sup>116</sup>

Secondly, in order to put this point into practice, the USG needs to take seriously the task of defining a strategy that deals with concrete post-secular issues which convenes (or

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<sup>116</sup> Jeffrey Stout, *Democracy and Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 64.



rather transcends) the voices of both sacred and secular players in the public sphere. In order to accomplish this goal, the USG must a) better comprehend vital aspects within Islamic society by depending more on its diplomatic infrastructure, b) build more direct relations with Muslim audiences, in doing so, which pay due heed to the traditional voice of Islam; and c) restore relations at a grassroots level which build on mutual understanding and mutual interest, extending the voice of key religious players within Islamic society. This indicates that the voices and perspectives of both the sacred and secular are not exclusive of one another, but are interlinked. This broad approach then opens up the possibility of improving US-Muslim world relations by benefitting from what the post-secular might offer, as opposed to displaying an unreasonable level of scepticism towards it.

## Chapter 2

### Transcending the post-secular

#### 2.1. Introduction: *Confronting post-secularism*

Both US domestic and foreign relations shifted over the last decade from fields solely dominated by a Western-centred focus to areas currently confronted by an unsuspected rise in religious concern in public life. This re-emergence of religion contributes to what sociologists and public intellectuals have termed post-secularism.<sup>117</sup> Over the last half-century many scholars have written of post-secularism as the re-emergence of religious practices in public life.<sup>118</sup> This study broadens this description and identifies the activity of post-secular trends as being twofold: the re-emergence of religion in public life creating a unique tension

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<sup>117</sup> See Jürgen Habermas, *Notes on a Post-Secular Society* (June 2008) [article online]; available from <http://print.signandsight.com/features/1714.html>; Internet, accessed 2008; Jürgen Habermas, “A “Post-Secular” Society – What Does That Mean?” (June 2008), *Reset Dialogues on Civilization* [article online]; available from <http://www.resetdoc.org/EN/Habermas-Istanbul.php>; Internet, accessed 20 2008; John D. Caputo, “How the Secular World Became Post-Secular”, *On Religion* (London: Routledge, 2001), 37-66; Troy Dostert, *Beyond Political Liberalism: Toward a Post-Secular Ethics of Public Life* (Notre Dame, Notre Dame Univ. Press, 2006); Austin Dacey, *The Secular Conscience: Why Belief Belongs in Public Life* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2008); Roger Trigg, *Religion in Public Life: Must Faith be Privatized* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2007).

<sup>118</sup> Ananda Abeyesekera, “Politics of ‘Postsecular’ Ethics, Future of Anti-genealogy: Community without Community?”, *The Politics of Postsecular Religion: Mourning Secular Futures* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2008), 227-278; Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ., 2007); Alan Aldridge, *Religion in the Contemporary World: A Sociological Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000); James K.A. Smith, *Introducing Radical Orthodoxy: Mapping a Post-Secular Theology* (Michigan: Baker Academic, 2004); Hent de Vries and Lawrence E. Sullivan, *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-secular World* (New York: Fordham Univ. Press); John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishing, 1991); Phillip Blond, *Post-secular Philosophy: Between Philosophy and Theology* (London: Routledge, 1998), 137-176; Joseph Ratzinger and Jürgen Habermas, *The Dialectic of Secularization: On Reason and Religion* (San Francisco, Ignatius Press, 2006).

between sacred and secular players within the state; and a rise in domestic and international events directly linked to religion.<sup>119</sup>

Though the USG is confronted by post-secularism, is it possible that US secular players are capable of integrating the religious voice into a productive framework? While addressing this query, let us broaden this examination by appraising the post-secular's international appeal within sacred-secular relations. As Klaus Eder, the German sociologist, puts it, "though Western societies are secular, more citizens today are discussing religious issues in the public sphere."<sup>120</sup> This shift, in effect, contributed to a growing religious discourse throughout modern European society, on the one hand and, on the other, put on the defensive proposed US foreign policies seeking to address religious themes.<sup>121</sup> Acknowledging this claim, critical theorist Jürgen Habermas maintains that a "post-secular society must at some point have been in a secular state. The controversial term can therefore only be applied to the affluent societies of Europe or countries such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand, where people's religious ties have steadily or rather quite dramatically lapsed in the post-War period."<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> While Chapter 2 investigates the philosophical and political understanding of post-secularism (which argues for the inclusion of non-secular voices in the public sphere), this term is applied more descriptively throughout the course of this study (characterising the imperative of US officials to take religious violence seriously and engage religious voices in foreign affairs).

<sup>120</sup> Giancarlo Bosetti and Klaus Eder, *Post-secularism: A Return to the Public Sphere* [interview online]; available from <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2006-08-17-eder-en.html>; Internet, accessed 20 October 2008. See also Klaus Eder and W. Spohn, eds. *Collective Memory and European Identity: The Effects of Integration and Enlargement* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

<sup>121</sup> In October 2008, criticism was levied upon US Army General David Petraeus' suggestion that the USG should consider, at some point, talks with certain members of the Afghan Taliban to curb aggression and conflict within the region. Staunch defenders of the War on Terror suggest that talks with the religious faction should not be pursued despite the general's recommendation. See Robert Naiman, *General Petraeus: Talks with the Taliban are Kosher* [article online]; available from [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/robert-naiman/general-petraeus-talks-wi\\_b\\_133503.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/robert-naiman/general-petraeus-talks-wi_b_133503.html); Internet, accessed 20 October 2008; David Morgan, *Petraeus sees value in talking to Taliban*, [article online] available from <http://www.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUSTRE497AIT20081008>; Internet, accessed 20 October 2008.

<sup>122</sup> Habermas, *Notes on a post-secular society*, 1.

According to the Norris and Inglehart survey of religious behaviour, which covered nearly eighty countries in order to determine the impact of the secularisation thesis<sup>123</sup>, the United States, Italy and Ireland, among the Western countries mentioned, lead as the most religious post-industrial countries in the world.<sup>124</sup> Predictably, the research also reveals that France, Denmark and Great Britain as less religious.<sup>125</sup> Despite a country's religious status, the fact remains that, after September 11, most Western nations' domestic and foreign policies confronted emerging events linked to the post-secular either at home or abroad. Though religious ties in the US have remained consistent over the last century, as with its Western counterparts throughout Europe, the US has not been exempt from confronting international events linked to religion.<sup>126</sup>

Interestingly, what is apparent, but often less explored by writers on post-secularism, is the fact that non Judeo-Christian faiths, their practices and multi-ethnic publics in traditional Western settings, have become more pronounced and clearly alarming to Western

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<sup>123</sup> The *secularisation thesis* is the core assertion held by post-Enlightenment thinkers during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that a rise in science, technology and urbanisation would bring about a decline in the practise and importance of religion in society. This study identified that the opposite has occurred in many urbanised Western societies. The fact is that the practise of Christianity has declined in some settings, but on the whole, non Judeo-Christian practises have risen tremendously within these Western settings. See Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2004); Paul Choi, *Revisiting the Secularization Thesis: an historical and sociological analysis* (M.A. Thesis, Boston University, 2002); Steve Bruce, *Religion and Modernization: sociologists and historians debate the secularization thesis* (Oxford, Oxford Univ. Press, 1992).

<sup>124</sup> Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, "The Puzzle of Secularization in the United States and Western Europe", *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2004), 83-110.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>126</sup> Norris and Inglehart claim that the reasons for these findings are linked to "rising levels of human security and [the fact] that publics of virtually all advanced industrial societies have been moving toward more secular orientations; second, due to demographic trends in poorer societies, the world as a whole now has more people with traditional religious views than ever before and; third, the expanding gap between the sacred and the secular societies around the globe will have important consequences for world politics, raising the role of religion on the international agenda." *Ibid.*, 25-26.

observers who do not know how to address the new phenomenon and its growth.<sup>127</sup> According to a number of global studies, the practice of Christianity is declining in many post-industrial countries in the West (with the exception of the US) and is being replaced either by secularity or New Age spirituality, whereas non Judeo-Christian faith practices are rising, both in their countries of origin and in Western societies (such as Great Britain, France and the Netherlands).<sup>128</sup> “Nevertheless, global changes and the visible conflicts that flare up in connection with religious issues give us reason to doubt whether the relevance of religion has waned.”<sup>129</sup> Assertions such as C. Wright Mills’s statement that, “in due course, the sacred shall disappear altogether except, possibly in the private realm,” and the allied beliefs held by seminal thinkers such as Emile Durkheim, Herbert Spencer, August Comte, Max Weber, Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud “that religion would gradually fade in importance and cease to be significant with the advent of industrial society”<sup>130</sup>, were not correct. This prediction, however, was only made in some Western Christian societies and the fact that concurrently

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<sup>127</sup> See Tariq Ramadan, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005); Steven Vertovec, “Islamophobia and Muslim Recognition in Britain”, *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*, ed. Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad (Oxford: Oxford University, 2002), 19-35; Shireen T. Hunter, *Islam, Europe’s Second Religion: The New Social, and Political Landscape* (London: Praeger Publishing, 2002)

<sup>128</sup> See Hugh Meleod and Werner Ustorf, *The Decline of Christendom in Western Europe, 1750-2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2003); Vivian S. Patrick, Scholars Find Decline of Christianity in the West (6 March 2004) [article online]; available from <http://www.christianpost.com/article/20040306/scholars-find-decline-of-christianity-in-the-west.htm> Internet; accessed 20 October 2008. Despite signs of religious erosion in numerous Western countries, the US, for the last century, has maintained a consistent religious posture in Judeo-Christian practices owed primarily to an outstanding religious market. This concept is regarded as *religious-supply* and is held by Stark and Iannaccone; it will be discussed in brief later in this chapter. See also Pippa and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular*, 89-95.

<sup>129</sup> Habermas, *Notes on a post-secular society*, 1.

<sup>130</sup> Norris and Inglehart, 3. See, C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959), 32-33. See also Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life: A Study in Religious Sociology* (New York: Macmillan, 1915); August Comte, *The Positive Philosophy* (New York: Calvin Blanchard, 1858); Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion* (New York: Norton, 1975); Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (London: International, 1948); Herbert Spencer, *The Principles of Ethics* (1897) (Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1978).

intractable religious events since the mid-twentieth century proved otherwise with regards to religious forces today make these predictions more pronounced.

Timothy Shah, Senior Fellow of the Council on Foreign Relations, agrees that religion has not faded, and makes reference to the expression “God is Winning”. Shah implies that “[there seems] to be a worldwide trend across all major religious groups, in which god-based and faith-based movements in general are experiencing increasing confidence and influence vis-à-vis secular movements and ideologies.”<sup>131</sup> Clearly these religious movements are not confined to Islam, Christianity or even Buddhism alone. This “world-wide resurgence in religion”<sup>132</sup> appears across the board, is greatly influential and most relevant, and is more pronounced than the nineteenth century secularists may have imagined. In recent years, US foreign policy, for example, has confronted this resurgence with its encounter with political Islam (first in the 1970s and again in 2001) with its threat to US allies in the Middle East and South Asia.<sup>133</sup>

These crosscurrents indicate clearly that the United States is presently confronted by emerging post-secular affairs which call for a reshaping of certain elements in its domestic and foreign policy approach, if it is to effectively address post-secularism. However, it is possible that we may be able to measure the USG’s propensity to welcome the religious

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<sup>131</sup> See Timothy Shah, *Timothy Shah explains “Why God is Winning”* (July 2006) [interview online]; available from <http://pewforum.org/events/?EventID=119>; Internet, accessed 2 November 2008; Timothy Shah and Monica Duffy Toft “Why God is Winning”, *Foreign Policy* (July / August 2006): 39-43.

<sup>132</sup> In *Notes on post-secular society*, Habermas defines this term as an overlapping phenomenon that has converged upon society, fuelled primarily by: “missionary expansion, fundamentalist radicalisation, and the political instrumentalisation of the potential for violence innate in many of the world religions”, 2.

<sup>133</sup> In the US domestic arena, this contemporary resurgence, which began in the 1970s, is associated with the question of gay marriage, censorship, continuous efforts by Christian groups to nationalise school prayer, and whether *Roe vs. Wade* should be overturned.

voice into its foreign policymaking by assessing its previous approach to engage religion in domestic politics. In making this determination, Chapter 2 will not focus entirely on the impact of secularism (Western centrism or political realism).<sup>134</sup> Rather, it broadens an already existing discourse determining how a government may ensure religious expression, but yet remain politically apprehensive when engaging religious publics across secular lines. Three specific areas of consideration are covered: a) the importance of acknowledging both the public and private voice in reaching cohesive social relations; b) a historical look at America's political apprehensiveness within the liberal-secular state; and c) different arenas where post-secularism is critical in US politics. In detailing these points, this chapter makes the distinction that forced relations between the sacred and secular are non-productive, but when the public sphere fully accepts the transcendence of the post-secular, both are able to coexist. To ensure the success of this project requires that both sacred and secular voices are integrated into a post-secular framework to improve social relations.

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<sup>134</sup> Jonathan Fox and Shmuel Sandler, "Overlooked Dimensions", *Bringing Religion into International Relations* (New York: Palgrave, 2006), 9-34; see also Jonathan Fox, "Religion, Politics and International Relations: The rise of religion and the fall of the civilization paradigm as explanation for intra-state conflict", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 20, No. 3 (September 2007): 361-82.

## 2.2. The reverberation of the public and private sphere

In *A Secular Age*, Charles Taylor argues that the effects of the Enlightenment on Western social space was “the emergence of a viable alternative to Christianity in exclusive humanism;...also a number of reactions against this and the understanding of human life which produced it.”<sup>135</sup> Taylor sets up the argument that, after the Enlightenment, religious voices in Western society grew less influential as a result of the “widening gamut of new positions and ideals (some secular and others religious) that evolved among elite groups in Western society.”<sup>136</sup> He calls this shift in influence the *nova effect*.<sup>137</sup> Alongside this transition in social discourse and attitudes away from religion one of the most important, but often less recognised, shifts to take place was the partitioning of social space and the construction of two distinct spheres structuring the now-separated sacred and secular elements in Western society: the *public* and the *private*.

The private sphere is the arena consisting of civil society, moral traditions and a citizenry which practises or identifies itself with this culture. The public sphere, on the other hand, refers broadly to the secular political realm of non-religious, professional and economic activities (particularly in the US).<sup>138</sup> Regarding society’s secular posture, it is observed in Taylor’s argument that these public spaces – in both the US and Europe – “have been

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<sup>135</sup> Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 423.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 423.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 423.

<sup>138</sup> A note of clarification is made with respect to the work of the critical theorist Jürgen Habermas, who is investigated in this chapter. Habermas implies that the “public” in his study *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* refers to events and occasions which are public and “open to all, in contrast to closed or exclusive affairs, as when we speak of public places or public houses.” His referencing of the “public” in total refers to a conceptualisation of the public sphere, whereas my usage of the term “public space” refers specifically to the secular realm as located within the “public” sector of Western society and segregated from the affairs of the “private” sector. See Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a category of Bourgeois-Society* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1989), 1.



allegedly emptied of God, or of any reference to ultimate reality.”<sup>139</sup> Since the Enlightenment, most Western public spaces no longer “refer us to God, but to rationality that aids society in reaching its greatest benefit, without solely drawing on moral ideals.”<sup>140</sup>

Jürgen Habermas clarifies the partition of social space, claiming that:

By the end of the eighteenth century [Western society] had broken apart into private elements on the one hand and into public on the other. The position of the church changed with the reformation: the link to divine authority which the church represented, that is, religion, became a private matter. So-called religious freedom came to insure what was historically the first area of private autonomy. The church itself continued its existence as one public and legal body among others.<sup>141</sup>

Existing now as simply one of a number of public bodies, the once-dominant voice of the sacred and the Church had dwindled considerably by this time. Secular fear during the late eighteenth century contributed to this decline by placing an emphasis on free-thinking and public reason – no longer drawing solely on moral ideals to construct socio-political frameworks for society. While the voice of the sacred should not dominate the public arena, consideration of that voice in the political realm would tackle many of the emerging post-secular events that confront US national security. In considering this point, Roger Trigg suggests, “public debate about the proper basis for society is necessary and the religious voice should be heard in that debate.”<sup>142</sup> In *Vernacular Voice*, Gerard A. Hauser adds that through “citizen participation” private citizens unintentionally sharpen their usage of Athenian democracy and ensure the civic virtues of the state are carried out on their behalf.<sup>143</sup> In this respect, the voices, ideas and opinions of religious citizens deserve public

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<sup>139</sup> Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 2.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>141</sup> Jürgen Habermas, “The Public Sphere: An Encyclopaedia Article (1964)”, *New German Critique*, 3 (Autumn, 1974): 49-55.

<sup>142</sup> Roger Trigg, *Religion in Public Life*, 236.

<sup>143</sup> Gerard A. Hauser, “The Public Voice of Vernacular Rhetoric”, *Vernacular Voice* (Columbia: South Carolina Press, 1999), 13-36; see also Cornel West, *Democracy Matters: Winning the Fight Against Imperialism* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004), 201-218.

acknowledgement, considering the natural rights of all citizens within the liberal-secular state.

It should be noted that it was not only religious voices, but also private opinions, that were encouraged during the nineteenth century to evolve outside of public space (Jürgen Habermas in his review, however, fails to recognise a place for religion or the cultivation of beliefs and ideologies within the private sphere). Habermas' findings in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* observe this point through an examination of the "bourgeois public sphere model."<sup>144</sup> Located between bourgeois civil society and the state for nearly two centuries, the *bourgeois public sphere* served, in European society, as a social prescription for an alternative sphere where private citizens could meet in café salons and coffeehouses in the newly "enlightened" London, Germany, Paris and Vienna.<sup>145</sup> The aim in the "bourgeois public sphere" was to generate widespread public discussions and political debates, while participating in social engagement.<sup>146</sup> Though many of these European homes of public criticism were not particular political institutions, their widespread reputation

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<sup>144</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 1-26; see also Frank Bechhofer and Brian Elliot, eds., *The Petite Bourgeoisie: Comparative Studies of the Uneasy Stratum* (London: Macmillan Press, 1981).

<sup>145</sup> See James Gordon Finalayson, *Habermas: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005), 10-13; Michael Schaich, "The Public Sphere", *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Europe*, Peter H. Wilson, ed. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 125-140.

<sup>146</sup> "The bourgeois avant-garde of the educated middle class learned the art of critical-rational public debate through its contact with the "elegant world". This courtly-noble society, to the extent that the modern state apparatus became independent from the monarch's personal sphere, naturally separated itself, in turn, more and more from the court and became its counterpoise in the town. The "town" was the life centre of civil society not only economically; in cultural-political contrast to the court, it designated especially an early public sphere in the world of letters whose institutions were the coffee houses, the *salon* and the *Tischgesellschaften* (table societies). The heirs of the humanistic-autocratic society, in their encounter with the bourgeois intellectuals (through sociable discussions that quickly developed into public criticism), built a bridge between the remains of a collapsing form of publicity (the courtly one) and the precursor of a new one: the bourgeois public sphere" Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 30.

throughout the continent held mass credence in their ability to unite a diverse citizenry to test state laws and policies through public discourse.<sup>147</sup>

The bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere [in which] private people come together as a public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatised but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labour.<sup>148</sup>

Habermas' findings regarding the "bourgeois public sphere model" denote two very important points: (a) *that there is a fundamental separation between social spaces in Western society*; and (b) *despite the manufacturing of these spaces, the opinions generated by private citizens deserve consideration in the political realm*. Even with the decline of the bourgeois sphere during the late nineteenth century (due to a rise in print media), the principles and values are of relevance in ensuring that the voice of the sacred is acknowledged (but not allowed to dominate the public sphere).

Bringing this concept into the present era, Habermas recognises that the same strategies as those adopted by the "bourgeois public sphere" may be deployed in the present context with what he calls the contemporary *public sphere model*, which functions as a "realm [in] our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed."<sup>149</sup>

The public sphere concept, according to Habermas, is that in which:

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<sup>147</sup> See James Gordon Finlayson, *Habermas: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005), 11.

<sup>148</sup> Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a category of Bourgeois-Society* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1989) 27; "According to Habermas the bourgeois public sphere originated in the middle-class concern with protecting its commercial interests through the political regulation of civil society. It mustered little sympathy for proletarian or peasant issues. Nonetheless, its discursive standards were not linked to political or economic ideology but to Enlightenment ideals of reason and rational opinion from which society forged a public understand of matters that were consequential in private relations." Hauser, *Vernacular Voice*, 42.

<sup>149</sup> Habermas, "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopaedia Article (1964)", 49-55.

Citizens, [sacred or secular] behave as a public body when they confer in an unrestricted fashion – that is, with the guarantee of freedom of assembly and association that freedom to express and publish their opinion – about matters of general interest. In a large public body this kind of communication requires specific means for transmitting information and influencing those who receive it. Today, newspapers and magazines, radio and TV are the media of the public sphere. We speak of the public sphere in contrast, for instance, to the literary one, when public discussion deals with objects connected to the activity of the state.<sup>150</sup>

In order to assure a more assertive interchange between the sacred and secular an integration of the religious voice into the public sphere or (in the case of the USG) political debate is required. However, Trigg and others are correct that this application is pertinent, but must not be implemented at the expense of allowing one voice to dominate the other.<sup>151</sup> Sustaining “democratic forms”<sup>152</sup> ensures that all citizens may contribute to crafting a progressive agenda. In order that the American political system accomplishes this task, it will need to confront its internal apprehensiveness toward religion manufactured by a historical

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 49-55.

<sup>151</sup> It is uncertain, in my opinion, whether genuine public discussion may take place in parts of the US public sphere that rely greatly on mass commercial media outlets. With the decline of the traditional *bourgeois public sphere*, where I suggest that authentic opinions were formed uninfluenced by massive commercialisation; today, we discover parts of the US public forum saturated by commercialisation, lending an appearance of it being synthetic, but still democratic. The attempt of some US public forums to appear synthetic derive from their relationship with media conglomerates which generate and dictate a *manufactured* or “stage-managed” *public opinion* by filtering what they perceive as necessary information to the general public. As for its democratic appearance, as the traditional bourgeois sphere, many of these public forums – cyberspace, in particular – are today open markets where anyone with a thought can post his opinion without having had any critical debate or discourse in forming this opinion. A question can be raised here about whether, in some of these newly-created public forums, private citizens are critically thinking about many of these issues or are merely regurgitating the commercially-generated public opinions by which they were previously bombarded. For example, with advancements in technology and the internet, some public blogs by news agencies and private citizens and a rapidly growing online community have contributed to the production of synthetic public opinions on international issues, public perceptions of groups and political events in society and our obligations as private citizens to address religious publics. Despite the formation of some of these opinions in the US public forums and seeing that the public sphere has descended from coffeehouses, public discourses in religious institutions in cyberspace to the corridors of private facilities, I argue that the general public’s opinions on state affairs and its concerns on state issues, despite the descent, deserve recognition within the political realm. See also Al Gore, “Blinding the Faithful”, *Assault on Reason* (New York: Penguin Books, 2007), 45-71.

<sup>152</sup> According to Hauser, “Democratic forms rest on opportunities for citizens to discuss issues that concern their interests so that they may influence intelligent public opinion. Concomitantly, people engaged in every day congress with strangers holding diverse beliefs, traditions, and interests have a comparable need for discursive forums in which they may develop a sense of prevailing opinion and participate in charting its course.” Hauser, *Vernacular Voice*, 40.

body of Western secular thought. In a post-secular era, this means moving beyond ideology that augments a separation of the sacred and secular voice that will inevitably enhance US foreign relations.

### **2.3. The Western secular vision and American political apprehensiveness**

The strongest attribute of secularism is that it manufactures space for multiple ideals and plural relations within the state by dispensing with authoritative rule, which historically dominated the agendas of both religion and government in European society before the eighteenth century. In a subtle way, through its behaviour and policy the body of secularism emphasised within Western society that religious issues are less significant than political affairs. Clearly, the practise of secularism triumphs in the West nowadays as the most effective social formula for guaranteeing the luxuries of freedom, free-thinking and democracy, but at the expense of undervaluing the relevance of religion in the public sphere. This is a traditional posture in Western political manoeuvring. Though it is not a singular American-centric position, it nevertheless integrated itself into the Bush administration's foreign policy of exceptionalism. This political behaviour, which undervalues religious forces, flourishes out of a political history of hierarchy where the secular rejects sitting parallel to religion. In turn, the secular argues that it is superior to religion. For centuries the secular has dominated the public discourse in affairs relating to issues of politics, economics, education and defence. This posture did not only contribute to centuries of violent reactions during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but by the nineteenth century an entire exclusion of the reliance on the religious in the public sphere occurred in Europe and the US.

George J. Holyoake's *The Principle of Secularism* clarifies this study's reference to secularism when he writes:

Secularism is the study of promoting human welfare by material means; measuring human welfare by the utilitarian rule and making the service of others a duty of life... Secularism is a series of principles intended for the guidance of those who find Theology indefinite, or inadequate, or deem it unreliable. It replaces theology, which mainly regards life as a sinful necessity, as a scene of tribulation through which we pass to a better world. Secularism rejoices in this life and regards it as the sphere of those duties which educate men to fitness for any future and better life, should such transpire.<sup>153</sup>

Holyoake's definition of the word indicates that secularism, as a counter to embracing the guidance of theology, functions as a better option for the state in sustaining democracy and ensuring a society free of religious influences. His view of religion implies that, before the nineteenth century, broader issues contributed to Western societies' unbalanced relationships with and political apprehensiveness towards religion. The seventeenth century religious wars, tyranny by rulers and "Enlightenment" endeavours by *man* to elevate reason over divine right are three of the greatest social influences in encouraging secularism. In both European and US society after the eighteenth century, fear of the first two influences would lead the state to steer clear of religion in state affairs. At a deeper level, memories of early seventeenth century contentions between the Church and European powers helped, in some ways, to shape the posture adopted by many secularists today. Such a posture derives from a historical fear among secular officials that their secular influence will be lost if religious ideals prevail or are openly expressed within society.

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<sup>153</sup> George J. Holyoake, *The Principles of Secularism*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London: Austin & Co., 1870) 11-12.; see also writing from twentieth century writers such as Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of Sociology Theory of Religion* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1967). However, it was in 1999 that Peter Berger shifted his belief in the effectiveness of the secularisation thesis, making the claim that "loose assertions were placed on the impact urbanisation would have on Western society"; Thomas Luckman, *The Invisible Religion: The Problem of Religion in Modern Society* (New York: Macmillan, 1967); Harvey Cox, *Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective* (New York: Macmillan, 1966); Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

To explore the concept of secular fear somewhat further, let us take the “Age of Enlightenment” and the development of the body of secularism in Europe as an example. The fears of secularists rooted themselves in a resolution by the state and the secular citizen not to return to an era where affairs were dominated by authoritative institutions or the perversions of religion. French, Dutch and English societies emerged, to some degree, out of this indirect counter-response taken in the seventeenth century toward Christian religious bodies and European powers. Out of the horrors of the Thirty Years’ War (fought initially in Germany between the Protestants and Catholics of the Holy Roman Empire) came insurmountable tragedy, religious division and the formation of a new religio-political framework with the strategic aim of combating both intractable war and religious conflict between European powers at the time. In an effort to end the many religious wars and inter-church hostilities, two treaties were signed in 1648 (the Treaties of Osnabrück and Münster; recognised as the Peace of Westphalia), ending both the Thirty Years War in Germany and the Eighty Years War fought between the Netherlands and Spain.<sup>154</sup> Through the signing and implementation of the Peace of Westphalia, the Western powers pushed back religious tension, bringing peace to “the vast lands of the Holy Roman Empire (which included modern Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg, Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovenia and parts of Poland and of northern Italy). It ratified the existing territorial divisions and required many rulers – Catholic, Lutheran and Calvinist – to tolerate worship by denominations other than the established one, on the basis of the conditions prevailing in each state in 1624.”<sup>155</sup> The Westphalian state system went on to grossly transcend the resolution of eighty years of persistent religious war in Europe: Westphalia helped to establish the modern Western

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<sup>154</sup> See C. V. Wedgwood, *The Thirty Years War* (London: Pimlico, 1992); Geoffrey Parker, *The Thirty Years’ War* (London: Routledge, 1997).

<sup>155</sup> Derek Beales, “Religion and Culture”, *The Eighteenth Century*, T.C.W. Blanning (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2000) 133.

nation-state and the concept of state sovereignty, which have contributed to stable relations between religion and government in modern Europe.<sup>156</sup>

The horrors of the seventeenth century were not forgotten in countries such as France, where widespread scepticism among the French intelligentsia about the benefits of religion's influence had become rampant. Examples of this scepticism are found in such leading *philosophes* as Voltaire, who acknowledged that the public apprehensiveness about religion and its rule was linked to "the evils [that] Christianity had perpetrated through wars of religion, burning heretics, executing so-called "witches" as well as restrictions imposed by the Vatican and Jesuit communities."<sup>157</sup> *Philosophes* and encyclopedists Diderot and Baron d' Holbach would echo these sentiments, but would also note absolutism and divine right as restrictive forces against free-thinking.<sup>158</sup> To demonstrate the possibilities for the state if it were more tolerant of religion while endorsing secularity and free-speech, we may cite non-French despots including Catherine the Great of Russia and Frederick the Great of Prussia, two enlightened rulers who set an example of advancing their countries' social stability by endorsing rationality and free-thinking. Frederick's level of enlightenment would be captured by Immanuel Kant in 1784; when answering Rev. Johann Löllher's enquiry *What is Enlightenment?* Kant exclaimed:

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<sup>156</sup> Daniel Philpott, "The Founding of the Sovereign States System at Westphalia", *Revolutions in Sovereignty: How Ideas Shaped Modern International Relations* (New Jersey: Princeton Univ. Press, 2001), 73-150.

<sup>157</sup> Roy Porter, *The Enlightenment*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Palgrave, 2001) 29-37; see also Kenneth W. Applegate, *Voltaire on Religion: Selected Writings* (New York: F Ungar Publishing, 1974).

<sup>158</sup> Dennis Diderot and Russell Goulbourne, *The Nun* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Patrick W. Byrne, "The Form of Paradox: A Critical Study of Diderot's *La Religieuse*", in *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* (1994): 169-293; Paul Henri Thiry Holbach, Baron d' and Jean Meslier, *Superstition in All Ages* (New York: Arno Press, 1972).



Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another. This immaturity is self-imposed when its cause lies not in lack of understanding, but in lack of resolve and courage to use it without guidance from another. *Sapire Aude!* [dare to know] "Have courage to use your own understanding!" – that is the motto of the Enlightenment.<sup>159</sup>

Kant's conviction of man's ability to evolve apart from religious authority captured what would later become a growing phenomenon in the West. This point is exemplified by the decline of religious practices after the eighteenth century in Europe. Affirming this point, Joachim Whaley writes, the "Enlightenment saw the decline of religious belief and the secularisation of European society. [It] promoted rationalism; new science undermined the basis of traditional belief; Christianity was edged out of the central position it occupied in Western society by the rise of a new 'paganism'."<sup>160</sup> This new paganism (free-thinking) would later develop into the central pillar which ensured that Western society would remain unfettered by religious authority and the confines of princely rule. "By the 1780s, at least among the upper classes, dogmatic religion seemed to be giving way among both Catholics and Protestants – and even among practising Jews – to a generalised and tolerant benevolence uninterested in the ancient ideal of asceticism or in doctrinal precision."<sup>161</sup>

But how have sociological theorists come to comprehend this decline in relation to society? According to several sociological theorists, the decline in religion in society is referred to by the widely ambiguous term "secularisation", which has taken on numerous meanings since Max Weber's sparing use of it.<sup>162</sup> As a leading thinker on the sociology of

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<sup>159</sup> Immanuel Kant, *An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment? (1784)* [article online]; available from <http://www.english.upenn.edu/~mgamer/Etexts/kant.html>; Internet, accessed 20 October 2008.

<sup>160</sup> Joachim Whaley, "Religion" *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Peter H. Wilson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), 176-177.

<sup>161</sup> Derek Beales, "Religion and Culture", *Short Oxford History of Europe: The Eighteenth Century*, T.C.W. Blanning, ed. (Oxford, Oxford Univ. Press, 2000), 131-177.

<sup>162</sup> The term "secularisation" was rarely used by Weber, but its meaning was expressed greatly throughout much of his seminal work; see Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of*

religion, Weber also referred to secularisation as “disenchantment”, (i.e. with religion), suggesting, “The fate of our time is characterised by rationalisation and intellectualisation and, above all, by disenchantment of the world.”<sup>163</sup> The world, as Weber observed, was destined to become more dependent on material progress, reason and science and less on the mystical or archaic traditions of religion. Other theorists, such as Durkheim, saw secularisation taking its course along two time-scales: “First, over a wide historical spectrum, in which secularisation has been in progress for millennia. Second, in more recent times, in which there has been an acceleration of the process due to particular circumstances in Western society.”<sup>164</sup> However, Freud, taking a psychoanalytical position – unlike other social theorists during his era – accepted neither urbanisation nor modernisation as being responsible for the decline of religion, but rather suggested that it was the instinctual urges of human wishes relating to religion which contributed to its decline. Freud regarded the mystical urge of religion as the *future of an illusion*, an event that tore humans away from doing what was best for society.<sup>165</sup> What we gather is that the social theories of the likes of Durkheim and Weber, in particular, emerged out of an era of social transition in Western society, which saw the decline in traditional practices and archaic mystical beliefs, and a loss, brought on by urbanisation, of relevance of religious influences on the political realm. Adding texture to this argument, David Martin contended that the secularisation process, “characterised modernity as a scenario in which mankind shifted from the religious mode to

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*Capitalism* (New York: Penguin Books, 2002); Michael W. Hughey, “The Idea of Secularization in the Works of Max Weber: A Theoretical Outline”, *Qualitative Sociology* 2, No. 1 (May 1979): 85-100.

<sup>163</sup> Max Weber, “The Social Psychology of World Religions”, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 282.

<sup>164</sup> W.S.F. Pickering, *Durkheim’s Sociology of Religion* (London: Routledge, 1984), 445; see also Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (New York: Free Press, 1965/1915).

<sup>165</sup> See Sigmund Freud, *The Future of Illusion* (New York: Norton, 1975).

the secular”<sup>166</sup>; whereas Gorski and Altinordu satirically acknowledge that secularisation has accomplished the extreme task of standing

Christian eschatology on its head, by postulating that the religious darkness will give way to secular enlightenment. Similarly, the spatial sense of secularisation anticipates the notion of “differentiated spheres” and the monk’s departure from the monastery parallels the individual’s exit from the church.<sup>167</sup>

While theorists have maintained that secularisation relates specifically to a historical shift in social and religious activities, others, as Stark and Iannaccone, take a broad analysis to assert a decline in religious demand, based upon religious supply, in certain Western industrial countries.<sup>168</sup> This contemporary argument is regarded as the supply-side/religious economics paradigm and makes it clearer why Judeo-Christian faith practices are not as pronounced as other non-Judeo Christian practices throughout Western Europe.<sup>169</sup> However, Jose Casanova takes a different approach in *Public Religion in the Modern World* by suggesting that the social movement in religion seen today is linked specifically to three areas: *differentiation, privatisation and decline*.<sup>170</sup>

In an effort to escape from the constraints of religion in Europe during the seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries, the social process of Western society as it moved from a narrow sacred position to that of a broader secular body outlines in clear terms what Swatos

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<sup>166</sup> David Martin, *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory* (England: Ashgate, 2005), 18.

<sup>167</sup> Phillip S. Gorski and Ates Altinordu, “After Secularization?”, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 34 (2008): 55-86.

<sup>168</sup> Rodney Stark and Lawrence R. Iannaccone, “A Supply-Side Reinterpretation of the so-called Secularization of Europe”, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 33 (1994): 230-52; see also Rodney Stark, “Secularization, RIP”, *Sociology of Religion* 60 (1999): 249-73.

<sup>169</sup> See Rodney Stark, *Discovering God: The Origins of the Great Religions and the Evolution of Belief* (New York: Harper One, 2007).

<sup>170</sup> Jose Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1994), 320; see also Jose Casanova, “Rethinking Secularization: A Global Comparative Perspective”, *Hedgehog Review* (Spring/Summer, 2006): 7-22.

argues: that secularisation is, as this study agrees, “the process by which societies in the experience of ‘modernisation’ have created competing institutions for doing better.”<sup>171</sup> This argument highlights the unique fact that the only continent that has ventured far in distancing society from religion, both in practice and in its trust in sacred frameworks, is Europe, but not the United States – since no dramatic decline in religious practices and beliefs in the US has yet prevailed.<sup>172</sup> However, while a decline in practise has not occurred publically, a private tension between secular players and sacred affairs is present. In acknowledging this fact, how might we apply to the United States Europe’s secular fear of the influence of religion in the public sphere? Clearly, the societies of both Europe and the US were influenced by Enlightenment secularisation; but, unlike what we see in Europe today of the creations of secularisation, the US was founded on Enlightenment principles which sought to establish a free society by promoting the separation of Church and State. Like their enlightened contemporaries in Europe, the framers of the US Constitution considered it fruitful to establish a new republic where tolerance for religious practices, within a secular context, could exist in the absence of divine absolutes. Strengthening this vision, such pre-Enlightenment philosophies found in Locke’s *Letters on Tolerance* and Hobbes’ proposals for a commonwealth of civil law were incorporated into the new republic’s secular vision.<sup>173</sup>

The architects of the new republic, like their European counterparts, were also suspicious of the influence which religion might have on the colonies, but understood the

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<sup>171</sup> William H. Swatos and KJ Christiano, “Secularization Theory: The Course of a Concept”, *Sociology of Religion*, 60, No. 3 (1999): 209-228.

<sup>172</sup> However, the July 2008 Gallup research findings indicate that both faith practices and a belief in God in the Western part of the US is lower than in other regions of the country. See Frank Newman, “Belief in God Far Lower in Western US ” *The Gallup Poll Briefing* (July 2008): 103; report available online, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/109108/Belief-God-Far-Lower-Western-US.aspx>.

<sup>173</sup> See John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration, and Early Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2006); Aloysius P. Martinich, ed. *Leviathan* (Ontario: Broadview Press, 2002).

value of religious tolerance as presented in Montesquieu's *The Spirit of the Laws*.<sup>174</sup> In *Religion in Public Life: Must Faith Be Privatized?*, Trigg writes that "An unfortunate aspect of this was a latent, and sometimes overt, anti-Catholicism, which was itself often the motive for the insistence on the separation of Church and State. Particularly after major immigration from Catholic countries, there was a fear of the influence of the Catholic hierarchy."<sup>175</sup> In addition, he notes that "Lingering distrust of the Church of England, coupled with denominational rivalry, led the Founders to be determined that the federal government should pursue a policy of neutrality concerning denominations."<sup>176</sup> James Madison, writing in the *Federalist Papers* on the need to safeguard the Union against domestic terrorism, emphasised the ills which corroded European society throughout the seventeenth century. He insisted that such historical events should not, in any way, plague the new republic.<sup>177</sup> In 1779, With the support of the statesman, Thomas Jefferson made this case against state-supported religion in the *Virginia Act for Establishing Religious Freedom* (passed in 1786).<sup>178</sup> This pre-Constitutional act served as a clause supportive of religious tolerance, giving freedom to all

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<sup>174</sup> Montesquieu's critical perspectives helped to shape the new republic's idea of tolerance. He asserts in *The Spirit of Laws* (1748), "When the legislator has believed it a duty to permit the exercise of many religions, it is necessary that he should enforce also toleration among these religions themselves." Charles de Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws* (1748) [article online]; available from <http://www.constitution.org/cm/sol-02.htm>; Internet, accessed 20 October 2008.

<sup>175</sup> Roger Trigg, *Religion in Public Life*, 210.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, 211.

<sup>177</sup> Isaac Kramnick, eds., *The Federalist Papers* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1987), 124. On the intensity of religious animosity, Madison expresses the division of religion in the early colonial society, indicating, "The latent causes of faction are thus sown in the nature of man; and we see them everywhere brought into different degrees of activity, according to the different circumstances of civil society. A zeal for different opinions concerning religion, concerning government, and many other points, as well of speculation as of practice; an attachment to different leaders ambitiously contending for pre-eminence and power; or to persons of other descriptions whose fortunes have been interesting to the human passions, have, in turn, divided mankind into parties, inflamed them with mutual animosity, and rendered them much more disposed to vex and oppress each other than to co-operate for their common good. So strong is this propensity of mankind to fall into mutual animosities, that where no substantial occasion presents itself, the most frivolous and fanciful distinctions have been sufficient to kindle their unfriendly passions and excite their most violent conflicts." *Ibid.*, 124.

<sup>178</sup> Thomas Jefferson, *The Virginia Act for Establishing Religious Freedom* (1786) [document online]; available from <http://religiousfreedom.lib.virginia.edu/sacred/vaact.html>; Internet, accessed 20 October 2008.

Virginians to practise the religion of their choice. This act prevented the state of Virginia from establishing its own state religion and the colony from taxing dissenters to the Anglican Church.<sup>179</sup>

Encouraging the spread of this tolerance throughout the American colonies, Madison and Jefferson's attempts in the *Federalist Papers* to ensure it, according to the vision of Montesquieu and Locke, focused on four points: (i) guarding against domestic and foreign rulers; (ii) ensuring that the new government could not establish a national religion comparable to the "Church of England"; (iii) protecting the many religious sects of the colonies and; (iv) ensuring that religious tolerance was implemented within the new republic.<sup>180</sup> What is of central importance to this study and in particular to the present chapter is the way in which the Virginia case helped to construct a plan for the separation of Church and State throughout the American republic. This was established to defend America against the ills that once threatened European society, and to ensure an American society of religious pluralism and tolerance.<sup>181</sup> Madison's efforts were implemented in Article I of the US Constitution (passed 15 December 1791) and are identified as part of the First Amendment's Establishment Clause, which makes it clear that:

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<sup>179</sup> See Christine Leigh Heyrman, *The Separation of Church and State from the American Revolution to the Early Republic* [article online]; available from <http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/eigheten/ekeyinfo/sepchust.htm>; Internet, accessed 20 October 2008.

<sup>180</sup> See David Wooten, *The Essential Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers* (Indiana: Hackett, 2003).

<sup>181</sup> Noah Feldman, "The Intellectual Origins of the Establishment Clause", *NYU Law Review* 77, No. 2 (2002); see also Noah Feldman, "The Origins", *Divided by God: America's Church-State Problem* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), 19-56.

*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...*<sup>182</sup>

As the architect of the Establishment Clause, Madison had a twofold personal aim for the *Virginia Act*: (a) to ensure that the US federal government did not establish a national church (or religion); and (b) to ensure that the many religious denominations in the colonies were free from discrimination and able to freely practise their chosen religion. However, out of Madison and Jefferson's good political intentions, two disturbing crosscurrents would emerge: secularist aims to protect free-thinking and rationalism would, first, set out to push the religious voice to the fringe; second, to demonstrate, in retaliation, their exceptionalist posture, religious citizens would perversely take advantage of their right to freely practise and express themselves in the public sphere by imposing their moral vision on both sacred and secular citizens living within society. The most recent occurrence of this was during the latter part of the twentieth-century, with evangelical Christians projecting their identity politics/and exceptionalist theological views on the American political system (i.e. indicating the reluctance of the USG to directly engage domestic religious forces).

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<sup>182</sup> See Cornell Univ. Law School database, *First Amendment, Religion and Expression* (1791) [document online]; available from [http://www.law.cornell.edu/anncon/html/amdt1afrag1\\_user.html#amdt1a\\_hd4](http://www.law.cornell.edu/anncon/html/amdt1afrag1_user.html#amdt1a_hd4); Internet, accessed 20 October 2008; see Noah Feldman, "The Birth of Secularism", *Divided by God*, 111-134.

## 2.4. Shifting the domestic dynamic

In the context of this study and US-Muslim world relations, the significant tension of post-secularism that emerge from this historical dynamic (between religion and the public sphere) materialised in the late twentieth century in the US. This period would usher in a different tone in the potential for religio-political engagement. During this era, religion politicised itself in order to influence secular legislation and secular institutions. An overwhelming shift occurred during the 1970s and '80s, where right-wing religious advocates protested that Evangelical Christian voices deserve recognition in the political arena. This case implied that secularism contributed to a great loss in traditional American values – attributable to its liberal views – leading to what Christian fundamentalists observed as a pervasive moral decay.<sup>183</sup> This particular evangelical campaign assumed prominence by means of the promising electronic church (the rise of televangelism) and a moral campaign which included direct mailers to its twenty million sympathisers (who, by the late 1970s, would represent an essential bloc in US domestic politics). The evangelical campaign, led by hard-line Christian fundamentalists such as Jerry Falwell, Paul Weyrich and James Robinson, televangelists including Pat Robinson and Charles Stanley, and mass communicationists (with financial interests) such as James Bakker, progressed from private solicitation to outright public awareness against the US liberal political establishment. In addition, the

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<sup>183</sup> Robert Liebman and Robert Wuthnow, *The New Christian Right* (New York: Aldine Publishing Co, 1983). This grassroots movement is traceable to the conservative political vision recognised in the 1960s as “the politics of doomsday”. A “silent majority” of Christian fundamentalists, intellectuals such as William F. Buckley and US political leaders such as Senator Barry Goldwater supported the religio-conservative view that “unless America returned to the standards of righteousness which they outlined, [the US] would be destroyed from within, and then only the End Times could preserve the few Christians who remained.” Erling Jorstad, *The Politics of Moralism: The New Christian Right in American Life* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House), 15; See Patrick Allitt, *Religion in America Since 1945: A History* (New York: Columbia UP, 2003).



campaign became a powerful grassroots movement in US affairs, in which religious activism would unconventionally influence liberal-secular political decision-making.<sup>184</sup>

Maturing by 1979 into the widely-recognised umbrella organisation, the Moral Majority (led by Falwell), this grassroots movement raised substantial financial capital, through James Robinson's recommended "moral report cards" project, for a robust lobbying campaign which focused on the voting records of US political officials.<sup>185</sup> The project "rated the votes of national lawmakers against [Evangelical Christian] standards of what constituted a 'moral' or 'immoral' vote on a key public issue."<sup>186</sup> In doing so, the Moral Majority targeted key congressional officials with agendas which it considered too liberal, or rather, unchristian. Interrelated crises influenced this project, such as:

The results of the 1973 Supreme Court decision on abortion, demands by homosexuals for civil rights, the Supreme Court's prohibition of religious exercises in public schools, the Equal Rights Amendment, the accessibility of pornography, and, in a different realm, the alleged decline of American prestige and power abroad due to a weakening military posture compared to increasing Soviet might.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> As part of this movement an apocalyptic culture war would be waged against the US political establishment, with Christian fundamentalism seeking to dictate the direction of US domestic and foreign policy. This narrow partisan vision, however, lost momentum and failed to attract many to "the politics of doomsday", forcing what would become the New Christian Right (NCR) (an assembly of Christian political action and lobbying organisations in the early 1970s) to restructure itself. Still, by the mid-1970s its views would be revived by more Christian action committees, such as the Christian Voice, the Religious Roundtable, and the National Conservative Political Action Committee (together with other smaller organisations) with ties to the Republican party. The NCR recognised that, to effect socio-political change, it could not concentrate on raising mass enthusiasm for its concerns and, to shape its characteristic moral vision, it had to put pressure of its own on the US political establishment and its leaders.

<sup>185</sup> Erling Jorstad, *The Politics of Moralism: The New Christian Right in American Life* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Pub. House, 1981), 54; Christian Voice (organisations), *Christian Voice Congressional Report Card: How Your Congressman Voted on 14 Key Moral Issues, 96th Congress, 1st Session, January-December, 1979* (Washington, D.C.: Christian Voice, 1980).

<sup>186</sup> Jorstad, *The Politics of Moralism*, 7; see Robert Webber, *The Moral Majority: Right or Wrong?* (Westchester: Cornerstone Books, 1981).

<sup>187</sup> Jorstad, *The Politics of Moralism*, 5; Anson D. Shupe and William A. Stacey, "Born Again Politics and the Moral Majority: What Social Surveys Really Show", *Studies in American Religion*, Vol. 5 (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1982).

In assessing how the USG engaged this religious force in politics, it seems reasonable for it to have had great political apprehensiveness (just as in 2001 it re-engaged with political Islam). By taking this apprehensive approach between 1976 and 1980 – and not setting clear boundaries for the religious voice in the public sphere or maintaining a secular posture on authentic morality – the USG was browbeaten and manipulated by a well-funded grassroots religious movement, which planned to pursue its narrow partisan *politics of moralism* within the US political establishment. The USG's liberal secular position was therefore compromised because of two shortcomings: a) *its unwillingness to establish a space for socio-political discussion*, and b) *US lawmakers conceding its legislative decision-making and power to the religious right*.

Take the first shortcoming, for example: given the religio-political vision of the Moral Majority and its impact on American voting patterns, the USG never, at either the state or the national level, convened representatives of the sacred and secular community in order to pursue any constructive form of tolerant engagement, dialogue or discourse within a special space. In essence, the religious players were never reminded of the boundaries outlined in the Constitution on the influence which religious expression might exert on secular political decision-making. The Moral Majority openly suggested social issues relating to affirmative action: prohibition on school prayers, secular curriculums in public schools, abortion and even the Equal Rights amendment were recognised as concrete issues which US elected officials had a “moral” responsibility to correct.<sup>188</sup> For evangelical Christians in this movement, “Salvation was to be found not only at the altar, but at the ballot box. [Thus, the argument ran], with the right man, highly moral men, in public office, America could yet be

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<sup>188</sup> Robert Liebman and Robert Wuthnow, *The New Christian Right*, 16; Steve Bruce, *The Rise and Fall of the New Christian Right: Conservative Protestant Politics in America, 1978-1988* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

redeemed to continue its God-given destiny.”<sup>189</sup> Instead of Christian political action committees operating in a widely beneficial and coherent space established for unimpeded dialogue with US politicians, they instead on the liberty to impose their belief system and ideology on public lawmakers.<sup>190</sup>

The second shortcoming related to the USG’s compromise is linked in part to the first. By not establishing a special space where sacred and secular voices might engage within the US public sphere to craft consensus between 1976 and 1980, political officials were attacked to draft or support US policy in the interests of evangelical Christian voters. A *politics of moralism* became the driving force behind this movement, whose members would transgress against the notion of traditional morality enshrined in the Constitution.<sup>191</sup> Though the founding fathers may have doubted whether the decisions of one group, man, idea or society enjoyed “an absolute significance” with regards to right and wrong, the Moral Majority thought otherwise. Erling Jorstad points out that traditional morality (as envisioned by the founders) and moralism (according to the Moral Majority) differ in three respects:

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<sup>189</sup> Jorstad, *The Politics of Moralism*, 5.

<sup>190</sup> See Francis A. Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto* (Westchester: Crossway Books, 1981); For a contrasting perspective on how this conservative motivation created not only a tension but an atmosphere conducive to producing religious violence, see also Frank Schaeffer, *Crazy for God: How I Grew Up As One of the Elect, Helped Found the Religious Right, and Lived to Take All (or Almost All) of It Back* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2007).

<sup>191</sup> “Morality can be defined as the rights or wrongness of human actions. The centuries-old question, of course, is who decides what is wrong or right: professional priests, holy men, sacred writings, or trial-and error experience?... But authentic morality hesitates to place too much authority in any one person or group of persons because, as Reinhold Niebuhr reminded us, “man is a finite and contingent creature, with some sense of universal value transcending his own existence but unfortunately inclined to endow the contingent values of his life or culture, of his truth or loyalty, with an absolute significant which it does not deserve” Jorstad asserts that moralism “embodies a particular world view. It understands that the moral answer to the questions perplexing mankind since earliest times are known, that no new or revised moralistic teachings will be forthcoming from the Author of morality because all revelation from him is full, complete, and binding” Jorstad, *The Politics of Moralism*, 8-9.

(1) it posits only one right moral action to any ethical question because (2) its authority is based on that view of Scripture which claims it is inerrant, infallible, and verbally inspired entirely without “error” in its original. Those Scriptures yield only one answer to each question. Those persons who accept that view of authority are the people qualified to decide what action is right and what is wrong, what is moral and what is immoral. (3) They can measure in quantifiable terms (such as voting report cards) the degree of morality of a person, in this case a public lawmaker, by choosing a select number of public issues and controversies on which the lawmaker must vote. Since those who speak with absolute authority have the moral answers they turn morality into moralism because they state they have the answers; those who disagree with them may not necessarily be “immoral” but they are not “moral”.<sup>192</sup>

Being cast as “not moral” by an entire political voting bloc was essentially a scare tactic which put unforeseen pressure on US lawmakers to acquiesce to the New Christian Right’s far-reaching hand in US politics and its public discounting of traditional morality, as set out by the founders. This pressure marked the onset of US lawmakers’ concessions of legislative power, due to religious pressure from the Christian right.<sup>193</sup> This issue was revived in the 1980s by Robert Billings, with his “Family Issues Voting Index”, which provided a set of key social issues and policies voted on or to be voted by liberal lawmakers contributing to America’s inevitable moral decay.

Targeting officials in the Senate and the House, the index expressed extreme opposition to sex education in public schools and Patricia M. Wald’s confirmation for US judgeship. But it would go on to advocate school prayer and a Bible reading amendment in the Senate.<sup>194</sup> In the House, the index expressed further opposition to “a bill establishing a programme to curb domestic violence (and provide aid to its victims) and to the Child Health

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<sup>192</sup> Ibid., 9

<sup>193</sup> Some critics have even argued that, as a presidential candidate in 1976, Jimmy Carter’s religious conversion as a “born again” Christian was a narrow political appeal to secure the growing evangelical voting bloc. But Carter’s liberal policies, for example, toward abortion and equal rights and his foreign policy posture toward the Soviet Union were enough to make him a targeted candidate by 1979, forfeiting the support of the Moral Majority which preferred Republican candidate Ronald Reagan for president. Kenneth Earl Morris, *Jimmy Carter, American Moralist* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996); Arthur Frederick Ide, *Idol Worshippers in America: Phyllis Schlafly, Ronald Reagan, Jerry Falwell, and the Moral Majority on Women, Work, and Homosexuality* (Dallas: Monument Press, 1985).

<sup>194</sup> Jorstad, 84.

Assurance Act of 1979 – while favouring a bill to balance the budget for fiscal 1980.”<sup>195</sup> These legislative issues became a yard-stick for deciding whether various members of Congress were moral or not and if they deserved to remain in office. As Jorstad observed, “the moral report card campaign allowed for no explanation by lawmakers, who now stood rated as... moral or immoral.”<sup>196</sup> Therefore, the religious and non-religious voice could not convene to consolidate opposition, for the secular players under pressure were either concerned to restore their public image or anxious to align themselves with the Moral Majority to maintain their political appeal. This applies to liberal Democratic senators such as George McGovern of South Dakota, Frank Church of Idaho, John Culver of Iowa, Alan Cranston of California, Birch Bayh of Indiana and Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin, who were targeted by the Moral Majority.<sup>197</sup>

Clearly, a trial of the US Establishment Clause occurred during the latter part of the twentieth century. With its popular appeal, the Moral Majority exercised its domestic right to religious expression in the public sphere, but US lawmakers would fail to confront its voice in fear of losing political support. When the Moral Majority took the US political establishment hostage by holding the “Holy Bible” above the head of certain lawmakers to promote its social agenda, it only raised doubts as to whether its narrow views were in fact in the interest of all Americans. But, by yielding to this extreme Christian movement, the USG would only display its unpreparedness at handling emerging religious issues in the public sphere. Doing so would require the USG to convene sacred-secular dialogue in a special

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<sup>195</sup> Jorstad, 84-85.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., 84.

<sup>197</sup> Sharon Linzey Georgianna, *The Moral Majority and Fundamentalism: Plausibility and Dissonance* (Lewiston N.Y.: E. Mellen Press, 1989).

forum to engage or even curb the activities of the Moral Majority before US political officials compromised the American secular political system.

In thinking critically about the US's failure at engaging religion and religious issues directly, this section has opened up a few challenges the USG faces with addressing religious activity in the public sphere. Its unpreparedness to directly engage the Moral Majority movement raises a red flag as to whether this posture of reluctance would surface later in its foreign relations. In comprehending the role the USG might employ to resolve a set of emerging post-secular issues on the international stage, let us turn our attention to understanding how religion is generally discounted in international relations. Hence, this study suspects that the USG's own loath position at engaging religious issues in a secular context (within the domestic arena) could very well lead to it applying a similar approach, as opposed to a more engaged response, when addressing the Muslim world.

## 2.5. Discounting religious forces in international relations

In this section, this study will take a step back in order to go beyond the prior discussion (the handling of religion in domestic American politics) to argue that broader frameworks must be considered. Comprehending that rather than being how the USG deals with its own domestic religious movements (with respect to US-Muslim engagement), it is in fact about understanding how its political apprehension toward religion is capable of reaching into international relations. Jonathan Fox and Samuel Sandler, in the study *Bringing Religion into International Relations*, argue that the contemporary revitalisation of religious concerns in public and private space emerged as a result of multiple trends in modernity and a discounting of religion, on occasion, by US political and academic sources since the mid-twentieth-century. Dismissing the secularists' thesis that a historically admitted rise in modernity would eventually lead to "the demise of religion as a significant political and social force [in society]", Fox and Sandler observe that, instead of modernity contributing to the demise of religion, it has contributed to its resurgences, citing eight points:

(i) in many parts of the Third World, efforts at modernisation have failed, causing a religious backlash against the Western secular ideologies that were the basis for the governments which were in charge of these unsuccessful efforts at modernisation; (ii) modernisation has undermined traditional lifestyles, community values and morals, which are based in part on religion, thus contributing to this religious backlash against modernity; (iii) modernisation has allowed both the state and religious institutions to increase their spheres of influence, thus resulting in more clashes between the two; (iv) modern political systems allow for mass participation in politics, which has allowed the religious sectors of society a means to impose their views on others; (v) modern communication has allowed religious groups to export their views more easily and the international media has made religious groups aware of the activities of other religious groups; (vi) a new trend in the sociology of religion, known as the rational choice or economic theory of religion, posits that freedom of choice in many modern societies to select one's own religion has led to an increase in religiosity; (vii) modern religious organisations contribute to political activity and; (viii) modernity does cause secularisation in some parts of the religious economy in that many mainstream and dominant religions become more worldly.<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Fox and Sandler, *Bringing Religion into International Relations*, 12-13; see also Charles Taylor, "The Two Theories of Modernity", *Hastings Center Report*, 25, No. 2 (1995): 24-33; Talal

In practical terms, what Weber, Comte and others saw during the nineteenth century as the growth of anti-religious forces (modernity and a rise in technology) has essentially contributed to the resurgence of religion in public life. This study refers to this resurgence as *religious intensity* – aggressive efforts by religious bodies to express their beliefs in actions beyond the private arena. “Rather than an inevitable and steady loss of spiritual faith or purpose as societies modernise, critics argue that more complex historical and cross-current patterns [are present today...For example] religiosity evident in the success of Islamic parties in Pakistan, the popularity of evangelicalism in Latin America, outbreaks of ethno-religious bloodshed in Nigeria and international conflict in Afghanistan and Iraq in the aftermath of 9/11.”<sup>199</sup> Within each scene of *intensity* there is a diverse pattern of events linked to religious concerns, as Andrew Greely points out.<sup>200</sup> Even Habermas has taken this concept a step further by regarding these new challenges as a “*world-wide resurgence of religion*”, relating directly to: transnational missionary expansion inspired by charismatic leadership; a growing fundamentalist radicalisation among Muslims and Pentecostals; and the political instrumentalisation of the potential for violence innate in many of the world’s religions.<sup>201</sup> This last factor presents an uncomfortable reason why the USG in particular should take *religious intensity* seriously. The facts are clear: it is impossible for the USG to deny the

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Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 2003).

<sup>199</sup> Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2004), 10. Describing the effect on European states in the context of the United States of the intensity of religious issues, Habermas notes, “The movements for religious renewal at the heart of Western civilisation are strengthening, at the cultural level, the political division of the West that was prompted by the Iraq War. With the abolition of the death penalty, with liberal regulations on abortion, with setting homosexual partnerships on a par with heterosexual marriages, with an unconditional rejection of torture and generally with the privileging of individual rights versus collective good, e.g., national security, the European states seem to be moving forward alone down the path they had trodden side by side with the United States”. Jurgen Habermas, “Religion in the Public Sphere”, *European Journal of Philosophy*, 14, No. 1 (2006): 1-25.

<sup>200</sup> See Andrew Greely, *Religion in Europe at the End of the Second Millennium* (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2003).

<sup>201</sup> See Habermas, *Notes on Post-Secularism*, 2.



evidence that certain events relating to religion have not reshaped the political landscape, thereby requiring the political realm to define more direct methods to address these emerging issues.

Such traditional political philosophies including political realism, stymie the development of sacred-secular engagement. On the one hand, this philosophy influenced practitioners in the US political realm where, on occasion, it predetermined the extent of political engagement. When reviewing this political philosophy it's clear why US politicians hesitate to engage with the emerging moral ideas within the state (as was the case with the Moral Majority). Political realism is rooted in a Weberian disenchantment with all things considered mystical (or religious) and their application to justify social events. Political realism contributes, in a way, to constructing a political philosophy which ensures that the conversation of what is legitimate to nation-state relations remains in liberal-secular terms (i.e. power, economics and strategic defence). Hans Morgenthau, noted pioneer in the field of international relations, emphasises this separation, pointing toward the difference between the moral and the political; he writes in *Politics Among Nations*:

Realism maintains that universal moral principles cannot be applied to the actions of states in their abstract universal formulation, but they must be filtered through the concrete circumstances of time and place... Political realism refuses to identify the moral aspirations of a particular nation with the moral laws that govern the universe. As it distinguishes between truth and opinion, so it distinguishes between truth and idolatry.<sup>202</sup>

In a text that serves as a guide to American diplomacy and international relations theory for over a half century, a clear line is drawn between the justification of moral ideals and what

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<sup>202</sup> Hans Morgenthau, "Six Principles of Political Realism", *Politics Among Nations* [article online]; available from <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/morg6.htm>; Internet, assessed 20 October 2008; see also Hans Morgenthau, eds., *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Revised (Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Education, 2005).

political realism defines as sufficient for state action. Morgenthau continues, “[for] realism theory consists in ascertaining facts and giving them meaning through reason. It assumes that the character of a foreign policy [for example] can be ascertained only through the examination of the political acts performed and the foreseeable consequences of these acts...[it] believes that politics, like society in general, is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature.”<sup>203</sup> Morgenthau, in this argument, fails to identify that some human events cannot be understood by ascertaining its facts on the sole basis of reason. The foreseeable consequences of post-secular events encourage us to take another look at the relevance of religion in understanding the onset and the direction of certain human events that affect society. With respect to Morgenthau’s position, it is clear that the USG, in particular, is accustomed to speaking an entirely different language (political) from that used in predominantly Muslim countries (with varied exceptions to those countries that utilise religio-political frameworks). Consequently, this traditional Western-secular communicative framework makes it difficult to appreciate the significance of sacred-secular relations.

Regarding the varied levels in the political academic sphere of discounting the re-emergence of religion, Elizabeth S. Hurd, from her claim that “Religion is a problem in the field of international relations”, makes two points.<sup>204</sup> She argues, first, that “religious fundamentalism and religious differences have emerged as crucial factors in international conflict, national security and foreign policy” and, second, that “the power of this religious resurgence in world politics does not fit into existing categories of thought in academic

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<sup>203</sup> Morgenthau, “Six Principles of Political Realism”, <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/morg6.htm>.

<sup>204</sup> Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2007), 1.

international relations.’’<sup>205</sup> A systemic underestimating of religion in international relations encourages the tendency of political practitioners to regard religion as non-substantive within this arena. By taking this approach and regarding religion as something oddly different from the political (and without substance in rising events), this posture inhibits a progressive response to reconciling these emerging affairs. Fox and Sandler acknowledge this point in the context of the academic political sphere, asserting that:

Religion is rarely included in most major theories of international relations and when it is addressed, it is usually through viewing it as a subcategory of some topic that is considered more important, such as institutions, terrorists, society, or civilisation... ‘This disregard is related to the premise that primordial factors such as ethnicity and religion had no part in modern society or in rational explanations for the way the world works... because international relations is perhaps the most Western-centric of the social science disciplines... international relations is heavily influenced by behaviourism and the use of quantitative methodology... and... the major theories of international relations are all based on assumptions that exclude religion as an important factor.’<sup>206</sup>

Since religion is traditionally categorised as a non-legitimate source within the US political academic sphere, it is clear why political apprehensiveness is so prevalent among US lawmakers toward the post-secular affairs on the international stage. However, rejecting the view that religion is not a legitimate aspect of statecraft or relevant to the process of

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<sup>205</sup> Ibid., 1.; In “Theorizing Religious Resurgence,” Hurd explains, “Since the end of the Cold War, most political scientists have seen religion as an inexplicable obstacle on the road to secular democracy or as evidence of cultural and civilisational difference in world politics. As Euben argues, ‘both pessimistic and optimistic prognoses of the post-Cold War world are content implicitly to assume and thus reinforce the idea that religio-political movements (among others) stand in relation to Western, secular power and international order as the chaos of the particularistic, irrational and archaic stand in relation to the universalistic, rational and modern. Two secularist normative assumptions have structured attempts to theorise religion in international relations. The first is that religion should be expelled from democratic politics; this is laicism. The objective here is to create a public life in which religious belief, practices and institutions have lost their political significance, fallen below the threshold of political contestation and/or been pushed into the private sphere. Falk describes laicists as ‘those who view religion as disposed toward extremism, even terrorism, as soon as it abandons its proper modernist role as a matter of private faith and intrudes upon public space, especially on governance.’” Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, “Theorizing Religious Resurgence”, *International Politics*, 33, No. 6 (2007): 647-665.

<sup>206</sup> Fox and Sandler, *Bringing Religion into International Relations*, 32; see also Vndulka Kabalkova, “Towards an International Political Theology”, *Millennium*, 29, No. 3 (2000): 682-683; 675-704.

political engagement, Jurgensmeyer, Shalieyeh, and Appleby acknowledge the counter-truism that religion is relevant and capable of bolstering “government and opposition legitimacy” within the political realm in times of difficulty.<sup>207</sup> “[Regardless] of the legitimacy of a state, religious frameworks are capable of providing legitimacy both to the state and to its opposition. For that matter, religious frameworks are capable of providing legitimacy to just about any group or individual, including violent activities such as terrorism.”<sup>208</sup> Instead of emphasising the apparent theoretical and philosophical differences between religion and the political realm, Craig Calhoun suggests that what should be emphasised is what religion may offer the state in times of great difficulty. In *Recognising Religion* he writes:

Religion appears in liberal theory first and foremost as an occasion for tolerance and neutrality. This orientation is reinforced by both the classification of religion as essentially a private matter and the view that religion is in some sense a “survival” from an earlier era – not a field of vital growth within modernity... [in as much] as Religion, moreover, is a part of the genealogy of public reason itself. To attempt to disengage the idea of public reason (or the reality of the public sphere) from religion is to disconnect it from a tradition that continues to give it life and content.<sup>209</sup>

While acknowledging religion in the public sphere is imperative to improving relations, clearly when a secular official applies their own exclusive religious rhetoric toward this religious audience, such posture will push against a potential post-secular engagement. Nikos Kokosalakis rightly sees that “though a separation of church and state are present in

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<sup>207</sup> Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War?* (California: Univ. of California Press, 1993). Clifford Geertz, “Centers, Kings and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolic of Power”, *Culture and its Creators*, Joseph Ben-David and Terry N. Clark, eds. (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1977); Emile Sahliyah, ed., *Religious Resurgence and Politics in the Contemporary World* (Albany: Univ. of New York Press, 1990); Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000).

<sup>208</sup> Jonathan Fox, “Towards a Dynamic Theory of Ethno-Religious Conflict”, *Nations and Nationalism*, 5, No. 4 (1999): 431-463.

<sup>209</sup> Craig Calhoun, “Religion in the Public Sphere: Recognizing Religion”, *Immanent Frame* SSRN [article online]; available from [http://www.ssrc.org/blogs/immanent\\_frame/2008/03/24/recognizing-religion/](http://www.ssrc.org/blogs/immanent_frame/2008/03/24/recognizing-religion/); Internet, accessed 20 October 2008.

Western societies, a separation of religious culture and politics is not”.<sup>210</sup> Therefore, one may argue that the Christian Right movement would go on, (during the 2000s) to influence George W. Bush’s post-9/11 agenda and its reluctance to engage the Muslim world. While its influence would neither be direct nor comparable to the Moral Majority’s influence on domestic policy, it would, to say the least, influence the personal faith-based instincts of President Bush which persuaded his political decision-making. Here, an extension between the negative language conveyed by the Christian Right movement toward the American secular establishment (both in tone and rhetoric) would later find its way into President Bush’s public discourse after the attacks on 9/11.

Though the personal Christian beliefs of President Bush do not fit into America’s larger secular political framework, when projected into the US’s post-9/11 foreign policy agenda, elements of exclusivism (both religious and political) were conveyed to the Muslim world. Bush’s religious rhetoric established an international context for painting a portrait that suggested the religion and people of Islam were the “enemy” of the United States. This rhetoric took on a life of its own, shaping Bush’s foreign policy discourse into what is recognised as Bush’s “God-talk”.<sup>211</sup> This is reflected in the President asserting, for example, that: *America is an exceptional nation, referencing the “war on terror” as a crusade, indicating as President that he was on a divine mission from God, or that God has led him to invade Iraq.*<sup>212</sup> This Moral Majority inspired language contributed to both severing and even (on some occasions) constricting the prospects of post-secular engagement that might very

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<sup>210</sup> Nikos Kokosalakis, “Legitimation Power and Religion”, *Modern Society Sociological Analysis*, 46, No. 4 (1985): 367-376.

<sup>211</sup> Bruce Lincoln, “Bush’s God Talk”, *Political Theologies: Public Religion in a Post-Secular World*, ed. Hent De Vries and Lawrence E. Sullivan (New York: Fordham UP, 2006), 269

<sup>212</sup> Richard L. Pace, *The Role of Religion in the Life and Presidency of George W. Bush*, USAWC Strategy Research Project (Carlisle Barracks: US Army War College, 2004).

well improve or establish functional communicative relations with Muslim audiences in the Middle East. When opportunities for engagement arose that might restore or establish functional post-secular relations, they were unfortunately confronted by this exclusive religious rhetoric, dimming the USG's prospects on successfully engaging the Muslim world.

This section has argued there is a specific danger in discounting the perspectives and aspirations of religious audiences, especially in the case when a secular player applies negative language to an international religious community. Hence, we see here that it is likely to push against post-secular opportunities that will establish a special space where religious and secular voices might find expression through social dialogue. Subsequently, within this space, the US secular player might listen and develop more productive avenues for dealing with humanity. In this sphere, the secular player may come to terms with a more suitable way for addressing the post-secular while challenging its commitment to political realism. Despite its representation of various levels of political apprehensiveness toward religion (within the domestic and international arenas), a new course must be set where relations are managed and both voices are respected beyond the application of negative language.

## 2.6. Considering a more engaged response

Reinhold Niebuhr identifies in *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1933) that “a too consistent political realism would consign society to perpetual warfare.”<sup>213</sup> Seemingly, the most practical and “enlightened” way of addressing the post-secular, where religion and religious events become more pronounced in US domestic and foreign relations, is for the USG to consider the relevance of a more engaged response – when approaching post-secular affairs. A more engaged response is rooted in an attitude shift by the USG to make political apprehensiveness less likely when addressing the post-secular. To a great extent, such a response may be easier for citizens than for the state itself; however, this point should not rule out the idea that the USG is capable of embracing a more coherent approach, rather than clinging to a militarist foreign policy (as endorsed previously by the Bush Administration) when addressing international religious affairs. Niebuhr asserts that “individual men are more moral than the society where collective egotism hinders the making of a cohesive moral society.”<sup>214</sup> The challenges we as humans most often face are rooted in the evils and self-interest of both man and society. In the case of the USG, the last decade its state interests were domineering and selfish, especially when dealing with less powerful, predominantly religious nations. Such a perverted egotism suggests that a “social ignorance” of this magnitude is counter-productive in an age where direct communication is most needed

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<sup>213</sup> Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society: A Study in Ethics and Politics* (Whitefish, Mont.: Kessinger Publishing, 2006).

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., xi.; “There is always, in every nation, a body of citizens more intelligent than the average, who see the issues between their own and other nations more clearly than the ignorant patriot, and more disinterestedly than the dominant classes who seek special advantages in international relations.”, 87.

between social groups, nations and between sacred and secular voices.<sup>215</sup> Niebuhr affirms this point by indicating the need of self-criticism, suggesting that

...the nation is a corporate unity, held together much more by force and emotion, than by mind. Since there can be no ethical action without self-criticism and no self-criticism without the rational capacity of self-transcendence, it is natural that national attitudes can hardly approximate to the ethical. Even those tendencies toward self-criticism in a nation which do express themselves are usually thwarted by the governing classes and by a certain instinct for unity in society itself.<sup>216</sup>

His perspective that nations must desire unity through self-criticism is correct. For example, at the (September 2008) CNN/George Washington University forum, *The Next President: A World of Challenges*, five former US Secretaries of State convened to offer criticism and advice on the US's current foreign policy. When questioning former Secretary Warren Christopher, Christiane Amanpour asked if, after September 11, "the United States could continue to be the demander in the world?" Secretary Christopher responded with an emphatic, "No. I think we have to take a much more cooperative attitude than we have been in the past, listening to other countries, recognising our strength, but moving forward in a way that makes other countries feel they'd like to be on our side, helping us."<sup>217</sup> Christopher has argued that, in a sense, there is validity in Niebuhr's point that the aim of "the nation" should be that of "finding political methods which will offer the most promise for achieving

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<sup>215</sup> Niebuhr points out, "Such is the *social ignorance* of peoples, that, far from doing justice to a foe or neighbour, they are as yet unable to consider their own interests wisely. Since their ultimate interests are always protected best, by at least a measure of fairness toward their neighbours, the desire to gain an immediate selfish advantage always imperils their ultimate interest." Ibid., 86.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>217</sup> Frank Sesno and Christiane Amanpour, *The Next President: A World of Challenges* [transcript online]; available from <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0809/20/se.01.html>; Internet, accessed 20 October 2008; see also Bill Richardson, "New Realism: A Realistic and Principled Foreign Policy", *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 2008) [article online]; <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20080101faessay87111/bill-richardson/a-new-realism.html>; Internet, accessed 20 October 2008.



an ethical social goal for society”.<sup>218</sup> This point is most relevant to the USG in defining a more engaged way to address religious forces, as opposed to becoming overwhelmed by them.

Beyond Niebuhr’s self-criticism (and call for the unity of the nation), it is clear how the USG must pursue this unity in a post-secular framework. First, its initial presentation must shift and transcend the attitudes of both the sacred and secular within society. In essence, to assure the religious voice will not overshadow the secular, and, vice-versa, a behavioural shift must initially occur between both citizens. Jürgen Habermas regards this cognitive behavioural shift in the post-secular setting as the *complementary learning process* (CLP). The aim of the CLP is to establish, first, that a cognitive level of respect is necessary between the sacred and secular in society, by emphasising that neither should consider itself a social burden to the other.<sup>219</sup> The *process* emphasises that differences between them will be apparent, but that what is gained by joining them derives from their very diversity. The aim is to ensure that both voices understand that they each have qualities from which other citizens can learn. The CLP ensures that in taking this primary step, citizens aligned to the sacred will not have to denounce their sacred beliefs when engaging with the secular, and the secular political realm, in return, will maintain its traditional beliefs when addressing the sacred. However, it is unlikely that an epistemic *learning process* of this magnitude will be forced on citizens by the state, because the process will first have to be appropriated by the citizens of both arenas determined to see the state take a more progressive posture than political apprehensiveness toward non-secular groups and the issues they raise. Habermas affirms that, “In view of what an ethics of democratic citizenship requires in terms of mentalities, we

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<sup>218</sup> Niebuhr, xxiv.; Reinhold Niebuhr, “The Character of National Imperialism”, *Nations and Empires* (London: Faber and Faber, 1959), 201-216.

<sup>219</sup> See *Notes on a Post-Secular Society*, 8-10; see also Habermas, *Religion in the Public Sphere*, 18-25.

come up against the very limits of a normative political theory that can justify only rights and duties. Learning processes can be fostered, but not morally or legally stipulated.”<sup>220</sup>

In making this primary shift toward a more engaged response, a broadening of the space for discussion is likely to develop, allowing for more direct public debates and deliberations between the public and the private spheres. In addition, a diminution of political apprehensiveness is likely to follow, since both citizens will have an idea of the other’s current objectives. Even with the progressive aims presented, it would be naive to assume that the process will not throw out great cognitive challenges. The problem often identified between both mentalities is that each considers the other a “complementary equal” – a problem which has persisted in Western society since the eighteenth century at the nation-state level. With the *complementary learning process*, a reflexive convocation of learning develops, and is imbued with respect in order to encourage the primary adjustment of attitude needed to ensure a more engaged response that transcends the post-secular.<sup>221</sup>

Second, in encouraging this primary attitude adjustment of citizens and state actors, moral-political engagement (assuming the religious voice does not become dominated, but is expressed respectfully) comes to the aid of this process. Troy Dostert makes this point clear in *Beyond Political Liberalism: Toward a Post-secular Ethic of Public Life*. In doing so, he

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<sup>220</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>221</sup> Habermas, *Religion and the Public Sphere*, 16-17. Habermas reminds us that, “As long as the secular citizens perceive religious traditions and religious communities as archaic relics of pre-modern societies which continue to exist in the present, they will understand freedom of religion as the natural preservation of an endangered species. From their viewpoint, religion no longer has any intrinsic justification to exist in the present, and thus they will understand freedom of religion in this way. From their viewpoint, religion no longer has any intrinsic justification to exist. And the principle of the separation of state and church can for them only have the laicist meaning of sparing indifference. Citizens who adopt such an epistemic stance toward religion can obviously no longer be expected to take religious contributions to contentious political issues seriously or even to help to assess them as a substance which can in any way be expressed in a secular language and justified by secular arguments.” Ibid., 16-17.

presents an opportunity for the nation-state to move beyond the limitations of John Rawls and Habermas by presenting an argument that goes beyond tolerance. Dostert makes the case for a post-secular moral engagement by challenging John Rawls's political liberalism, which is rooted in John Locke's separation of power.<sup>222</sup> Dostert argues against the tenets of political liberalism ("which insist upon utilising secular methods to regulate public discourse") and for a more robust kind of engagement which takes into account religious convictions and public reasoning between spokesmen for the sacred and the secular in the public sphere.<sup>223</sup> Dostert's proposal emerges as a direct counter to Rawls's political liberalism, which aims to marginalise the convictions of religious citizens. This effort "devalues democratic engagement by engineering how religious citizens might express themselves in the public sphere toward their secular counterparts."<sup>224</sup> In making this claim he asks:

Are liberal justice and social stability fully desirable if, as a means to those ends, citizens are not welcomed in bringing their deepest convictions to bear in negotiating public space or defining public purposes? This is not simply a question of fairness to both religious and nonreligious citizens. Given the role that religious communities have historically played in the American context through shaping public space and public ideals, are we not to look upon this involvement as being inherently suspect, something to be carefully controlled or monitored?<sup>225</sup>

The problem does not lie with any bad case or weak political theory presented by Locke or Rawls for religious-state relations, because their philosophical approach to ways for the state to engage religious matters is out of date and should be updated. Concurrently, what makes Rawl's argument problematic is that his philosophy is unwilling to reach across the aisle to engage the sacred. As Dostert has pointed out, it aims merely to tolerate the sacred

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<sup>222</sup> Troy Dostert, *Beyond Political Liberalism*, 15-32.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid., 165-166.

<sup>224</sup> He states, "...political liberalism envisions a politics more akin to *political engineering* than to political creativity. The ideal of the well-ordered society Rawls champions is one in which the most essential questions of justice and rights have been settled. While important political conflicts may remain, it is assumed that they will be addressed solely by referring to the political values contained in the overlapping consensus." Dostert, *Beyond Political Liberalism*, 180.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid., 9.

within society, leaving the secular to remain in its space and the sacred isolated in its realm. But it is not enough to merely respect the religious model at a time when post-secular events are taking place. Although toleration is needed within the state, more cooperation should be offered between the sacred and the secular.<sup>226</sup>

As a colourful remedy for the stubbornness of political liberalism in failing to adapt to moral communities, Dostert presents four general qualities which the state should consider if it wishes to progressively improve its relations with post-secularism: *sincerity*, *discipline*, *forbearance* and, above all, *dialogical creativity*. The last of these qualities is of great importance in understanding a way in which the USG might better engage post-secularism at home and abroad (and in formulating effective communication across communal lines). What is likely to develop when there is dialogical quality is a conversion of multiple communicative frameworks, which creates an inclusive context conducive to engagement between the sacred and the secular. “The practice of dialogical creativity presupposes an ongoing need for scrutinising our political ideals and adapting them so as to respond to changing social, cultural and political realities.”<sup>227</sup> Dostert asserts, “We must always seek to measure the adequacy of our political understandings and use whatever normative resources at our disposal to critique and refashion them when they fall short. This is a process that requires imagination and discovery, as well as flexibility and a desire to experiment with diverse political approaches.”<sup>228</sup> Where a more compassionate approach is taken to function within Dostert’s *dialogical creativity*, it creates what seems to be the most important feature,

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<sup>226</sup> “Political liberalism proves a ready-made solution for resolving such conflicts, but at the expense of the flexibility and solicitude that might generate more accommodating, less divisive outcomes. In situations such as these a more robust kind of engagement, one in which we forge political solutions through taking into account the comprehensive views of affected moral communities, can afford us possibilities for negotiating our differences which we would not have if we relied solely upon an insular set of political values.” Ibid., 166.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid., 180.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid., 180.

a communication approach committed to engaging post-secularism to ensure that the voices of both sacred and secular citizens are acknowledged and integrated into the public sphere.

## 2.7. Conclusion

The act of reaching beyond the secular and into a more engaged response ensures the making of a “transformative progressive society”, as identified in Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s *Beloved Community* model, which provides flesh to Niebuhr’s notion of national unity. A nation open to unifying its many voices is a nation unafraid of embracing post-secularism. King’s *Beloved Community* model speaks of the idea of how to improve relations by employing a post-secular framework. By invoking King’s position, both sacred and secular players are able to move from the aspirational to the practical by accepting their social duty to employ united action. Smith and Zepp acknowledge that “King’s conception of the Beloved Community is best described as a transformed and regenerated human [and] integrated society wherein brotherhood would be an actuality in every aspect of social life.”<sup>229</sup> If this concept were taken seriously by the USG from within the domestic arena, a growth in shared values between citizens, room for equitable coexistence, cooperation in forming practical social solutions and the advancement of sacred-secular relations would inevitably result. This study proposes five vital points for consideration for improving the USG’s engagement with the post-secular:

- (a) The USG should readily identify that it has embarked upon a post-secular era which warns against its apprehensive political posture toward religious issues (both domestic and foreign);

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<sup>229</sup> Kenneth L. Smith and Ira G. Zepp Jr., *Searching for the Beloved Community: The Thinking of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Pennsylvania: Judson Press, 1974), 120.

(b) In maintaining its liberal-secular traditions, the USG must become more accustomed to incorporating forms of post-secular *political engagement* to address moral issues when they are linked to religious publics;

(c) The establishment of a special post-secular political forum that encourages public deliberation should integrate sacred and secular voices in order to balance the political realm's decision-making process when developing policies relating to post-secular international religious affairs;

(d) In this forum, the USG should consider partnerships with international religious leaders to reshape failed US foreign policies which over the last decade did not invest in understanding the strength of international religious publics and their opinions and;

(e) Ensure that with creative post-secular communicative language the USG rebuilds equitable sacred-secular relations with international religious publics and ceases to rely on outdated secular measures.

Putting these vital points into practice will provide an opportunity for the USG to improve its domestic dynamic to ensure national security by embracing a post-secular framework. This means identifying post-secularism as a critical social issue worthy of recognition and direct action. Before considering this position, this study will introduce the advantage of interfaith dialogue (as a productive form of *dialogical creativity*), which aids in integrating sacred and secular voices for improving post-secular relations.

## Chapter 3

### Interfaith dialogue as a post-secular treatment

#### 3.1 Introduction

The diverse model of interfaith dialogue is the post-secular strategy which may serve to provide a tradition of diversity for the US liberal secular state when engaging in sacred-secular affairs. Traditionally defined as a multi-religious interaction between citizens of faith, the interfaith model characterised in this chapter has two faces:<sup>230</sup> one provides a conventional method for sacred citizens to communicate with one another within a multi-religious setting, and the other functions as a treatment by which the US liberal-secular-state might: a) utilise a special space for post-secular engagement with international religious publics so as to more effectively identify their concerns; and b) learn how to treat post-secular issues within a diverse public sphere setting. Considering the fact that post-secularism is a new agenda where the religious voice has reasserted itself into liberal-secular state affairs, it is vital the USG comprehends a treatment capable of handling this resurgence, while simultaneously assuring space for both sacred and secular opinions.

What is recognised as the body of interfaith activity (the interfaith sphere) is not a particular model as such, but a general tradition characterised here as an all-encompassing sphere where numerous activities related to, and modes associated with, the practice of interfaith relations exist for the purpose of engagement. The interfaith sphere is grounded in a universal diversity that ensures its participants (sacred or secular) may convene to engage

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<sup>230</sup> John Gray makes reference to this “two faces” position first in his research on liberal toleration, entitled *“Two Faces of Liberalism”*. We will examine aspects of this study further in 3.4, looking specifically at his discussion on *modus Vivendi* and value pluralism.

with one another to address a range of issues relating to theology, spirituality and social justice without being stymied by exclusive religious behaviour. When looking specifically at the practise of interfaith dialogue (as will be the case in section 3.3.) this study observes that it is not a singular practice related to one unitary mode, but in fact belongs to a varied arrangement inside a larger sphere, which develops out of a historical tradition of diversity to *resolve intractable disputes non-violently, aid public deliberations, embrace multi-religious opinions to promote mutual understanding and provide a safe space for plural engagement.*

This post-secular treatment is not committed to any one religion (in the sense that the central focus of interfaith activity is not a religion (or faith) tradition in particular). Interfaith activity is inherently a form of religious democracy, in that it convenes persons from diverse backgrounds, ideologies and traditions while making sure that particular religious practises and specific traditions do not dominate the process of engagement.<sup>231</sup> Interfaith activities offer possibilities for dialogue and encounter which not only reshape the concept of diversity, but also open up an alternative for employing a post-secular framework within both domestic and international arenas to ensure a more engaged response.

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<sup>231</sup> I will revisit this point later in this chapter in my discussion on the religious behaviour of Christian exclusivists toward non-Christian religions and their legitimacy. Regarding the notion of religious democracy and the ongoing discussion on how multi-religious conversations are comparable to liberal secular activity; see Jeffrey Stout, *Democracy and Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Jürgen Habermas and Benedict Joseph Ratzinger *Dialectics of Secularization: On Reason and Religion* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006); and Thomas F. Banchoff *Democracy and the New Religious Pluralism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).



### 3.2 The contemporary interfaith movement: *Making a tradition*

The concept of diversity, over the last century, serves as a centrepiece to the contemporary interfaith movement which can be traced to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century World Parliament of Religions (WPR), marking the beginning of the *first phase* – the gathering.<sup>232</sup> Both historians and researchers in interfaith studies, such as Marcus Braybrooke and Richard H. Seager, agree that the origins of this contemporary movement are linked to the significant religious exposition which began on 11 September 1893 and welcomed more than 6,000 religious delegates over the course of seventeen days in Chicago, Illinois. The WPR served not only as a significant international event held in conjunction with the “World’s Columbian Exposition, Chicago’s great world fair built to celebrate Christopher Columbus’s achievement,” but as the first ever structured global interfaith convention.<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> See Marcus Braybrooke, *Pilgrimage of Hope: One Hundred Years of Global Interfaith Dialogue* (London: SCM Press, 1992), 7-54; Richard H. Seager, *The World Parliament of Religion: the East/West Encounter Chicago 1893* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1995).

<sup>233</sup> Acknowledging the significance of this event, Seager writes, “The Parliament deserves a central place in American and modern religious history. A seventeen-day-long assembly held in September 1893, it was considered by its organisers as the most noble expression of the World’s Columbian Exposition.” Richard Seager, *The World Parliament of Religions*, XV; Among the varied contentions of the Gilded Age involving the rise in urbanisation, development, Jim Crow and a nation readjusting from a Civil War not less than three decades prior, the Parliament sought to carry a set of goals that centred on mutual understanding and plural action, as outlined in Charles C. Bonney’s (1894) reflection, *The Genesis of the World’s Religious Congresses 1893*. More specifically, Bonney cites the Parliament’s goals were that of “uniting all religion against irreligion and to [setting] forth common aims on a common ground of unity”; see Charles Carroll Bonney, “The Genesis of the World’s Religious Congresses of 1893”, *New-Church Review I* (January 1894): 73-100. Adding to Bonney’s observation, Braybrooke acknowledges that the objectives, as agreed upon by the General Committee of the Parliament in its June 1891 plenary meeting, were that there should be “no desire [among any delegate] to create a mood of indifferentism. Rather the hope [of the Parliament] was that a friendly conference of eminent men, strong in their personal convictions, would show what are the supreme truths and the light that religion could throw on the great problems of the time.” Marcus Braybrooke, *Pilgrimage of Hope*, 11.

Among the hundreds of lectures and papers presented at the Parliament, it was the theological address by a Hindu delegate, Swami Vivekananda<sup>234</sup> (yet to gain prominence) which embodied the temperament and concept of pluralism that the contemporary interfaith movement would later practise. In his opening remarks, reflecting on the social contentions of the age, Vivekananda candidly observed that:

Sectarianism, bigotry and its horrible descendant, fanaticism, have long possessed this beautiful earth. They have filled the earth with violence, drenched it often and often with human blood, destroyed civilisation and sent whole nations to despair. Had it not been for these horrible demons, human society would be far more advanced than it is now. But their time is come; and I fervently hope that the bell that tolled this morning in honour of this convention may be the death-knell of all fanaticism, of all persecutions with the sword or with the pen, and of all uncharitable feelings between persons wending their way to the same goal.<sup>235</sup>

Among the many addresses and lectures presented at this event, which concentrated mainly on cooperation and religious diversity, Vivekananda's closing address on 27 September 1893 set out the dangers stemming from exclusive religious behaviour which, on a number of levels, sought to impede the interfaith process of the time. In his closing address, Vivekananda spoke of the need for both cultural and religious assimilation in fostering peaceful relations:

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<sup>234</sup> Richard P. Hayes writes, "The man who came to be known to the world as Swami Vivekananda was born on January 12, 1863 into the Datta family, an affluent Bengali family known for its philanthropy and contributions to scholarship. His parents named him Narendranath and called him Narendra or Naren for short. Like most affluent young Bengali men of his generation, Narendra Datta received a well-rounded British-style education in Calcutta. He studied history, science, medicine, English literature, European philosophy and especially Western logic. Early influences on his thinking included John Stuart Mill's reflections on scientific method and on religion and ethics. By the time he had finished college he was an accomplished musician who could sing and play several instruments and was proficient in the Bengali, English, Urdu, Hindi and Persian languages." Richard P. Hayes, *Reflections on September 11, 1893* [article online]; available from <http://www.unm.edu/~rhayes/18930911.pdf>; Internet, accessed 20 January 2009.

<sup>235</sup> Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. 1 (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1999) 4; see also Swami Vivekananda and Swami Nikhilananda, *The Yogas and Other Works* (New York: Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, 1953).

If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world, it is this: It has proved to the world that holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of the others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance: "Help and not Fight," "Assimilation and not Destruction," "Harmony and Peace and not Dissension."<sup>236</sup>

Since this Parliament, the contemporary interfaith movement has matured without a single leader; in this way, over a century, it has maintained a dependence upon its multi-faith global network, as opposed to one solitary religious tradition. Stephen Fuqua acknowledges that, "Since 1893, [this] movement has grown up around the idea that religious people can find common ground through dialogue; and while they may not agree on who the mouthpiece of God is – or even what to call that Supreme Deity – they are beginning to learn that their shared values can be put to use for the betterment of the world."<sup>237</sup>

After the gathering of 1893 and a decade of reflection, the *second phase*, in which subsequent movements emerged (1900 to the 1980s) also saw a rise in diverse interfaith conferences and forums whose aim was to encourage unity among the world religions (and faiths). In addition, this phase centred on motivating interfaith players to take seriously the well-being of society by promoting cooperation and harmony (first, among the world's religious players). After delegates and onlookers published histories of the WPR and numerous associated papers<sup>238</sup>, various international conferences and global organisations would emerge with diverse agendas (some of which were not reflective of the WPR).<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>236</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>237</sup> Stephen Fuqua "The Global Interfaith Movement", *Fertile Field* [article online]; available from <http://www.fertilefield.org/articles/archives/000009.html>; Internet, accessed 20 January 2009.

<sup>238</sup> C.D. Arnold and H.D. Higinbotham, *Official Views of the World Columbian Exposition* (Chicago: Press Chicago Photo-gravure Co., 1893); John Henry Barrows, *The World's First Parliament of Religions: Its Christian Spirit, Historic Greatness, and Manifold Results* (Chicago: Hill and Shuman, 1895); J.W. Buel, *The Magic City: A Massive Portfolio of Original Photographic Views of the Great World's Fair* (St. Louis: Historical Publishing Co., 1894); Fredrick, Douglass and Ida Wells, *The Reason Why the Colored America is Not in the World's Columbia Exposition*, (n.p., 1893);

Providing an example of those that proposed a forward thinking project with a distinct connection to the 1893 gathering, this study recognises the following as having a key impact on the *second phase*: the Religion of Empire Conference (1924); The World Fellowship of Faiths First International Congress (1933); Sir Francis Younghusband's World Congress of Faiths (founded in 1936); The Temple of Understanding (founded in 1960); and the World Conference of Religions for Peace (founded in 1970).<sup>240</sup> (These conferences and organisations are selected on account of their historical commitment to applying a liberal framework led by multifaith players as an alternative to single religious leadership when approaching interfaith matters). Though Christian ecumenical organisations as The World Council of Churches (founded in 1937) and the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (founded in 1964) would come into view during this phase--making yet a substantial contribution to the fields of dialogue and mutual understanding--this study takes the position that these organisations do not reflect the same liberal framework because of its commitment to the objectives set out by a particular religion (i.e. Christianity).

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"The First American Congress of Liberal Religious Societies", *Unity* 33 (May 1894): 135-36; J.W. Hanson, ed. *The World's Congress of Religions: The Addresses and Papers Delivered before the Parliament* (Chicago: W.B. Conkey, 1894); S. Hecht "The Lessons of the World's Columbian Exposition", *Reform Advocate* (11 November 1893): 205-206; Charles Little, "The Parliament of Religions", *Methodist Review*, 76 (March 1894): 208-220; Lewis P. Mercer "Swendenborg and the Harmony of Religions", *The New Jerusalem in the World's Religious Congresses of 1893* (Chicago: Western New-Church Union, 1894): 117-123; Charles Morgan, "Signs of the Times", *World's Fair Sermons by Eminent Divines at Home and Abroad*, edited by J.B. McClure (Chicago: Rhodes and McClure, 1893); F. Max Müller, "The Real Significance of the Parliament of Religions", *Arena*, 61 (December 1894): 1-14; William Pipe "The Parliament of Religions", *The Outlook*, 26 (August 1893): 385; M. M. Trumbull, "The Parliament of Religions", *Monist*, 5 (April 1894): 335-54; Henry Van Buren, "The Columbian Exposition and American Civilization", *Atlantic Monthly*, 71 (May 1893): 577-88.

<sup>239</sup> Many Christian ecumenical organisations that emerged during the second phase were unlikely to carryout a corresponding multi-faith framework as presented at the World Parliament of Religions. Though contributions were made in the area of encouraging dialogue, engagement, and mutual understanding, religious parameters were set, often constraining multi-faith relations. See Marcus Braybrooke, *Inter-Faith Organizations, 1893-1979: An Historical Directory* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1980)

<sup>240</sup> See Josef Boehle's doctoral study for a broader discussion on the dynamics of the contemporary interfaith movement, with specific emphasis on the works of Martin Buber and Charles Wendt within the second era. Josef Boehle, *Inter-Religious Co-operation in a Global Age* (Ph.D. diss., University of Birmingham, 2001).

Assuring the possibility of broad religious and social engagement (through a liberal framework) would be one of the principle objectives taken from the 1893 gathering. Hence, maintaining this liberal framework makes certain that interfaith engagement does not become congested and interfaith players in both public and private settings may pursue religious democracy. The World Conference of Religions for Peace (WCRP) would apply this objective broadly in its endeavour to reach beyond conducting general interfaith gatherings (in the latter part of the second phase) to addressing projects (of a social nature) that include: poverty reduction, advocating for children's rights, conflict transformation in Central Africa, ecological justice, and nuclear disarmament. The emphasis of organisations as the WCRP on expanding its reach beyond general interfaith engagement contributed, during this period, to the development of new paths for religious players to comprehend how they might fashion a new consensus (among one another) toward a richer interfaith engagement.

Taking this step would contribute, however, to the promotion of a globally responsible dialogue committed to addressing broad social issues. Union Theological Seminary professor, Paul F. Knitter, crystallizes this perspective in, *One Earth Many Religions*, writing

Global responsibility...includes the notion of liberation intended by traditional liberation theologians but goes beyond it in seeking not just social justice but eco-human justice and well-being; it does so aware that such a project, in order truly to attend to the needs of all the globe, must be an effort by the entire globe and all its nations and religions. A globally responsible dialogue is one that is aware that any interfaith encounter is incomplete, perhaps even dangerous, if it does not include, somehow a concern for and an attempt to resolve the human and ecological suffering prevalent throughout the world.<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>241</sup> See Paul F. Knitter, *One Earth Many Religions: Multifaith Dialogue & Global Responsibility* (New York: Orbis Books, 1995), 15.

Knitter's call for interfaith players to take serious global responsibility would introduce into the *third phase*, the prospects of an action-oriented sea change within the contemporary interfaith movement. This occurred both in tone and action to address what Knitter references as eco-human suffering. Completing this task required a new cooperation from interfaith players that would include recognizing the voices and concerns of the suffering and oppressed which meant reaching beyond stubborn religious debate. Knitter's project asserts,

[The voices of the suffering] are not only to be heard but understood, if the reality of their suffering and ethical concerns are to be felt and not just registered, then somehow all the participants in the dialogue need to be actively involved in the praxis of working against eco-human injustice and promoting more life-giving policies in the structure of governments and economics. [Hence] one can hear the message of the suffering only if one is struggling, and therefore suffering, with them.<sup>242</sup>

By the late 1980s and well into the 1990s the unprecedented events of "new wars" stemming from ethnic and religious tension contributed greatly to some interfaith organisations and its players taking serious the need to promote "interreligious cooperation" to assure a globally responsible dialogue. Since the early 1990s, the *third phase* has been preoccupied with a combination of themes relating to peacemaking and conflict transformation. Josef Boehle of the University of Birmingham has contributed at length, in research and discourse, during the *third phase*, to furthering "inter-religious cooperation" as an imperative to guarantee eco-human justice. (As a widely applied term among many interfaith players today, "interreligious cooperation", is concerned with encouraging cooperative relations among religious players that is committed to advancing peace and justice by partnering with civil society.) Reflecting upon the many "new wars" that are emerging under this *third phase*, Boehle writes in the essay, *Inter-religious Cooperation and Global Change*,

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<sup>242</sup> Ibid., 128.

In order to avoid major future wars, and being aware of the past terrible history of war and violence of humankind, it is now imperative to build bridges of inter-cultural and inter-religious understanding, dialogue and cooperation, wherever possible, to overcome the social, economic, cultural and religious dynamics that increase the rise of war. It is imperative to build cultures of peace and justice. It is vital to create the international structures needed to facilitate and co-ordinate dialogue and co-operative efforts across civilisations, cultures and religions.<sup>243</sup>

The Boehle contribution has challenged opinions as to why an action-oriented dialogue that includes (as a first measure) encouraging cooperative relations among interfaith players is essential to fostering eco-human justice. As a consequence, promoting “interreligious cooperation” and efforts that lead to a reduction in human injustice and violence has come to embody the conduct of the *third phase*.

For example, the theme of “interreligious cooperation” would become resourceful during the 1990s, a key decade, where international organisations such as the United Nations (UN), faith-based NGOs and civil society would cooperate together to bring an end to “new wars”, in the wake of many failed diplomatic efforts by nation-states and the UN.<sup>244</sup> A shift from *interstate* to *intrastate* conflict during this period served as a contributing factor in such countries as Nicaragua (1989-91), El Salvador (1991-95), Mozambique (1992-94) and

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<sup>243</sup> Josef Boehle, “Inter-religious Cooperation and Global Change: From a Clash of Civilisations to a Dialogue of Civilisations” in *Pacifica Review - Peace, Security and Global Change*, Vol 14, No.3, Oct 2002.

<sup>244</sup> In the third era, contentions related to minority and human rights and sovereignty were at the fore of the international agenda by the early 1990s. The chemistry at the UN, during the late 1980s, was filled with that of understanding how to cope with the shift from *interstate* to *intrastate* conflicts which would prove to require more alternative styles of engagement toward emerging non-state actors (and combatants). US interests at this time were placed on protecting the sovereignty of Kuwait from Iraq’s invasion. Liberia’s civil war proved tenuous during this era, while the Paris Peace Accords, which ended the strife in Cambodia, offered, to a lesser extent, a sigh of relief of what could occur. However, the realities during this era of comprehending the best measures to cope with the shift in conflict were noted with the spike in more than twenty new UN peacekeeping missions between 1988-1993, many of which failed due to traditional responses placed upon new demands. In the study *Understanding Peacekeeping*, researchers Bellemey, Williams and Griffin point out that, “During this period the UN conducted more peacekeeping operations than it had undertaken in the previous forty years, prompting Boutros Boutros-Ghali to remark that the UN now suffered from having too much rather than too little credibility.” See Alex J. Bellemey and Paul Williams, eds., *Understanding Peacekeeping* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004) 75.

Rwanda (1993-96). At the same time, even in the resolving of these “new wars”, the mediators felt pressure from the regional-political transitions, religious-based tension and the ongoing regional ethnic/(tribal) disputes. All of this encouraged the then Secretary General of the UN, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to press for more substantial measures to sustain peace in *An Agenda for Peace* (1992; 1995 addendum), which he presented to the General Assembly and Security Council.<sup>245</sup> Against a backdrop of failed UN peacekeeping missions, Ghali’s proposed *Agenda* seeks to educate the UN on these new demands with a new set of clear-cut recommendations. Alongside UN peacemaking (the task of seeking to prevent conflict and keep peace by bringing hostile parties to agreement with peaceful means), a visible dependence on NGO peacemaking coupled with interfaith activity soon brought forward this form of peacemaking and “interreligious cooperation” as a more formidable option – considering its ability to bring hostile parties to agreement by invoking spiritual or traditional customs among them which foster peace and mutuality.<sup>246</sup>

Though “the field of religious peacemaking is yet maturing”, its contributions are evidently clear.<sup>247</sup> David Smock of the United States Institute of Peace points this out in *Religious Contributions to Peacemaking*:

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<sup>245</sup> See Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: United Nations, 1995) 39-74. Ghali acknowledged in the (1992) *Agenda for Peace* that, “As the international climate has changed and peacekeeping operations are increasingly fielded to help implement settlements that have been negotiated by peacemakers, a new array of demands and problems has emerged regarding logistics, equipment, personnel and finance, all of which could be corrected if Member States so wished and were ready to make the necessary resources available.” Bellemy and Williams, 80.

<sup>246</sup> Researchers Diamond and McDonald cite in their study at the time that NGO peacemaking encompasses: “a number of activities involving unofficial, nongovernmental citizen interactions between parties to a conflict, often but not always with the presence and assistance of a third party. The ultimate aim of these activities is to help resolve conflict by encouraging communication, understanding, and collaboration toward shared problem solving.” Louise Diamond and John W. McDonald, *Multi-track Diplomacy: A Systems Approach to Peace* (Connecticut: Kumarian Press, 1996), 37.

<sup>247</sup> David Smock, ed., *Religious Contributions to Peacemaking: When Religion Brings Peace, Not War* (January 2006) [document online]; available from



The World Council of Churches and the All Africa Conference of Churches mediated the short-lived 1972 peace agreement in Sudan. In South Africa, various churches were at the vanguard of the struggle against apartheid and the peaceful transition. The most dramatic and most frequently cited case is the successful mediation the Rome-based Community of Sant'Egidio achieved to help end the civil war in Mozambique in 1992.<sup>248</sup>

The theme of the *third phase*, to bring peace through peacemaking, played an equal – but unique – role; for example, in the UN's campaign for a *Culture of Peace*.<sup>249</sup> Over the last two decades its search for the best methods to establish this international culture of peace resulted in a number of documents produced since the end of the Cold War. In “Religions, Civil Society and the UN System” Boehle acknowledges that these include: *The Barcelona Declaration on the Role of Religion in the Promotion of a Culture of Peace* (1994); *The Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly-Culture of Peace* (A/RES/52/13) (1998); *The Declaration and Program of Action on a Culture of Peace* (A/RES/53/L79) (1999); *The Promotion of Interreligious Dialogue* (A/RES/59/23) (2004); *The Promotion of Religious and Cultural Understanding, Harmony, and Cooperation* (A/RES/59/142) (2004); and *The Elimination of All Forms of Religious Intolerance* (A/RES/59/199) (2004).<sup>250</sup> In the last few years, other documents would include: *Promotion of Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, Understanding and Cooperation* (A/RES/61/221) (2007); and *High-level Dialogue on Interreligious Understanding and Cooperation for Peace* (A/RES/61/269).

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<http://www.usip.org/pubs/peaceworks/pw55.pdf>; Internet, accessed 20 January 2009; see also David Smock, ed., *Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding* (Washington, USIP, 2002), 63-102.

<sup>248</sup> Smock, *Religious Contributions to Peacemaking*, 1.

<sup>249</sup> See UNESCO, *Culture of Peace: What is it?* [online site]; available from [http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/uk/uk\\_sum\\_cp.htm](http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/uk/uk_sum_cp.htm); Internet, accessed 20 January 2009.

<sup>250</sup> See Josef Boehle, “Religions, Civil Society and the UN System”, *Studies in Interreligious Dialogue*, Vol. 17, No. 1, Jul 2007.

Paralleling the UN's efforts to make peace by engaging religious forces, the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions (founded in 1988 by two monks from the Vivekananda Vedanta Society of China) brought more than 8,000 participants to Chicago, IL in 1993 for a centennial global interfaith rally commemorating a century of interfaith work.<sup>251</sup> The rallying manifesto, *Declaration Toward a Global Ethic*, was introduced by the Swiss theologian, Hans Küng. Promoting the concept of "interreligious cooperation" it maintained that all religions share a common ethical ground capable of enhancing the making of peace. Its central aim conveys the basic objectives and purposes associated with the 1893 gathering, namely the agreement that:

We condemn these blights [armed hostilities] and declare that they need not be. An *ethic* already exists within the religious teachings of the world which can counter the global distress. Of course this ethic provides no direct solution for all the immense problems of the world, but it does supply the moral foundation for a better individual and global order: A *vision* which can lead women and men away from despair, and society away from chaos.<sup>252</sup>

Advancing this theme to put forth a global ethic, the United Nation's Alliance of Civilizations (AOC), established in 2005, developed a set of similar objectives that transcended the work of the 1993 Parliament by strategically connecting people and institutions to consolidate the global networks of the contemporary interfaith movement. The AOC serves today as an initiative "which aims to improve understanding and cooperative relations among nations and people across cultures and religions, and to help counter the forces that fuel polarisation and extremism."<sup>253</sup> These efforts were crystallised further at the October 2007 UN High-level Dialogue on Interreligious and Intercultural Understanding and

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<sup>251</sup> See Wayne Teasdale and George Cairns, *The Community of Religions: Voices and Images of the Parliament of the World's Religions* (New York: Continuum Publishing Co., 1996).

<sup>252</sup> Hans Küng, ed. *Declaration Toward a Global Ethic: Presented at the Parliament of the World's Religions* (1 September 1993, Chicago) available from [http://www.weltethos.org/pdf\\_decl/Decl\\_english.pdf](http://www.weltethos.org/pdf_decl/Decl_english.pdf); Internet, accessed 20 January 2009.

<sup>253</sup> See, *The Alliance of Civilization* [article online]; available from <http://www.unaoc.org/content/view/39/187/lang.english/>; Internet, accessed 20 January 2009.

Cooperation for Peace. In convening two intense panel sessions: (*Challenges of Interreligious and Intercultural Cooperation Today*) and (*Best Practise and Strategies of Interreligious and Intercultural Cooperation Going Forward*) this conference would go on to make a unique contribution by identifying new action-oriented models for Member States to advance relations with interfaith organisations.

Such conferences over the last two decades exemplify the depth of diversity linked to the contemporary interfaith movement (since 1893) which currently spans the globe. While we will explore the diverse settings for interfaith activity more in section 3.3., it is vital to mention there is not a “single” type of interfaith organisation or agenda that exist. Often interfaith activity is recognised as a local, regional or interregional effort, but its growing association with multilateral bodies concerned with eradicating eco-human injustice as: the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, United Nations (and governments) makes clear that its activities are being applied at all levels within society.

For example, the reach of interfaith activity extends beyond promoting conflict resolution in war torn regions as the Middle East, teaching American youth about the benefits in embracing diversity and religious pluralism, promoting aspects of a global ethic at the United Nations, to the social work of local NGOs educating indigenous communities about mutual understanding in post-war torn regions.<sup>254</sup> This diverse trajectory establishes interfaith activity as being multilayered, with a broad geographical scope, whilst also having diverse

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<sup>254</sup> Regarding the diversity of interfaith activity in the Middle East, see Abu-Nimer, Mohammed, Amal Khoury, and Emily Welty. *Unity in Diversity: Interfaith Dialogue in the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007); see also Eboo Patel and Patrice Brodeur, *Building the Interfaith Youth Movement: Beyond Dialogue to Action* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006); David Smock, ed., *Religious Contributions to Peacemaking: When Religion Brings Peace, Not War* (January 2006) [document online]; available from <http://www.usip.org/pubs/peaceworks/pw55.pdf>; Internet, accessed 20 January 2009

activities that encourage its members today to reach across sacred and secular lines. These specific contributions of the interfaith tradition allow for a better understanding of the role which interfaith activity (as a mode of communication) is likely to contribute to US diplomacy if it were to engage international religious publics directly.<sup>255</sup> In understanding the trajectory of this concept, let us establish a foundation that explores exactly how interfaith participation inevitably leads to dialogue.

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<sup>255</sup> See S. Wesley Ariarajah, *Not without My Neighbour: Issues in Interfaith Relations* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1999) 11-25.

### 3.3. The manifestation of interfaith dialogue

In their study *Death or Dialogue?: From the Age of Monologue to the Age of Dialogue*, researchers Leonard Swidler<sup>256</sup>, John B. Cobb Jr.<sup>257</sup>, Paul Knitter<sup>258</sup> and Monika Hellwig<sup>259</sup> tackle the notion of interfaith dealings and the importance of encounter. The study sets out to address the shift in human society between the “Age of Monologue” (dominated by competing religious and traditional ideals) to the present “Age of Dialogue” (an era which has begun to accommodate different religious and cultural norms). However, for argument’s sake, it may sometimes be conceded that the earlier age is not yet dead in Western society. Since post-secular norms appear more frequently in US domestic and foreign affairs, it is safe to assume that “the future offers two [clear] alternatives: death or dialogue”, indicating that a more engaged response must be applied.<sup>260</sup>

The tradition of the interfaith movement contributes greatly to promoting dialogue between religions, ideologies, and traditions. But how does interfaith participation become manifest in dialogue? The physical practice of interfaith dialogue, according to Leonard

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<sup>256</sup> Leonard Swidler, *Death or Dialogue?: From the Age of Monologue to the Age of Dialogue* (London: SCM Press, 1990); see also Leonard Swidler and Paul Mojzes, *The Study of Religion in an Age of Global Dialogue* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000); Leonard Swidler, *Theoria to Praxis: How Jews, Christians and Muslims Can Together Move from Theory to Practice* (Connecticut: The David Brown Book Co., 1999).

<sup>257</sup> John B. Cobb and Abe Masao. et al., *The Emptying God: A Buddhist-Jewish-Christian Conversation* (New York: Orbis Books, 1990); John B. Cobb and John Boswell, *Beyond Dialogue: Toward a Mutual Transformation of Christianity and Buddhism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982).

<sup>258</sup> Paul Knitter, *The Myth of Religious Superiority: Multifaith Explorations of Religious Pluralism* (New York: Orbis Books, 2005); see also Paul Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religion* (New York, Orbis Books, 2002) and Paul Knitter, *One Earth Many Religions: Multifaith Dialogue & Global Responsibility* (New York: Orbis Books, 1995).

<sup>259</sup> Monika K. Hellwig, “An Evolving Vision of the Church”, *Horizons*, 34, No. 1 (2007): 96; Monika K. Hellwig, *Understanding Catholicism* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981).

<sup>260</sup> Swidler, *Death or Dialogue*, vii; Sherbok’s text offers a definitive introduction into the many theological positions contributing to the development of the interfaith practice as an academic discipline and communal activity. See Dan Cohn-Sherbok, *Interfaith Theology* (Oxford: Oneworld Publication, 2001).

Swidler et al, “is related in the broadest sense to dialogue on religious subjects by persons who understand themselves to be in different religious traditions and communities.”<sup>261</sup> He asserts, “In this context, of course, we are speaking about a particular kind of dialogue, namely, interreligious dialogue in the broadest sense, that is, dialogue on a religious subject by persons who understand themselves to be in different religious traditions and communities.”<sup>262</sup> Swidler’s understanding of the practise of interfaith dialogue in this context is a narrow reading; in fact, it obstructs the traditional aims and purposes of the first phase of the interfaith movement, as introduced by the General Committee of the Parliament in its June 1891 plenary meeting:

There [should be no] desire to create a mood of indifferentism. Rather the hope was that a friendly conference of eminent men, strong in their personal convictions, would show what are the supreme truths and the light that religion could throw on the great problems of the time.<sup>263</sup>

In this context, interfaith dialogue is a multivalent practise which is not limited to convening religious citizens within the state, but is open to all – religious and non-religious citizens alike – to examine and resolve “the great problems of our time”. In addition, we must

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<sup>261</sup> Swidler, *Death or Dialogue*, 57

<sup>262</sup> Ibid., 57; see also Stephen Neil, *Crisis of Belief* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1984) 9-33.

<sup>263</sup> Braybrooke, *Pilgrimage of Hope*, 11. As a side-note to women’s rights in context to the aims and purposes of the early interfaith movement, the World Parliament of Religions, despite being led by a largely male populous, allowed for the contemporary interfaith movement to ensure opportunities for women to incorporate their marginalised voice within an interfaith context at the turn of the century. Seager’s study observes that the Parliament welcomed twenty-three women to present papers at the 1893 Parliament. This is noted especially with the groundbreaking work of Universalist Unitarian minister and educator, Augusta Chapin, who presented at the Parliament, later going on to become a religious pioneer at the turn of the century. See Phlox Laucher, “For a woman to speak in church: The Proud Calling of Augusta Jane Chapin”, *Unitarian Universalist Women's Heritage Society*, Occasional Paper #17 (1997). It is clear, however, that a deep cultural and racial disparity was present at the Parliament beyond these progressive opportunities provided for women. Of the twenty-two women asked to present, only one of Asian heritage, Jeanne Sorabji, presented a paper as a Christian convert from Zoroastrianism. To understand the dynamics of race and cultural indifference at the World Parliament of Religions (1893), as illustrated between “The Magic and White City”, see Richard H. Seager, *The World Parliament of Religion: the East/West Encounter Chicago 1893* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1995), 24-42.

understand that, “Conversation in this sense has an expansive definition, and is not limited to verbal exchange [between religious citizens] alone... The notion of interfaith dialogue encompasses many different types of conversations, settings, goals and formats.”<sup>264</sup> However, when looking into the interfaith sphere we comprehend that the potential for sacred-secular engagement is present but is often thwarted by tension within Western Christian circles that are opposed to the notion of shared objectives and interest. For Christians concerned primarily with Christian religious themes related to *legitimacy*, *salvation* and *revelation*, the notion of religious encounter often directs attention away from the core aims of interfaith dialogue, which are to convene all players for the sake of mutual understanding. Therefore, the limitations of this practise generally centre around the limitations employed by conservative Christians toward other religious traditions.

This particular posture that focuses an attention on these specific themes of major importance to Christianity is acknowledged as Christian exclusivism. This paradigm gained acclaim first by the conservative theology of Karl Barth. Hendrik Kraemer and Emil Brunner’s positions followed, with doctrines that Christianity is “the revelation of God and faith to all mankind”, therefore influencing the debate on Christianity’s social relevance and superiority above other world religions.<sup>265</sup> Their perspectives during the early part of the

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<sup>264</sup> Renne Garfinkel and United States Institute of Peace, *What Works?: Evaluating Interfaith Dialogue Programs* (July 2004) Special Report 123 [article online]; available from <http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/sr123.pdf>; Internet, accessed 20 January 2009.

<sup>265</sup> See Hendrik Kraemer, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World* (New York: Harper, 1938); Kraemer, *Religion and the Christian Faith* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1957); H. Kraemer, *Why Christianity of All Religions* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962); H. Kraemer, *World Cultures and World Religion: The Coming Dialogue* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1960); See also, Emil Brunner and Olive Wyon, *Revelation and Reason; The Christian Doctrine of Faith and Knowledge* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1946); Emil Brunner *The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption: Dogmatics* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1952).

twentieth century were grounded in the school of neo-orthodoxy.<sup>266</sup> Barth's position, for example, on Christian faith, and the *salvation, revelation* and *legitimacy* of non-Christian religions, is argued clearly in the multi-volume study *Church Dogmatics*.<sup>267</sup> The exclusivist paradigm rests with the emphasis that God's revelation is an event that occurs with the impartation of spirit and the knowledge of God given to man directly by God.<sup>268</sup> Alan Race observes in his study *Christianity and Religious Pluralism* that "Undoubtedly, the predominate attitude of the church through Christian history has been to regard the outsider as in-error or darkness, beyond the realm of truth and light."<sup>269</sup> According to Barth's argument, however, any religion apart from revelation is regarded as an activity of unbelief (i.e. paganism, or any religion outside of Christianity). Race affirms:

...the Christian gospel belongs with 'revelation', and the other faiths are the product of 'religion'. This radical separation, it is necessary to stress, is not the result of an exercise in comparative religion, but arises out of Barth's understanding of the Christian revelation... It

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<sup>266</sup> "The central theological motifs of the neo-orthodox movement stem from this basic drive toward discontinuity and separation of religion from culture. In place of the liberal emphasis on the immanence of God in the life of nature and human society came the vigorous affirmation of the transcendence of God – of God's unknowableness and consequent difference from all thoughts about God in cultural terms. In the place of the liberal faith in the inherent goodness of human beings appeared the categorical insistence that salvation must come to humans from beyond themselves. Thus the liberal conception of history as a gradual, progressive development of human powers toward a fulfilled good life was transformed into a view of history that is "dialectical" and "catastrophic" in character. Men and women are and remain sinners in both their personal and their social existence; thus history exists in a tension between God's judgement on human sin and God's grace, which alone can redeem this situation. The only hope for women and men, therefore, lies not so much in the liberal programme of education and enlargement of human benevolent powers, but rather in the "crisis" of faith when men and women repent before God, live in a new state of forgiveness, humility, and obedience, and look to the final fulfillment of God's purposes beyond history." Donald W. Musser and Joseph L. Price, eds., *A New Hand-Book of Christian Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Books, 1992) 334.

<sup>267</sup> Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Vols. 1&2, (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1956); and Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Vols. 3&4 (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1962).

<sup>268</sup> Barth argues, "This share is given as God unveils Himself to us in that other, second objectivity, that is to say, in the objectivity of His works and signs in our creaturely sphere, before the eyes and ears and in the hearts which as such and of themselves alone are quite incapable of knowing Him. But the heart of it all is that it is He Himself, the one, supreme and true Lord, who thus unveils Himself to us; that in revelation we have to do with His action as the triune God, and therefore with Himself in every creaturely work and sign that He uses. On this basis and only on this basis can there be real knowledge of God." Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Vol.1, 39.

<sup>269</sup> Alan Race, *Christians and Religious Pluralism: Patterns in the Christian Theology of Religions* (London: SCM Press, 1983) 10, 10-37.



follows from this that Christianity alone has received authority to be the **missionary religion**, and it has a duty to summon men and women from the world of the religions to follow the Christian gospel.<sup>270</sup>

Such a striking position places strain on the potential of the dialogical process with other religions when encountered by the Christian exclusivist – thereby congesting dialogue opportunities between Christians and non-Christians.

But Swidler is correct on this occasion that “the term dialogue [in recent years] has become faddish, and is sometimes, like charity, used to cover a multitude of sins. For example, it is sometimes used by those who are persuaded that they have all the truth on a subject, but feel that in today’s climate, with “dialogue” in vogue, a less aggressive style will be more effective in communicating to the ignorant the truth that they already possess in full.”<sup>271</sup> This theological position led many within the interfaith community to unknowingly become sceptical about those who hold it. Unfortunately, many Western Christian participants contribute to this position, both knowingly and unknowingly.

For example, over the last fifty years this internal theological debate has overshadowed the larger message attributed to the interfaith movement, which of course has nothing to do with exclusive religious behaviour. Looking more closely at factors contributing to this tension experienced within Christian circles, relations are further suffocated with Karl Rahner’s inclusivist model, which proposes that the conversation begin at the centre of Christianity where one should present an invitation to non-Christians to

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<sup>270</sup> Ibid., 13; For further sources on Christianity as a missionary religion, see Orlando E. Costas, *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission Beyond Christendom* (New York: Oribis, 1982) 71-99, 117-194.; and Timothy Yates, *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: CUP, 1994).

<sup>271</sup> Swidler, *Dialogue or Death*, 57.

follow or embrace the teachings of Christianity before real encounter can occur.<sup>272</sup> Rahner tries to substantiate this claim by asserting that “Christianity understands itself as the absolute religion intended for all men, and does not recognise any other religion beside itself as of equal right. This proposition is self-evident and basic for Christianity’s understanding of itself.”<sup>273</sup> This inclusivist argument, which straddles the fence on how to engage the non-Christian Other, is not far from the exclusivist position held (at one time) by the early Catholic Church (*Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*), which contributed to the decay of all intra- and inter-religious relations with persons outside the Catholic church.<sup>274</sup> Rahner’s invitation to non-Christians (presented in his theological debate as “Anonymous Christianity”) is an unreasonable argument.<sup>275</sup> It puts non-Christians into a situation to which they have not consented in order that Christians may regard them as legitimate equals.

However, a perspective that sets out to counter exclusivism and its obstruction to the dialogical process is John Hick’s pluralist theology. In examining how the notion of pluralism may contribute to promoting effective inter-religious relations by beating back religious superiority, Hick uses his “astronomical analogy”. Paralleling Copernicus’ revolution of Ptolemy’s theory, Hick makes the same claim in theological terms by demonstrating how important it is for Christians (in particular) who want to encounter the non-Christian Other to overthrow traditional paradigms which set out to place their religion

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<sup>272</sup> See, Karl Rahner, “Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions”, John Hick and Brian Hebblethwaite, eds. *Christianity and other Religions* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2001); see also Karl Rahner, *Theological Investigations*, Vols. 4&9 (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1979).

<sup>273</sup> Rahner, “Christianity and Non Christian Religions”, 56.

<sup>274</sup> Robert B. Sheard, “Inter-religious Dialogue in the Catholic Church Since Vatican II: An Historical and Theological Study”, Vol. 31, *Toronto Studies in Theology* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1987) 39-52.

<sup>275</sup> Rahner, “Christianity and Non Christian Religions”, 75.

above others.<sup>276</sup> Hick's counter to religious exclusivism echoes Thomas Kuhn's call for a paradigm shift from the "conventional way", which leads him to the following conclusion: "there comes a point when new information about a scientific subject or area forces a scientist [or theorist] to give up old models and find new ones to describe how things now look."<sup>277</sup> He alludes to the belief that the blinkered vision of the notion of encounter among many Christian theologians and exclusivist players has been the main reason for stifling the potential of interfaith dialogue and misleading others about what it could achieve.

The many contributions by Christian theologians on the subject of Western religious encounter may easily lead people outside the body of interfaith activity to believe that Christian theology, in particular, has something of a preverbal lock on how best to practise inter-religious relations or even encounter the religious Other. However, one might easily be left with the impression that the only persons likely to help the interfaith process substantially are religious citizens – if one accepted as persuasive the contributions by Christian theologians (or the Swidler argument above) on the practice of interfaith encounter. Having reviewed the activities of the third phase and taken part in a number of interfaith events and workshops, and even working for the Interfaith Center of New York and Interfaith Worker

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<sup>276</sup> "Ptolemaic astronomers saw the earth at the centre of the universe and explained the movement of planets (which did not conform to the theory) by postulating 'epicycles'. The growing number of epicycles rendered the Ptolemaic view less and less plausible. Finally, the Copernican view in its simple explanation of the facts by the theory that the sun, rather than the earth, was at the centre of the universe, replaced the Ptolemaic cosmology. In an analogous manner, Hick thinks that the old Ptolemaic theology (represented by Kraemer and others) and its recent epicycles (represented by Rahner and others), prop up an increasingly implausible system with the Church/Christianity/Christ at the centre of the universe of faith." Gavin D'Costa, *Theology and Religious Pluralism: The Challenge of Other Religions* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 23. Pertaining to inclusivism "Hick calls these inclusivist developments Ptolemaic 'epicycles'. They attempt to accommodate new situations (with difficulty) without modifying their basic presuppositions. Furthermore, Hick argues that trusting and credible dialogue is manifestly unsatisfactory when a partner is designated an 'honorary Christian' – and this even though they do not so regard themselves and even though they may insist they are not Christians but Muslims, Jews, Hindu, etc." Ibid., 25.

<sup>277</sup> Martin Forward, *Inter-religious Dialogue: A Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2001), 39.

Justice (Chicago, IL), my experience indicates that there are numerous modes that are associated with the practice of interfaith dialogue, rather than a unitary method which convenes only religious citizens. The shift to convening both religious and non-religious citizens within the interfaith sphere is attributed greatly to the watershed event of 1893 and the objectives of the interfaith tradition: to resolve intractable disputes non-violently, aid public deliberations, embrace multi-religious opinions to promote mutual understanding and provide a safe space for plural engagement. These varied modes of interfaith dialogue generally fall into one of three brands:

- a) ***spiritually-centred*** interfaith dialogue. This often occurs in a religious setting, where faith practitioners convene mostly religious citizens to practise the liturgies of their faith. This may be recognised in the practice of Buddhist-Christian meditation carried out by adherents of either faith in a private setting, for instance a pagoda or church.<sup>278</sup>
- b) ***religio-comparative*** interfaith dialogue, often led by religious scholars, in either a sacred or a secular setting to examine and compare the theologies or traditions associated with various religious/faith practices.<sup>279</sup> A conversation within this mode may, for example, centre on Surahs taken from the Holy Qur'an and placed alongside passages from the Torah for theological examination within a seminary setting. The conversation generated at the end of this examination generally turns into religio-comparative interfaith dialogue; and

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<sup>278</sup> See Thich Nhat Hahn and Daniel Berrigan, *The Raft is not the Shore: Conversations Toward a Buddhist-Christian Awareness* (New York: Orbis Book, 2001).

<sup>279</sup> See Roger Eastman, *The Ways of Religion: An Introduction to the Major Traditions*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New York and Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999); Michael Molloy, *Experiencing the World's Religions: Tradition, Challenge, and Change*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Press, 2002).

c) *socio-political* interfaith dialogue<sup>280</sup>, which is by far the most important presented to the liberal-secular state. This form of interfaith dialogue is generally prompted by social conditions or post-secular affairs which encourage religious and non-religious citizens to convene for the sake of dialogue, for example, between civilisations, to produce integrated approaches to resolving critical social issues.<sup>281</sup> While the two previous modes of interfaith dialogue are geared toward spirituality and theological education, the last deals more with the traditional aims of the interfaith movement: to convene both religious and non-religious parties with the purpose of promoting shared objectives in dialogue and peaceful coexistence.<sup>282</sup>

The third mode stands as a true form of *dialogical creativity* in that it illuminates Küng's Global Ethic by convening diverse parties for the purpose of assuring shared objectives. Within this brand players enter into a special space for diverse engagement and dialogue, not with intentions to employ their traditional secular or sacred (faith claims) – in order to create

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<sup>280</sup> This study has chosen the term “socio-political interfaith dialogue” which it believes is reflective to the argument that interfaith dialogue is a post-secular treatment. However, a point of clarification must be considered that the term “socio-political interfaith dialogue” shares resemblances with the term “interreligious cooperation” which is widely expressed by interfaith players. As indicated above, “interreligious cooperation” is concerned with (at the outset before engaging secular players) encouraging cooperative relations between religious players within an interfaith setting. In contrast, the term “socio-political interfaith dialogue” refers specifically to the activity of existing relationships between interfaith players and non-religious bodies, NGOs, civil society (and most especially), secular officials in the public sphere. Nonetheless, the term “socio-political interfaith dialogue” is encouraging to the prospects of liberal-secular relationship-making between U.S. Department of State officials and religious leadership. The likelihood of this relationship will be explored further in Chapter 9.

<sup>281</sup> See Kaveh Frasiabi, “Conversation with Mohammad Khatami on the Dialogue Among Civilizations”. *UN Chronicle*, 43, No. 4 (2006): 69. Fred R. Dallmayr and Abbas Manoochehri, *Civilizational Dialogue and Political Thought: Tehran Papers*, Lanham, (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2007).

<sup>282</sup> See studies by David Smock, *Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding* (Washington, USIP Press, 2002); Mohammed Abu Nimer, *Nonviolence And Peace Building In Islam: Theory And Practice* (Gainesville: UP Florida 2003); Marc Gopin, *Holy War, Holy Peace: How Religion Can Bring Peace to the Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002); Abdul Aziz Said, Nathan C. Funk and Ayse S. Kadayifci, eds. *Peace and Conflict Resolution in Islam: Precept and Practice* (Maryland: UP of America, 2001) Paul Salem, ed, *Conflict Resolution in the Arab World: Selected Essays*. (Washington: American UP, 1997).

division – but to enter into an arena mindful that the cultivation of plural ideals must be established in order to reconcile contemporary social affairs. The answer to the question of whether religious players should bring their “faith claims” into the *socio-political* arena is simple: they should not. Taking a step back here to challenge the pragmatist Richard Rorty, it is not true that religion is likely to “bring a potentially productive democratic conversation to a grinding halt”<sup>283</sup>; when practising *socio-political interfaith dialogue*, the fact that this is unlikely is based upon one single fact – which relates to typical religio-political activity within this brand. Here, the interjection of a “faith-claim” (an authorisation by religious players, often found in the first two modes where players clarify why they have taken on a religion/faith and why other players should take it on) is generally unnecessary and thus is unlikely to occur in this setting. (This practise of social dialogue is manifest in the work by international bodies such as, for example, the UN Alliance of Civilizations, and work by the United States Institute of Peace, the Tanenbaum Centre of Interreligious Understanding and the International Centre for Religion and Diplomacy.)

Dialogue that is used for the purpose of conversion has often congested interfaith relations, as opposed to a dialogue accommodating shared values and objectives. This study acknowledges that the true concept of interfaith dialogue is made manifest in practise when sacred or secular players set out to employ Hans Küng’s theory of dialogue, which focuses on assuring a Global Ethic through shared values.<sup>284</sup> Küng’s progressive recommendation moves beyond exclusivism and rather toward a shared ethical interest that exists between religious and political citizens. When taking up Küng’s position, dialogical participation shifts from *communicative interaction* to a focus on *the power of relations* between players and

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<sup>283</sup> Regarding the notion of “faith claims” see Richard Rorty, “Religion as a Conversation-Stopper,” *Philosophy and Social Hope* (London: Penguin Books, 1999), 168-74.

<sup>284</sup> Küng defends the notion that salvation may occur in one’s own religious tradition, unlike the constraints of Rahner’s “Anonymous Christianity”.

institutions to improve society. Küng identifies that it is more sensible to focus on similarities which may create a Global Ethic than on the many differences which might impede the engagement process. In doing so, he asks, "...what can religions contribute to the furthering of an ethic [of this kind], despite their very different systems of dogmas and symbols?"<sup>285</sup> Clearly, if the interfaith community desires to move beyond tolerance and into a more real form of dialogue grounded in assuring shared objectives and values, sacred-secular players have no other choice but to employ Küng's Global Ethics.

Consequently, activities related to *socio-political* interfaith dialogue are likely to be of interest to the US liberal-secular state, because it is less assertive of religious claims, thus making it more appealing to both sacred and secular players to carry out the diverse traditions associated with the contemporary interfaith movement. Its comprehensive arena provides a place where the US liberal secular state might advance diversity and peaceful coexistence through a religious narrative. Unlike in the previous two modes, the conviction in this setting by the religious players centres not on conversion, religiosity, theological claims or rash discussion of religious legitimacy, but on restoring contemporary social relations, reasoning with secular players on how best to re-establish political systems, and ensuring social justice within a pluralist arena. In returning to the study's central theme on comprehending the possibility of a post-secular framework for engagement, how then does the conception of pluralism relate to the US liberal-secular agenda as a diverse practise beneficial to growing sacred-secular relations?

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<sup>285</sup> Hans Küng, *Global Responsibility: In Search of a New World Ethic* (London: SCM Press, 1990), 55-60; see also Hans Küng "Global Ethic: Development and Goals", *War and Peace in World Religions*, ed. Perry Schmidt-Leukel (London: SCM Press, 1989), 183-198.

### 3.4. On a “non-conventional way”

Obviously, the notion of pluralism serves as a core component to the body of the interfaith sphere and the diverse tradition of the contemporary interfaith movement. In addition, it performs a similar function within the liberal secular state, under the name of liberal toleration (liberalism).<sup>286</sup> This section draws attention to the influence of “political” pluralism in shaping non-conventional state positions and approaches when confronting post-secular issues. In the text *Two Faces of Liberalism*, the noted London School of Economics political theorist, John Gray, sets out to assess the relationship of the liberal secular state to pluralism by taking on the notion of liberal toleration and its associated themes.<sup>287</sup> Recommending broader steps to incorporate the new themes to effectively address the needs of society, Gray contends that “Liberalism has always had two faces; from one side, toleration is the pursuit of an ideal form of life. From the other, it is the search for terms of peace among different ways of life. In the former view, liberal institutions are seen as applications of universal principles. In the latter, they are a means to peaceful coexistence.”<sup>288</sup> The former view may easily be associated with the conventional attitude taken by traditionalists that a “single” way of thinking leads to the best outcome. The latter is willing to accept that differences do exist within society and believes that bringing these differences together may contribute to reaching peaceful ends. As soon as we recognise that we live in a complex world which “harbours many ways of life,” Gray’s argument turns from theory to a recommendation to consider non-conventional alternatives in approaching the emerging issues and belief systems of our time.

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<sup>286</sup> John Gray, *Liberalism* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1995); John Gray, *Post-Liberalism: Studies in Political-thought* (London: Routledge, 1996).

<sup>287</sup> John Gray, *The Two Faces of Liberalism* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishing, 2002).

<sup>288</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.



Gray's description of the first form of liberalism is regarded as the "conventional way", and can apply to the views of Locke and Immanuel Kant's "liberal project"; it can also apply to John Rawls's concept of political liberalism.<sup>289</sup> Each thinker, however, sets out to find a rational universal consensus about ways to reach the *good* through ideals related to justice and tolerance.<sup>290</sup> Shifting the emphasis by looking at what effect the notion of liberal toleration might have on a pluralistic society, Gray's views ally themselves with those of Hobbes,<sup>291</sup> Isaiah Berlin,<sup>292</sup> and Michael Oakeshott,<sup>293</sup> drawing on the idea that "human beings may flourish peacefully in many different ways of life," not necessarily a single "conventional way" under a canopy of universal principles.<sup>294</sup> The notion of the plural as an alternative to conventionalism offers (in the context of US-Muslim world engagement) a fresh way to use new matrices which would be effective in addressing the emerging tensions of the post-secular world. The discovery that society can contain many different modes is attributed to Isaiah Berlin in his study of positive and negative liberties, entitled *The Two Concepts of Liberty* (1958).<sup>295</sup> From this basis, Gray goes on to explore this social/political pluralism, drawing attention to its two core components: *value pluralism* (the ethical ideal that there are many modes to life relating to different values) and the search for a *modus vivendi* (the ideal of finding the terms on which different ways of life may live together).<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>289</sup> See Ross J. Corbett, *The Lockean Commonwealth* (Albany: State UP New York, 2009); Karl Ameriks and Otfried Hoeffe, *Kant's Moral and Legal Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2009); John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia UP, 1993).

<sup>290</sup> Maureen Ramsay, "What's Wrong with Liberalism?": *A Radical Critique of Liberal Political Philosophy* (London: Leicester UP, 1997), 38-67.

<sup>291</sup> George Herbert Wright and Thomas Hobbes, *Religion, Politics and Thomas Hobbes*. (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006).

<sup>292</sup> Isaiah Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1969).

<sup>293</sup> Elizabeth Campbell Corey, *Michael Oakeshott on Religion, Aesthetics, and Politics* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006).

<sup>294</sup> Gray, *Two Faces of Liberalism*, 5.

<sup>295</sup> See Isaiah Berlin, *Two Concepts of Liberty* [article online]; available from <http://www.nyu.edu/projects/nissenbaum/papers/twoconcepts.pdf>; Internet, accessed 20 January 2009.

<sup>296</sup> In the field of international politics and diplomacy, the term *modus vivendi* is generally regarded, according to the UN, as "an instrument recording an international agreement of temporary or provisional nature, intended to be replaced by an arrangement of a more permanent and detailed

The latter search will be the central focus in the remainder of this chapter because it parallels the traditions of the contemporary interfaith movement, that of finding common ground among divergent ways of life that seek to assure shared values and objectives.

In making sense of this position, Gray implies that if the overall conception of liberal toleration (an essential paradigm within the Western liberal-secular state) can survive in this age, its “future lies in turning its face away from the ideal of rational consensus and looking instead toward *modus vivendi*.”<sup>297</sup> He writes:

*Modus vivendi* expresses the belief that there are many forms of life in which humans can thrive... For the predominate ideal of liberal toleration, the best life may be unattainable, but it is the same for all. From a standpoint of *modus vivendi*, no kind of life can be the best for everyone. The human good is too diverse to be realised in any life. [In this case] our inherited ideal of toleration accepts with regret the fact that there are many ways of life.<sup>298</sup>

This position means that, to some extent, the possibility of reaching a peaceful end is greater if, from the start, we do not put overwhelming emphasis on the “conventional way”. The *modus vivendi* approach, however, has a greater ideal in mind, acknowledging that a variety of ways beyond the traditional offer non-conventional alternatives for engaging different parties (i.e. the Muslim world). Though interfaith dialogue may not be a leading option at this point, in this study the benefit of realising its the varied option beyond the “conventional

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character. It is usually made in an informal way, and never requires ratification.” See *United Nations Treaty Collection* (website online) available from <http://untreaty.un.org/English/guide.asp#modus>; Internet, accessed 20 January 2009. However, this chapter will look at the philosophical definition related to this term, thereby opening up the concept of *modus vivendi* wider to make sense of how US diplomacy might draw from this perspective a better way in which to engage international religious publics through a non-conventional means.

<sup>297</sup> Gray, *Two Faces of Liberalism*, 105; As a side-note, see Bill Krystal’s January 2009 Op-ed piece that engages the posture of contemporary liberalism under the newly-formed Obama-Biden administration. Critics ponder the nature of liberalism’s survival in the US under President Obama’s administration and if critical values will be ensured amid his transition. William Crystal, *Will Obama Save Liberalism?* (26 January 2009) [article online]; available from <http://mobile.nytimes.com/article?a=304978&fd=28>; Internet, accessed 29 January 2009.

<sup>298</sup> John Gray, *Two Faces of Liberalism*, 5.

way” is likely to allow the US Department of State to consider its potential as a post-secular treatment.

### 3.5. Part one conclusion

Summarily, two verifiable facts are presented. First, the USG must make a formal public recognition (politically and diplomatically) that it has entered an era of post-secularism. While not as dominant as it once was, religion is not completely detached from the emerging international affairs that US foreign policy is today forced to confront. And second, notions of the post-secular are presently bound up with the Lewis-Huntington *Clash of Civilizations* and confrontationalist-inspired arguments convincing US policymakers that religion is essentially a problem. This posture makes it difficult for US lawmakers to acknowledge the potential and relevance of the post-secular and its contribution to a world-wide resurgence of religion when drafting US foreign policy and when engaging the Muslim world. Caught within a body of political apprehensiveness toward religion (linked to historical aspirations to assure religious tolerance within the public sphere), America’s too-consistent political realism has not only distorted US-Muslim world engagement but stymied the debate as to where exactly, with whom and when this communicative engagement must begin. In calling for a consideration to improve US-Muslim world relations, it is vital that the five formal recommendations presented in Chapter 2 are reintroduced in order to progress with a clear understanding of how the USG must embrace Muslim publics if it desires to make any attempt at improving relations. They include at this point:

- (i) *The USG should readily identify that it has embarked upon a post-secular era which warns against its apprehensive political posture toward religious issues (both domestic and foreign);*

(ii) *In maintaining its liberal-secular traditions, the USG must become more accustomed to incorporating forms of post-secular political engagement to address religious and tribal issues when linked to Muslim publics;*

(iii) *The establishment of a special post-secular political forum that encourages public deliberation should integrate the sacred and secular voices in order to balance the political realm's decision-making process when developing policies relating to post-secular international religious affairs;*

(iv) *In this forum, the USG should consider partnerships with critical academic, political, religious and private infrastructures in Muslim publics to reshape failed US foreign policies which over the last decade did not invest in understanding the shared objectives and values of Islamic society, and;*

(v) *Ensure that there is creative post-secular **interfaith** communicative language the USG is able to employ in its effort to rebuild equitable sacred-secular relations with international Muslim publics and cease to rely on outdated secular measures.*

If the USG is willing to comprehend how to utilise the various traditions of the contemporary interfaith movement, it will be able to transcend the post-secular to engage in sacred-secular dialogue (not limiting itself to post-secular domestic issues but those beyond the United States relating to current foreign affairs). These recommendations will become solidified when the USG seeks to employ a more engaged response to include a post-secular treatment drawing on characteristics from the interfaith tradition that employ religious pluralism and the contemporary movement's use of the *socio-political interfaith dialogue* forum.

The challenges taken up in this chapter have centred on comprehending interfaith activity and how this concept is manifest in dialogue. In light of these five recommendations this study will take a turn here to explore how the Bush Administration engaged the vast majority of the Muslim world in the absence of a post-secular framework. Based on the USG's narrow three-fold fixation between 2001 and 2008 to comprehend the religion of

Islam as the problem, Islamic fundamentalism as the source, and the Islamic militant as the extreme combatant, we observe how an American history of political apprehensiveness toward engaging religious forces in the domestic arena hampered US-Muslim world engagement. Apart from examining the lacklustre approaches employed by the Bush administration, Part 2 makes a viable contribution by challenging previous US-Muslim world engagement practises by exploring the question of communication as considered, developed and even pursued (at the diplomatic level) within the US Department of State between 2001 and 2008. In carrying out this analysis, attention is given to the Bush administration's application of corporate logic to address emerging post-9/11 religious forces in the public sphere.<sup>299</sup>

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<sup>299</sup> Naomi Klein, *No Logo* (New York: Harper Collins, 2009).

**PART 2**

**PRACTISES IN US-MUSLIM WORLD ENGAGEMENT**

**(2001-2008)**

## CHAPTER 4

### CRUSADING US NATIONAL SECURITY

#### 4.1. Introduction

Part 1 outlined various objectives (and possibilities) for improving contemporary US-Muslim world engagement through socio-political communicative dialogue. However, the most pronounced challenge hindering the USG from taking this progressive step surrounds the American political system's inability to readily identify that it has embarked upon a post-secular era, which warns against its present posture for engaging in broad international religious affairs. Making this post-secular recognition goes beyond a realisation that religious issues are rapidly resurging to establishing policies that engage these critical issues by building trusted sacred-secular relationships. America's apprehensive posture toward the very subject of religion relates to its historic fear that religion's influence may become more persuasive than political ideals within the public sphere – thus lessening the authority of the secular on society. Part 1 makes a unique contribution by outlining a conception of this political apprehensiveness and its effect within Western and American society; but how did this fear mature within the US foreign policy environment after September 11, 2001?

To answer this question, national security documents provide answers of where America's distorted communication message to the Muslim world would emerge, creating lacklustre policies and practices throughout the Near East region.<sup>300</sup> In handling this

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<sup>300</sup> See Melvin Gurtov, *Superpower on Crusade: The Bush Doctrine in US Foreign Policy* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006); Robert Gordon Kaufman, *In Defense of the Bush Doctrine* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2007); Mary Buckley and Robert Singh, *The Bush Doctrine and the War on Terrorism: Global Responses, Global Consequences* (London:

question, Chapter 4 explores how an American foreign policy agenda centred on expanding America's political and ideological beliefs constricted the prospects for post-secular engagement opportunities between the US and Muslim world. This assessment identifies how this post-9/11 foreign policy posture provided a context for the development of lacklustre policies and communication practices projected at international Muslim communities. Thus, when looking at the political and ideological framework that inspired America's post-9/11 foreign policy, it is clear why a complementary communication process is today imperative, but was quite unlikely after 9/11, considering the highly influential neoconservative inspired "Bush Doctrine".

Recognised as a new conservative advocacy during the late 1970's (by liberals turned conservative), neoconservatism would soon emerge and cast itself into American politics after the Cold War as a staunch supporter of an aggressive US foreign policy in the Middle East and within other regions around the world. Three principal convictions apply to the overall neoconservative agenda which include: a.) Giving credence to the *American Century*, "that moment when US power has no competition and US purposes are fully realizable"<sup>301</sup>; b.) America's values are "universal" and should be installed with democracy around the world; and c.) Regarding America as an exceptional nation. Charles Krauthammer captures this post-Cold War vision in the essay, *The Unipolar Moment* (1990), identifying the contemporary "neocon" agenda. Krauthammer reflected that the latter part of the twentieth century were an ideal period for America to seize global domination considering the centre of the world's power was unchallenged—since the fall of the Soviet Union. In expanding America's preeminence across the globe would therefore mean

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Routledge, 2006).

<sup>301</sup> See Melvin Gurtov, *Superpower on Crusade: The Bush Doctrine in US Foreign Policy* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006), 35 .



standing isolated from multilateral alignment (unless with a coalition unified behind America's foreign policy agenda). In convincing his readers on the value of spreading an American hegemony, he writes,

International stability is never a given. It is never the norm. When achieved, it is the product of self-conscious action by the great powers, and most particularly of the greatest power, which now and for the foreseeable future is the United States. If America wants stability, it will have to create it...[Hence], we are in for abnormal times. Our best hope for safety in such times, as in difficult times past, is an American strength and *will*—the strength and *will* to lead a unipolar world, unashamedly laying down the rules of world order and being prepared to enforce them.<sup>302</sup>

Leading with force meant applying a unilateral foreign policy to ensure America's security while extending its predominance to defend against what some "neocons" regard as "new threats" (i.e. suspected Weapon States).<sup>303</sup> Prominent neoconservatives as William Kristol and Robert Kagan later shaped Krauthammer's position, identifying that in order to bring this foreign policy vision into being requires the use of force "unilaterally" and "preemptively" in the essay, *Toward a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy* (1996). This motivation (and terminology) later re-emerged in many of America's post-9/11 strategies drafted to win its war against terror by extending an American hegemony. Kristol and Kagan insists

Having defeated the "evil empire," the United States enjoys strategic and ideological predominance. The first objective of US foreign policy should be to preserve and enhance that predominance by strengthening America's security, supporting its friends, advancing its interests, and standing up for its principles around the world. The aspiration to benevolent hegemony might strike some as either hubristic or morally suspect. But a hegemon is nothing more or less than a leader with preponderant influence and authority over all other in its domain.<sup>304</sup>

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<sup>302</sup> Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment" in *Foreign Affairs* no. 1 (1990): 29, 33.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid., 30-31; See also Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment Revisited" in *The National Interest* (Winter 2002/2003):5-17.

<sup>304</sup> William Kristol and Robert Kagan, "Toward a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy" in *Foreign Affairs*, no. 4: (1996):18-32; See also Thomas Donnelly, *Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources for a New Century* (2001) [document online]; available from [www.newamericancentury.org/RebuildingAmericasDefenses.pdf](http://www.newamericancentury.org/RebuildingAmericasDefenses.pdf); Internet accessed 20 April 2010.

Clearly, the political and security agenda of neoconservatives to install an American hegemony across the globe is rather exclusive in its framework and in interpretation of America's power and values. This interpretation, as laid out in the Kristol and Kagan essay constricts the prospects of integrating the perspectives of others in the dialogue setting to advance multilateral objectives on the global stage. Hence, the imperial context in which this vision functions sets out to sever ties with persons or nations that appear in opposition to America's foreign policy agenda—shrinking the prospects of the US entering into a global dialogue of civilisations to address pertinent issues after 9/11. Working its way into the Bush administration via prominent “neocons” in the National Security Council and the Department of Defense, its agenda (after 9/11) meant looking past varied opportunities to understand the Muslim world and the objections raised by Muslims who were not at odds with America.<sup>305</sup> This posture shaped itself into a vision that would be one-way in ensuring the goals and success of American preeminence.

This new conservative advocacy and President Bush's personal religious aspirations converged. Though projecting religious (i.e. Christian) ideals into American politics does not stand as a major agenda for neoconservatives, objections by leading “neocons” toward President Bush's application of personal religious rhetoric were not objected—considering the dual agenda of both in winning a war against terror--at all cost. “Two foreign policy implications flow from Bush's moralism. One is a faith-based certainty in the rightness of his actions and a strong tendency to ignore facts that get in the way of decisions already

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<sup>305</sup> “During Bush's 2000 presidential campaign, his eight primary foreign policy advisers, nicknamed the Vulcans, included two neocons, Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Perle. All of them had reputations as defense hardliners, and all but one went on to serve in Bush's first administration, including his chief mentor on foreign affairs, Condoleezza Rice. Bush's other top-level appointments in the Defense and State Departments were likewise veterans of the two previous Republican administrations—and again, all but Powell were well-known hardliners.” Melvin Gurtov, *Superpower on Crusade: The Bush Doctrine in US Foreign Policy* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006);

made. Another is his belief in the oneness of God's and US purposes".<sup>306</sup> Bush's agenda, nonetheless, meant carrying out his duties as President while adhering to his own personal convictions. In effect, Bush's projection of religious rhetoric in US public discourse complimented a rigid neoconservative agenda that insisted after 9/11 on capturing America's enemies and installing more effective forms of governance around the world.

Mel Gurtov makes clear, "Moral certainty and religiously informed devotion to the national interest are a dangerous combination. They create a sense of destiny that mirrors the vision of fundamentalist regimes and movements. In the hands of a leader with awesome military and economic power at his disposal, they have the potential to convert US exceptionalism into US adventurism."<sup>307</sup> Though Bush's projection of religious rhetoric into the American foreign policy environment does not fit into America's overall secular political tradition, it facilitated in both complementing and assisting the larger neoconservative vision to define America's new enemy and galvanize the fear of American's against the religion of Islam. Looking at President Bush's religious rhetoric (and the origin of Bush's faith-based instinct) as it stands complementary to the contemporary "neocon" vision, 4.2. explores briefly the nature of this rhetoric and instinct, as it facilitated in installing an American hegemony and democracy after 9/11.

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<sup>306</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid., 36.

## 4.2. Selling an American war rhetoric

It is often argued that President Bush's major policies were influenced by his Christian faith, which was newly-found during the 1980s.<sup>308</sup> Unlike previous American presidents who were reluctant to wear their religion on their sleeves, Bush was not perturbed by the idea of publically acknowledging the impact Christianity had on his mid-life development and that evangelical Christians had a religious partner in the White House.<sup>309</sup> In Bush's campaign biography, *A Charge to Keep: My Journey to the Whitehouse*, the president lays out a written account of his commitment to the Christian faith and dedication to compassionately-lead America, identifying this task as "God's calling and a sacred opportunity to improve history".<sup>310</sup> He recognised it not only as his duty but as the duty of all Christians, as citizens, to improve America. Comparably, the same Moral Majority rhetoric that flirted with an America on the brink of "moral decay" during the 1970s and '80s would be reintroduced by President Bush (who experienced a former liaison with the religious right during his father's campaign bid between 1988-89), thus asserting the need for a more compassionate America.<sup>311</sup> In doing so, Bush would take a page out of the Moral Majority's playbook, as written by the likes of Jerry Farwell, Jim Bakker and Paul Weyrich, to assert in his campaign biography:

During more than half a century of my life, we have seen an unprecedented decay in our

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<sup>308</sup> See, Stephen Mansfield, *The Faith of George W. Bush* (New York: Penguin Books, 2003); Mark J. Rozell and Gleaves Whitney, *Religion and the Bush Presidency* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Esther Kaplan, *With God on Their Side: How Christian Fundamentalists Trampled Science, Policy, and Democracy in George W. Bush's White House* (New York: New Press, 2004).

<sup>309</sup> Richard L. Pace, *The Role of Religion in the Life and Presidency of George W. Bush*, USAWC Strategy Research Project (Carlisle Barracks: US Army War College, 2004).

<sup>310</sup> See, George W. Bush, *A Charge to Keep: My Journey to the White House* (New York, NY: Perennial, 2001).

<sup>311</sup> See, Bruce Lincoln, "Bush's God Talk", *Political Theologies: Public Religion in a Post-Secular World*, ed. Hent De Vries and Lawrence E. Sullivan (New York: Fordham UP, 2006), 269.

American culture, a decay that has eroded the foundations of our collective values and moral standards of conduct. Our sense of personal responsibility has declined dramatically, just as the role and responsibility of the federal government have increased... We can now say, without question, that the belief that government could solve people's problems instead of people solving people's problems was wrong and misguided.<sup>312</sup>

As with the Moral Majority, when influencing new members and public policy decisions, President Bush would go on to identify America's decay as arising from "big government and liberal influence" – stating that to improve such an ill would require a moral solution. The moral solution, compassionate conservatism, as Bush calculated, included limiting the influence of government while outsourcing the addressing of social affairs to private organisations.<sup>313</sup> As Naomi Shaefer Riley writes, "Compassionate conservatism is the theory that the government should encourage the effective provision of social services without providing the service itself."<sup>314</sup> Thus, this would include issues related to health care, poverty and even immigration. But how did this perspective go on to shape Bush's position toward engaging the post-secular? In a real sense, Bush's compassionate conservatism campaign would shift the context of how US policy would address both domestic and foreign issues after 9/11.

Bruce Lincoln acknowledges in *Bush's God Talk* that President Bush "Understands compassion to be quality of spirit that characterises (religious) individuals and groups, but is categorically different from the soulless, bureaucratic nature of the state."<sup>315</sup> (This position

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<sup>312</sup> George W. Bush, *A Charge to Keep*, 229-230.

<sup>313</sup> See, George W. Bush, "Compassionate Conservatism", *Vital Speeches of the Day*, 66 (2000): 642-646; Marvin N. Olasky *Compassionate Conservatism: What It Is, What It Does, and How It Can Transform America* (New York: Free Press, 2000).

<sup>314</sup> Naomi Shaefer Riley, *Mr. Compassionate Conservatism* (October 21 2006) [article online]; available from <http://opinionjournal.com/editorial/feature.html?id=110009135>; Internet, accessed 20 October 2009. See Joe Conason "Where is the Compassion?" (August 2003) *The Nation* [article online]; available from <http://www.thenation.com/doc/20030915/conason/3>; Internet, accessed 20 October 2009.

<sup>315</sup> Bruce Lincoln, "Bush's God Talk", 272.

provides clarity into the nature of Bush's faith-based instincts that underpins his religious rhetoric. In addition, it explains why the State Department would outsource religious outreach and peacemaking activities to NGOs as opposed to having on-hand trained USG officials.) Lincoln would acknowledge of Bush,

When government attempts to care for the needy, it does so for practical and political, but not moral and spiritual, reasons. And in doing so, it obscures and inhibits the compassion of godly individuals, thereby compounding the problem... Since compassion is a spiritual quality, according to this perspective, social welfare and justice are best left to religious institutions, whence the specialised form of privatisation (and patronage) that is the President's "faith-based initiative."<sup>316</sup>

As President, Bush would not shy away from interjecting his religious beliefs into his compassionate conservatism campaign and the overall establishment of his political theology on social and international affairs. Bush identified his role as President as a calling to bring America out of its proverbial "moral decay", which meant making government smaller and invoking laws that were not always influenced by the secular, but rather by his faith-based instincts.<sup>317</sup> In Bush's view, the USG was a "soulless bureaucracy", deserving of compassionate leadership that would restore the soul of the nation by employing conservative ideals. In communicating this view, Bush created a "discourse of evil" expressed through his application of religious rhetoric to contextualise the events of 9/11, affirming that America was an exceptional nation that would defend its cause by taking up staunch force against any enemy.

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<sup>316</sup> Ibid., 272. See Jo Renee Formicola, Mary C. Segers, and Paul J. Weber ed., *The Bush Faith-Based Initiative: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003).

<sup>317</sup> See Guy Lawson, "George W.'s Personal Jesus", *Gentleman's Quarterly* (September 2003): 394.

Aspects of Bush's god-talk that would influence US foreign policymaking after 9/11 is acknowledged further by Lincoln as including: an evangelical theology of "born again" conversion; a theology of American exceptionalism as grounded in the virtue of compassion; a Calvinist theology of vocation; and a Manichean dualism of good and evil.<sup>318</sup> 9/11 provided a stage for Bush to invoke his faith-based instincts against an ideological enemy by selling an American war rhetoric to the foreign public with regards to the Taliban and al-Qaeda. Though he speculated as to whether America's war on terror was really a war on Islam, Lincoln implies that, unlike influential evangelicals such as Franklin Graham and Pat Robertson, and scholars like Bernard Lewis and Samuel P. Huntington or General William G. Boykin, the White House never publically shared this position. What is clear, however, is that Bush never publically rebuked his fellow associates and their persuasive rhetoric that the religion of Islam was in fact America's true enemy.<sup>319</sup>

On September 16, Bush stated in haste to a journalist that: "This crusade, this war on terrorism is gonna take awhile. And the American people must be patient. I'm gonna be patient... We haven't seen this kind of barbarism in a long period of time... This is a new kind of evil".<sup>320</sup> Bush's use of the term "crusade" sparked attention in the Muslim world and among key Muslim leaders in Europe. Soheib Bensheikh (Grand Mufti in Marseille, France) noted of Bush's unfortunate choice of language: "it recalled the unjust history and military operations of the Western world against the Muslim world."<sup>321</sup> James Carroll takes this point a step further in *The Bush Crusade*:

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<sup>318</sup> Bruce Lincoln, "Bush's God Talk", 275

<sup>319</sup> Ibid., 273.

<sup>320</sup> Manuel Perez-Rivas, *Bush Vows to Rid the World of Evil Doers* (CNN September 16, 2001) [article online]; available from <http://archives.cnn.com/2001/US/09/16/gen.bush.terrorism/>; Internet, accessed 20 August 2009.

<sup>321</sup> Lamont Colucci, *Crusading Realism: The Bush Doctrine and American Core Values After 9/11* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2008); see James Carroll, *Crusade: Chronicles of an Unjust War* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2004).

For George W. Bush, [the term] crusade was an offhand reference. But all the more powerfully for that, it was an accidental probing of unintended but nevertheless real meaning. That the president used the word inadvertently suggests how it expressed his exact truth, an unmasking of his most deeply felt purpose... He defined crusade as war. Even offhandedly, he had said exactly what he meant... A coherent set of political, economic, social and even mythological traditions of the Eurasian continent, from the British Isles to the far side of Arabia, grew out of the transformations wrought by the Crusades. And it is far from incidental still, both that those campaigns were conducted by Christians against Muslims, and that they, too, were attached to the irrationalities of millennial fever.<sup>322</sup>

By using the term “crusade” Bush invoked a new rhetoric, inciting a level of fear among non-conservatives towards his political to “rid the world of evil.”<sup>323</sup> In order to sell this new war rhetoric, an environment susceptible to this message was created. In this case, new laws such as *The USA Patriot Act* were hurried through congress (allowing American law enforcement unauthorised power to defend America against suspected terrorist activity by providing enhanced surveillance capabilities, interagency cooperation, abilities to update US laws to reflect new terrorist threats and increased penalties for suspected terrorists).<sup>324</sup> To reaffirm this, Bush announced on September 23 that “There could be no neutrality in the coming struggle. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make,” adding that “Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorist.”<sup>325</sup> For example, after 9/11, this tone would resurface in Egypt at the Israeli-Palestinian Sharm el-Sheikh summit in 2005 with the President incoherently stating:

I am driven with a mission from God, God would tell me, ‘George go and fight these terrorist in Afghanistan’. And I did. And then God would tell me ‘George, go and end the tyranny in Iraq’. And I did... And now, again, I feel God’s word coming to me, ‘Go get the Palestinians

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<sup>322</sup> James Carroll, *The Bush Crusade* [article online]; available from <http://www.thenation.com/doc/20040920/carroll>; Internet, accessed 20 August 2009.

<sup>323</sup> See, Charles Babington, *Bush: US Must Rid the World of Evil* (September 14, 2001) Washington Post [article online]; available from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn?pagename=article&node=&contentId=A30485-2001Sep14>; Internet, accessed 20 August 2009; James Carroll, *Bush’s War Against Evil* [article online]; available from <http://www.commondreams.org/views03/0708-03.htm>; Internet, accessed 20 August 2009.

<sup>324</sup> *USA Patriot Act* [document online]; available from <http://epic.org/privacy/terrorism/hr3162.pdf>; Internet, accessed 20 August 2009.

<sup>325</sup> Bruce Lincoln, *Bush’s God Talk*, 273



their state and get the Israelis their security, and get peace in the Middle East'. And, by God, I'm gonna do it.<sup>326</sup>

Hence, this brief reflection on Bush's "God-talk" answers the question as to why America's principle foreign policy position reflected an overall tone of exclusivism, rather than one of multilateral peacemaking. Regrettably, Bush's affirmation toward the Muslim world did not translate into a strategic plan to communicate and rebuild relations through peacemaking or by incorporating large support from the international community. His personal faith-based agenda succeeded, at best, at projecting elements of exclusivism to Muslims in order to destroy an existing "evil", thereby advancing American security and power. Integrated with a neo-conservative national security agenda, the world witnessed after 9/11 a new doctrine emerge to assure the installation of American power and democracy to win the US's war on terror.

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<sup>326</sup> Ewen MacAskill, *George Bush: God told me to end the tyranny in Iraq* [article online]; available from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2005/oct/07/iraq.usa>; Internet, accessed 20 August 2009.

### 4.3. Shaping the Bush Doctrine

Prior to George W. Bush assuming office in 2001, many American neoconservatives and foreign policy interest groups were consumed with defining the right post-Cold War moment to project its influence into shaping America's national security agenda. Some, for example, included, the US Committee on NATO, the Committee on the Present Danger, Clifford May's Foundation for Defense of Democracies (2001), and the Committee for the Liberation of Iraq (2002). But, the Project for the New American Century (PNAC), founded in 1997 by prominent neoconservatives and chaired by neo-Reaganite, William Kristol, led in shaping America's foreign policy after 9/11. With support from leading neoconservatives as: Donald Rumsfeld, Dick Cheney, Paul Wolfowitz, Robert Kagan, Frank Gaffney, Fred Iklé, Zalmay Khalilzad, Richard Perle, Elliot Abrams, Francis Fukuyama, and Peter W. Rodman, one might assume, given the right opportunity, PNAC's influence could soon become a driving force in twenty-first century American foreign policy. Given the events of 9/11, its influence was in fact relentless in its pursuit to seize control of the world's power by confronting what Krauthammer a decade earlier regarded as purported "Weapon States". In doing so meant shaping and providing the political agenda for the development of a new doctrine.

PNAC's inflexible realist agenda conveyed a seriousness toward installing US global leadership throughout the world by applying a foreign policy built on the successes of the Reagan Administration: *a military that is strong and ready to meet both present and future challenges; a foreign policy that boldly and purposefully promotes American principles*

*abroad; and national leadership that accepts the United States' global responsibilities.*<sup>327</sup>

Recognised in the first line of PNAC's statement and principles, is that American foreign policy had fallen adrift during the late twentieth century, due in part to the Clinton administration's commitment to multilateralism and its resistance to "isolationist impulses from within its ranks".<sup>328</sup> Thus, "Cuts in foreign affairs and defense spending, inattention to the tools of statecraft, and inconstant leadership" contribute to what the organization regards as opportunities that were making it "increasingly difficult to sustain American influence around the world".<sup>329</sup> In defending America's proposed new role in international relations meant taking serious the need to increase US defense spending, strengthening ties to democratic allies, spreading American values, and promoting economic and political freedom, and expanding US military primacy.

In crafting this agenda, this study acknowledges that both the election of George W. Bush (an American President who would rely on *faith-based instincts*) and the terrorist attacks of 9/11 provided the political context and ideological underpinning to promote PNAC's neo-Reaganite national security agenda. Acknowledging Gurtov, the terrorist attacks had three transforming effects on American foreign policy.

First, it elevated neocon thinking—a vigour US nationalism—to the intellectual center...Second, 9/11 downgraded the particularities of traditional realism and globalism in favor of a new crusade akin to the Cold War crusade that fused anticommunism with an open-door world economy...[and] Third, 9/11 crystallized two simple but very expansive strategic objectives: winning the war on terror and undermining rogue states that possess, or might possess, weapons of mass destruction.<sup>330</sup>

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<sup>327</sup> See PNAC Statement of Principles (3 June 1997) [article online] available from <http://www.newamericancentury.org/statementofprinciples.htm>; Internet, accessed 20 April 2010.

<sup>328</sup> Ibid.

<sup>329</sup> Ibid

<sup>330</sup> Melvin Gurtov, *Superpower on Crusade: The Bush Doctrine in US Foreign Policy* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006); 37.

In addition, PNAC's September 20, 2001 open letter to President Bush marked the beginning of neoconservatives having a hand in shaping America's national security agenda that would pursue many of the objectives laid out in either Krauthamer's *The Unipolar Moment*, Wolfowitz's *Defense Planning Guidance* (1992), or the Kristol & Kagan essay, *Toward a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy*. Hence, PNAC's statement and principles in collaboration with the political and ideological framework set out in these and other essays/documents resulted in the "Bush Doctrine", as mainly expressed in the 2002 and 2006 US National Security Strategy.

The core principles of the "Bush Doctrine" (introduced by "neocons" in the late 1990s) that were enacted in the 2002 National Security Strategy included: a) the endorsement of pre-emptive strikes against potential targets linked to terrorist activity; b) advancing military primacy; c) supporting a new multilateralism by establishing a coalition of the willing; and d) the spread of democracy to combat terrorist ideology within the Middle East.<sup>331</sup> The overall conception of this doctrine may be condensed into a concise statement as captured in the 2002 National Security Strategy:

The security environment confronting the United States today is radically different from what we have faced before. Yet the first duty of the United States Government remains what it always has been: to protect the American people and American interests. It is an enduring American principle that this duty obligates the government to anticipate and counter threats, using all elements of national power, before the threats can do grave damage. The greater the threat, the greater is the risk of inaction – and the more compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy's attack. There are few greater threats than a terrorist attack with WMD.

To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act pre-emptively in exercising our inherent right of self-defence. The United States will not resort to force in all cases to pre-empt emerging threats. Our preference is that

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<sup>331</sup> George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America September 2002* (New York: Morgan James Pub, 2009). See Brad Roberts, *American Primacy and Major Power Concert: A Critique of the 2002 National Security Strategy* (Alexandria: Institute for Defense Analyses, 2002).

nonmilitary actions succeed. And no country should ever use pre-emption as a pretext for aggression.<sup>332</sup>

In pursuing an aggressive national security agenda in its war against terror, numerous strategies – including the *National Security Strategy* in 2002 – were introduced by the Bush administration. However, an accompanying strategy to promote the “neocon” agenda to address “new threats” linked to suspected “Weapon States” (as Iraq and Iran) is the *National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction* (NSCWMD). This strategy highlights the depth of the neoconservative agenda to seize American predominance throughout Central and South Asia by identifying three specific pillars to deter WMDs from falling into the hands of terrorists. They include: *Counterproliferation to combat WMD use*; *Strengthening nonproliferation to combat WMD proliferation*; and *Establishing a consequence management unit to respond to WMD use*.

When considering the NSCWMD’s impact on a more nuanced level, its first pillar highlights counterproliferation to offset the flow of WMDs from reaching the hands of Islamic extremists (involved directly or indirectly with the Taliban or Al-Qaeda). Countering the development of nuclear arms by interdiction was essential to the President’s national security plan and to the White House for assuring counterproliferation. Efforts to counter WMDs were assured by US military and intelligence capabilities at the Department of Defense, the CIA, the National Security Agency and National Intelligence Council, to deter cross-border transaction of arms proliferation and the financing of terrorist cells. (Tactics

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<sup>332</sup> George Bush, *The 2002 National Security Strategy* [document online] available from <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/nss/2006/print/sectionV.html>; Internet, accessed 20 August 2009.

involved pre-emptive measures, and analysis of these agencies' "capabilities of detecting and destroying an adversary's WMD assets before these weapons [were] used."<sup>333</sup>

The second pillar centred on "diplomatic approaches in bilateral and multilateral settings in pursuit of [US] nonproliferation goals."<sup>334</sup> Suppressing terrorist organisations and countries which purportedly posed an eminent threat to US national security interests by the development and selling of nuclear arms, chemical and biological weapons and ballistic missiles, were to be carried out under this pillar, therefore setting, to a degree, the foreign policy and diplomatic agenda. In doing so, the Bush administration proposed measures that openly supported the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and the International Atomic Energy Agency's objectives on a number of levels, including UN sanctions against foes.<sup>335</sup> The selling of chemical and biological weapons was halted through a USG alliance with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. Conversely, in its pursuit to halt missile production by rival states and international terrorist organisations, the US was able to reinforce its position in the Missile Technology Control Regime by offering strategic "support for universal adherence to the International Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation."<sup>336</sup>

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<sup>333</sup> *The National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction* [document online] available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/nspd-wmd.pdf>; Internet, accessed 20 August 2009.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid.

<sup>335</sup> Since 2002, CIA and National Intelligence Estimate reports have concluded that neither country, Iraq or Iran, posed a nuclear threat; and nor did Iraq have WMDs, as implied by US President George W. Bush in his 29 January 2002 State of the Union Address; see Central Intelligence Agency, *The Comprehensive Revised Report with Addendums on Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction: Duelfer Report*, (September, 2004); National Intelligence Estimate, "Iran: Nuclear Intentions and Capabilities" (November 2007).

<sup>336</sup> *The National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction*, 4.

The final pillar to this strategy provided a central outline which specified how the USG would defend the “American homeland” in the event of future terrorist attacks, by establishing a Department of Homeland Security. The objectives of the *National Strategy of Homeland Security* (which fell under the third pillar) addressed the role of the White House Office of Homeland Security first in “[coordinating] all federal efforts to prepare for and mitigate the consequences of terrorist attacks within the United States, including those involving WMDs”; and, second, committing the Office of Homeland Security to “also work closely with state and local governments to ensure their planning, training and equipment requirements [were] addressed”<sup>337</sup> in the event of another terrorist attack.

In establishing these three pillars to combat WMDs, an additional US *National Security Strategy* was introduced (in March 2006), shifting the global war on terror’s focus from combat and weaponry to nation building, spreading democracy and supporting democratic regime change in order that predominantly Muslim countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq might combat Islamic extremism. Bush’s 2006 National Security Strategy set out to ensure that the Middle East would no longer be a breeding ground that contributed to the recruitment of terrorist activity. In doing so, the administration would implement an alternative ideology rooted in democratic ideals and American values. To carry out this vision meant vehemently encouraging the spread of democracy and American values by publically affirming:

The long-term solution for winning the War on Terror is the advancement of freedom and human dignity through effective democracy. Elections are the most viable sign of a free society and can play a critical role in advancing effective democracy. But elections alone are not enough... They are responsive to their citizens, submitting to the will of the people. Effective democracies exercise effective sovereignty and maintain order within their own borders; address causes of conflict peacefully, protect independent and impartial systems of

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<sup>337</sup> Ibid., 5.

justice, punish crime, embrace the rule of law and resist corruption. Effective democracies limit the reach of government, protecting the institutions of civil society. In effective democracies, freedom is indivisible.<sup>338</sup>

A tone of American predominance is asserted in the notion that any nation (or non-state combatant) should and would not be allowed (in any way) to present a threat to America's governance capabilities or national security (at home or abroad). The best way to ensure this would be through the spread of democracy, which would mean that allies and foes alike understood the value of a democratic society. Regime change (among other important objectives) became an essential component of the new paradigm. The 2006 NSS accomplished, on the surface, two specific goals: i) identifying in clear terms America's new enemy (extreme Islamic ideology, terrorists and rogue states) that the USG planned to defend against at all costs militarily; and ii) it included the course of action for rebuilding key nations in an effort to promote effective democracies within countries identified as failed states.

While these strategies which underpin the Bush Doctrine focused on installing US global leadership to ensure American security—*by applying unilateral policies*—the fact stands that they inevitably cut off prospective opportunities to recognise the interests of allies and foes alike. Between President Bush conveying exclusive religious rhetoric and a hard-line neoconservative agenda, space would not exist for promoting a post-secular engagement with the Muslim world. For the Bush administration, endorsing this post-secular

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<sup>338</sup>George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy 2006* [document online] available from <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/nss.pdf>; Internet, accessed 20 August 2009; "It is the policy of the United States to seek and support democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world. In the world today, the fundamental character of regimes matters as much as the distribution of power among them. The goal of our statecraft is to help create a world of democratic, well-governed states that can meet the needs of their citizens and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system. This is the best way to provide enduring security for the American people." NSS 2006.



engagement would in effect work counter to any aims it previously set for projecting exceptionalism and an American hegemony throughout the world. Taking such a progressive stance would require President Bush stepping back from his faith-based instincts and the Bush administration endorsing multilateralism over isolationism. Unfortunately, this would not be the case.

The truth stands that by sticking to its “hard-headed” realism posture (to expand American dominance politically and militarily) America would not become safer as suspected, but a more arrogant nation. Promoting this aggressive realism has inevitably cost America its reputation throughout the Muslim world and including varied opportunities to restore trusted relations with Muslims (who were not at odds with America after September 11). These events occurred in a culminated effort to maintain the Bush Doctrine’s principle objectives to: *Endorse preemptive strikes against purported terrorist sites, Build an alliance with the “coalition of the willing” or Endorse (legal/illegal) regime change in support of spreading democracy throughout the Middle East.*<sup>339</sup> Applying these measures essentially meant restricting the prospects of making America a safer nation. In effect, it ensured the USG would have a narrow post-9/11 doctrine that promoted a rigid form of imperialism, as oppose to a broad multilateral doctrine that assured peace through constructive peacemaking.<sup>340</sup>

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<sup>339</sup> Jonathan Monten, “The Roots of the Bush Doctrine: Power, Nationalism, and Democracy Promotion in US Strategy”, *International Security*, 29 (2005): 112-156; See also Lawrence Kaplan and William Kristol, *The War Over Iraq: Saddam's Tyranny and America's Mission* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2003).

<sup>340</sup> See Noam Chomsky, “Modern Day American Imperialism: Middle East and Beyond” (speech online) available from <http://www.bu.edu/buniverse/view/?v=uDHmO6i>; Internet, accessed 28 April 2010; See Lamont Colucci, *Crusading Realism: The Bush Doctrine and American Core Values After 9/11* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2008).

#### 4.4. The limitations of the Bush Doctrine

The aim of the Bush Doctrine was extending America's exceptionalism and democracy into the Muslim world in order to assure the "expansion of material capability" and "the presence of a US domestic ideology cultivated by fear."<sup>341</sup> Jonathan Monten states, in the essay *Roots of the Bush Doctrine*:

In an approach variously characterised as "democratic realism", "national security liberalism", "democratic globalism" and "messianic universalism" the Bush administration's national security policy [centred] on the direct application of US military and political power to promote democracy in strategic areas... More broadly, the Bush administration [proposed] a liberal international order grounded in US military and political power, as its 2002 National Security Strategy (NSS) contends, the unparalleled US position of primacy creates a moment of opportunity to extend the benefits of freedom across the globe... [to] actively work to bring the hope of democracy, development, free markets, and free trade to every corner of the world."<sup>342</sup>

Bush's *Charge* to pursue a liberal international order to meet then US national security objectives contributed greatly (to the surprise of the USG) to: distorting US-Muslim World communication, ensuring the spread of American values within Muslim publics, and replacing the spread of political Islamic ideology with Western democratic ideals. Bush's unilateralist policies, on the whole, "produced quick victories in Afghanistan and Iraq but have yet fractured the nation's alliances causing the world system to be more chaotic and unfriendly and the United States to be less secure."<sup>343</sup>

As with both the Truman and Eisenhower Doctrines, the Bush Doctrine reintroduced a staunch agenda which also distinguished the American political system from its enemy (in Bush's case the Taliban/Al-Qaeda's or non-democratic system on the international stage).

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<sup>341</sup> Jonathan Monten, "The Roots of the Bush Doctrine: Power, Nationalism, and Democracy Promotion in US Strategy", *International Security*, 29 (2005): 112-156.

<sup>342</sup> Ibid.

<sup>343</sup> Joshua Micha Marshall, "Remaking the World: Bush and the Neoconservatives", *Foreign Affairs*, 82 (November/December 2003): 142.

While promoting policies that identified America as an exceptional nation, the prospects for a global dialogue (with foes and enemies alike) were severed. After reviewing the most vital aspects of this doctrine, it is apparent that there is a missing dimension to its framework, which centres on its inability to acknowledge the importance of engaging both the religious and cultural dimensions of Islamic society through constructive peacemaking efforts. Its limitations are as follows:

- i) While the Bush Doctrine served as the principle national security and foreign policy strategy after 9/11, influencing the entire USG system, this thesis finds that the doctrine is reluctant to make a post-secular recognition that moves beyond identifying the religion of Islam as a potential threat to US national security (as opposed to it serving as a potential peacemaking instrument to combat WMDs);
- ii) The Bush Doctrine outlines a strategy to combat terror and Islamic extremism through staunch military force, but fails to outline an equal but strategic communicative plan of action to directly engage the vast majority of the Muslim world (to establish formidable social relations that contribute to direct peacemaking efforts); and
- iii) The doctrine stands as a *hyper-defence* agenda which downplays political peacemaking efforts while placing more emphasis on expediting results achievable through staunch military force.

To a great extent, it is clear why the USG overlooked the important dimension of comprehending the religion of Islam as a potential partner and avenue to combat WMDs and terror after 9/11. The realist agenda held by key Bush administration “neocons” would not recognise nor take serious the dynamics of religion in its overall foreign policy equation. Its success-over-understanding agenda, nonetheless, limited this productive form of engagement.

For leading “neocons” in the Bush administration as Rumsfeld, Cheney, and Wolfowitz, engaging with religious elements to promote peacemaking ran counter, however, to its agenda to seize power in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Downplaying the post-secular or impact of religious issues on US foreign policy would coincide with President Bush’s political agenda to shrink the USG’s capacity to handle critical issues related to social welfare. Most religious, tribal and cultural affairs on the international stage would fall into this category, with exceptions given to issues related to religious freedom and religious tolerance. In Bush’s compassionate conservatism campaign, America’s bureaucratic system, according to the President, was not moral or spiritual enough to understand with complete measure the concept of religion, and therefore should not engage in the American political system; such matters should instead be outsourced to faith-based organisations or private NGOs.<sup>344</sup> This position gained traction within the White House and later made its way into key USG departments and agencies. Carrying out the Bush Doctrine’s objective could only be upheld if the religio-political dimension of the Muslim world were overlooked and traditional components such as economy, security, governance, political realism and defence-related issues were on the table. Washington made it clear that dedication to analysing broad international religious affairs would be overlooked in order to execute this hyper-defence agenda. But why would key USG departments/agencies and its officials be reluctant to counter this position? Numerous issues relate to this hesitation.

According to the Center for Strategic and International Studies 2007 report, *Mixed Blessings: US Government Engagement with Religion in Conflict-Prone Settings*, three

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<sup>344</sup> See Naomi Shaefer Riley, *Mr. Compassionate Conservatism* (October 21 2006) [article online]; available from <http://opinionjournal.com/editorial/feature.html?id=110009135>; Internet, accessed 20 October 2009.

obstacles to the above are put forth.<sup>345</sup> The first obstacle would relate (as noted in Chapter 2) to their misunderstanding of the US Establishment Clause and the parameters identified within it. Misunderstanding this significant clause, in effect, created an administration publically apprehensive toward challenging the Bush administration or integrating any form of religious analysis or sacred-secular engagement (with critical Muslim infrastructures) into its overall policy discussion. When various USG department and agency officials were interviewed by CSIS:

Some officials said they believe the Establishment Clause categorically limits government activities related to religion, while others said they were not sure of the specific ways the clause should shape their actions and decisions. This lack of clarity on the rules regarding religion can hinder proactive engagement. Some government officials said they are sensitive about approaching religion because they fear being personally attacked – via litigation or public opprobrium – for possibly violating the Establishment Clause. Although usually unclear on the legal parameters of this engagement, government officials are often certain of the political risks involved.<sup>346</sup>

This level of scepticism cultivated a USG system that would become hesitant at addressing religion within the public sphere. Considering the reluctance of the Bush Doctrine to engage the religious and cultural dimensions of the Muslim world indicates clearly that the Bush administration “[saw] religion as a dangerous or divisive issue best left out of analysis.”<sup>347</sup> With key USG departments and agencies adhering to this approach it, in effect, limited the possibility for concrete formidable US-Muslim world relations.

The second obstacle relates to the USG’s contemporary framework for “approaching” religious issues. This CSIS report indicates that the USG’s framework was too narrow and

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<sup>345</sup> Liora Danan and Alice Hunt, “Mixed Blessings: US Government Engagement with Religion in Conflict-Prone Settings.” *CSIS Report*. (Washington: CSIS Press, 2007).

<sup>346</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*, 41; Hence, it appears further discussion between USG agencies on its parameters and its gathering a definitive understanding of the Establishment Clause deserves greater attention. This discussion is one that would initially broaden the conversation on how the administration could possibly engage religion to employ strategic non-violent peacemaking as a first option.

generally lacking a progressive focus when confronted with engaging post-secular issues, hence the Bush administration's narrow view toward the religion of Islam and Islamic fundamentalism. This narrow vision translated itself into a tapered tone that overemphasised the violent aspects associated with the religion of Islam as the problem, and consequently created an insular US government culture that was sceptical of both potential US-Islamic engagement and religious analysis.

Despite the fact that religion is seen as powerful enough to fuel conflict, policymakers less often [engaged] with its peacemaking potential. The current focus on extremism... skewed official US policy toward viewing Islam through a threat lens, rather than as a community of actors who may also be able to play a positive role in international relations.<sup>348</sup>

The final, but most important, obstacle identified recounts how the Bush Doctrine influenced the overall framework of the USG system whereby officials reduced the concept of religion to that of a non-substantive topic in international relations. In this case, it is clear how a principal foreign policy position created in the White House would later influence key departments and agencies. For example, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense (since 9/11) were often limited to their personal engagement efforts as set forth by the doctrine and its influence on its approach. If and when the topic of religion was introduced into USG affairs in such agencies, however, officials approached these topics nonchalantly as “broad cultural issues rather than religion specifically.”<sup>349</sup> In taking this approach, officials, in the case of the State Department, stripped away the theological significance of critical post-secular matters – reducing them to cultural affairs issues. Thus CSIS's research notes:

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<sup>348</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>349</sup> Ibid. 45.

Although mainstreaming religious awareness across the government will be critical to improving engagement abroad, many government officials mentioned the lack of religious experts as a particular problem. Hiring of religious experts has recently been emphasised by some government officials, but their use has been ad hoc and resource-constrained and there is often a lack of incentive for these experts to join the government.<sup>350</sup>

Harvard University professor J. Bryan Hehir points out in *Religion, Realism and Just Intervention*, “The separation of religion from political discourse and the broader assumption that religion may be treated as a “private phenomenon,” significant in the lives of individuals but not a force of public consequence, has been treated as a given in the discipline of international relation and in the discourse of [American foreign policymaking after 9/11].”<sup>351</sup>

Thus, the three obstacles identified by the CSIS (*a misunderstanding of the Establishment clause, the USG’s narrow framework for engaging religion, and the incapacity of the USG to engage the topic of religion substantively*) indicate why USG officials would/could not effectively employ an alternative approach to addressing broad international religious issues. “U.S. foreign policy, in recent decades, has often misread the importance of religion as a factor in the national politics and international behaviour of some countries and regions. This has sometimes led to incorrect analysis and erroneous policy responses which have proven quite costly.”<sup>352</sup> For example, this was the case with the NSS 2006 and its speculative statement on how the USG proposed it would address the vast majority of the Muslim world. Ad hoc approaches would be employed by the USG’s key diplomatic agency, the State Department, and these approaches would advocate the NSS 2006 support of “political reforms which (should) empower peaceful Muslims to practice and interpret their

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<sup>350</sup> Ibid, 44.

<sup>351</sup> Bryan Hehir, “Religion, Realism and Just Intervention”, *Liberty and Power: A Dialogue on Religion & US Foreign Policy*, ed E.J. Dionne, Jean Bethke Elshtain and Kayla Drogosz (Washington: Brookings Institute Press, 2004), 13.

<sup>352</sup> Barry Rubin, “Religion and International Affairs”, *Religion the Missing Dimension of Statecraft*, ed. Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson (Oxford: Oxford Press, 1994), 20.

faith [while the USG works] to undermine the ideological underpinnings of violent Islamic extremism and gain the support of non-violent Muslims around the world.”<sup>353</sup> However, this lacklustre approach, coupled by unilateral foreign policies, would in effect achieve the opposite, thus to promote American predominance in Afghanistan and Iraq.

#### 4.5. Conclusion

After the September 11 attacks, the Bush Doctrine served as the principal foreign policy position for the USG to combat terrorism and WMDs. This doctrine, which adamantly set out to defend the Bush administration’s objectives to: *carry out pre-emptive strikes, advance military primacy, endorse a coalition of the willing, and the spread of democracy*, had an overwhelming influence on US foreign policy formation from the executive branch to key US departments and agencies. This doctrine overhauled the possibility of diplomatic and peacemaking initiatives to serve as a first option to engage the Muslim world after 9/11. Its central focus to reaching its objectives was based entirely on employing staunch military force in order to install an American hegemony in throughout Central and South Asia. In taking this approach, the Bush administration would forgo making a post-secular recognition that a) recognised the emergence of religious issues in international affairs and b) went as far as to setup a socio-political forum that incorporated the religious voice in order to welcome its perspectives into the US policymaking discussion. In its 2007 recommendation on how the USG system might improve its relations with the post-secular to enhance peacemaking opportunities, the Center for Strategic and International Studies’ researchers suggested that the USG:

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<sup>353</sup> National Security Strategy 2006, 11.



- i) *Create a policy imperative that encourages broad public discussion;*
- ii) *Provide clarity and give legal guidance for engaging with religion;*
- iii) *Increase knowledge of religious dynamics; and*
- iv) *Sensitise programming to religious realities.*

In considering the CSIS' suggestions, this thesis will shift here to examine how the doctrine (absent of making a post-secular recognition) influenced US diplomatic practises and the development of key foreign policies irrespective of Muslim publics. In making this review, Chapter 5 will answer two additional questions: "What often occurs within the foreign policy environment when broad international religious affairs are not taken seriously?" and "What is the outcome when a post-secular communication approach is not implemented to directly engage the vast majority of the Muslim world within a diplomatic setting?" In such cases, ad-hoc communication resources such as public diplomacy and nation-branding with respect to the USG between 2001 and 2008 serve as the principal options.

## CHAPTER 5

### STATE DEPARTMENT OUTREACH TO THE MUSLIM-WORLD AFTER 9/11

#### 5.1. Introduction

Months before September 11 programming efforts by the US Department of State (State) were implemented to raise US favourability ratings in the Muslim world. None, however, included employing direct communication approaches between religious and political officials to restore relations at a grassroots-level. As a key department, State's approach after 9/11 was to assure the implementation of the Bush Doctrine by reintroducing a pre-existing public diplomacy and nation-branding campaign, which effectively succeeded at:

- a) Attempting to raise US favourability throughout the Muslim-world;
- b) Selling US foreign policy and the '*American Story*' through public diplomacy and nation-branding programs; and
- c) Ensuring the overall objectives of the Bush administration to disrupt and dismantle the extreme minority segment of the Muslim world by containing the spread of political Islam through third-party programming initiatives and foreign aid.

Chapter 5 uncovers the chosen communication practises by the State Department to engage the Muslim world. In doing so, this chapter will clear up two points: i) the likely outcome when neither an office or trained professionals are employed to analyse or engage broad international religious affairs that stress US-Muslim world relations, and ii) the

importance behind a strategic communication approach that directly engages the religious voice of the Muslim world. In establishing this case, a review of how State has historically addressed religious affairs is made, in order to determine why its initial efforts were unable to touch the core of Islamic society.

## **5.2. Limited appeal: *The Office of International Religious Freedom***

So often, the USG misses the mark when religious issues are central in international affairs. Since the latter part of the twentieth-century, especially during the Iranian revolution, failed American foreign policies would lead to poor decision-making. This setback also occurred during the 1990s with America's reluctance to recognise the ethnic impact between Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda, and is even still relevant with regards to present-day cross-border religio-tribal relations and political systems across the continent of Africa. However, attempts at addressing specific issues in international affairs are somewhat of a new phenomenon for the US Department of State. Thus, the State Department's most notable office with a narrow agenda to address specific religious concerns is located in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor.

The International Religious Freedom Act,<sup>354</sup> passed in 1998, "established the promotion of religious freedom as a US foreign policy objective [and mandated] the creation of an Office of International Religious Freedom (IRF)."<sup>355</sup> Further responsibilities of the office have included mandating all US embassies to produce a comprehensive final report on

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<sup>354</sup> See, *The US International Religious Freedom Act* [document online]; available from [http://www.uscirf.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=349&Itemid=1](http://www.uscirf.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=349&Itemid=1); Internet, accessed 20 August 2009.

<sup>355</sup> Ibid., 12. See, Office of International Religious Freedom [online website]; available from [www.state.gov/g/drl/irf/](http://www.state.gov/g/drl/irf/); Internet, accessed 20 February 2008.

the status of religious freedom, which, along with the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, provides foreign policy insight to the President and USG key agencies on Countries of Particular Concern.<sup>356</sup>

The religious freedom agenda was promoted in the mid-1990s by activists who focused on the importance of preventing Christian persecution abroad and a broader coalition of faith-based and human rights groups rallied around the larger religious freedom issue. The original bill introduced in the House was entitled the “Freedom from Religious Persecution Act”... [However] many in the government affirmed that current religious freedom activities remain overly focused on addressing religious persecution and that the religious freedom policy has sometimes been viewed as Christian-biased.<sup>357</sup>

Since the mid 1990s, the USG has created programmes or initiatives whose titles have included the term “religion” or “faith”, but their agenda has often fallen short of reaching toward a forward-thinking project supportive of inter-religious relations, religio-political analysis, conflict resolution or staffing and training key personnel within the USG system to address critical international religious affairs. For example, this was the case with President Bush’s White House Faith-based and Community Initiatives (and currently with President Obama’s White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships). Both have served as hubs for American faith-based organisations while providing public funding to improve social welfare initiatives across America. Thus, neither office has committed itself to critical analysis on religious and political affairs that influence US foreign policymaking (as private Washington think-tanks). Of the fifteen US cabinet-level departments in the executive branch with inter-agency specific foreign policy agendas, to date neither has a mission centred on the research and development of religious and political affairs – in an era where

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<sup>356</sup>For example, in the 2006 Annual Report on Religious Freedom, eight countries (Myanmar/Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia and Sudan) were re-listed and Uzbekistan was listed for the first time as a CPC; *Final Report on International Religious Freedom* (2006) [document online]; available from [www.state.gov/g/drl/irf/rpt](http://www.state.gov/g/drl/irf/rpt); Internet, accessed 20 February 2008; see also *The 2009 Report on International Religious Freedom* [document online] available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2009/index.htm> Internet; 2 November 2009.

<sup>357</sup> Liora Danan and Alice Hunt, “Mixed Blessings: US Government Engagement with Religion in Conflict-Prone Settings.” *CSIS Report*. (Washington: CSIS Press, 2007), 11, 35.

religious violence is a chief concern to US foreign relations. Nor has the executive branch of government taken up the challenge to build an office or department focused on these issues and consider the approach taken by the Departments of Labor, Treasury, Energy or Defence which recruits, trains and deploys inter-agency attachments to US embassies to carry out agency-specific tasks.

However, if the USG were earnest about peacemaking, conflict resolution and religious analysis issues, researchers suggest, it would consider the H.R. 808 Congressional Bill for the establishment of a Department of Peace and Non-violence (DOP).<sup>358</sup> Setting up a US Department of Peace (S. 1756) was first proposed in the US Senate by Senator Mark Dayton (D-MN) on September 22, 2005, (but returned to the House; on February 7, 2007: Congressional Representative Dennis Kucinich reintroduced it (H.R. 808) where it is currently gathering legislative support). H.R. 808, as a ground-breaking Congressional proposal, concentrates on the cornerstones of promoting peace and non-violence in establishing a comprehensive Peace Department. (Such a department was first proposed more than two centuries ago (in 1792) by Benjamin Rush and Benjamin Banneker. Rush's proposal, published in Banneker's *Almanac*, was seen as an additional executive branch

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<sup>358</sup> "Department of Peace and Nonviolence Act – Establishes a Department of Peace and Nonviolence, which shall be headed by a Secretary of Peace and Nonviolence appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. Sets forth the mission of the Department, including to: (1) hold peace as an organising principle; (2) endeavor to promote justice and democratic principles to expand human rights; and (3) develop policies that promote national and international conflict prevention, nonviolent intervention, mediation, peaceful resolution of conflict, and structured mediation of conflict. Establishes in the Department the Intergovernmental Advisory Council on Peace and Nonviolence, which shall provide assistance and make recommendations to the Secretary and the President concerning intergovernmental policies relating to peace and nonviolent conflict resolution. Transfers to the Department the functions, assets, and personnel of various federal agencies. Establishes a Federal Interagency Committee on Peace and Nonviolence. Establishes Peace Day. Urges all citizens to observe and celebrate the blessings of peace and endeavor to create peace on such day." H.R. 808 – 110th Congress (2007): Department of Peace and Nonviolence Act, *GovTrack.us (database of federal legislation)* [article online]; available from <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h110-808&tab=summary>; Internet, accessed 20 August 2008.

department to juxtapose with the then-newly constructed War Department (Department of Defence)).<sup>359</sup> H.R. 808 proposes that the DOP should be led by a Secretary of Peace, who must set its tactical agenda. This agenda includes: working proactively and interactively with each branch of the USG on all policy matters relating to conditions of peace; serving as a delegate to the National Security Council; drawing from the intellectual and spiritual wealth of the US private, public and non-governmental sectors for the development of coherent policy; and monitoring and analysing the causative principles of conflict while making policy recommendations for developing and maintaining peaceful international conduct.<sup>360</sup>

Despite having an office of International Religious Freedom which serves as the only outlet at the State Department to address international religious concerns, IRF has met criticism from within and from former administrators about the way that it prioritises concerns. US diplomats, on occasion, have suggested that “the issue of [religious freedom] has often been limited conceptually and structurally.”<sup>361</sup> As indicated in the IRF mandate, the primary goal of the office is to promote religious freedom as a core objective of US foreign policy. However, in recent years, with international attention placed on human rights and the Abu Graib and Guantanamo Bay prisons torture issues, additional focus has been placed on religious persecution and support for freeing religious prisoners. Critics of the IRF suggest that this redirection currently limits and narrows the attention available for meeting the initial IRF goal of promoting religious freedom and places it on more formidable issues for the present international community. Alarmed by the current direction taken by the IRF, former

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<sup>359</sup> It was meant to encourage – as both agreed – a “conscientious study for peace” in an age preoccupied by slavery and emerging internal strife. Unfortunately, the Rush-Banneker proposal lay dormant for two centuries; see the 1792 proposal for a Department of Peace in Chapter Appendix.

<sup>360</sup> H.R. 808 – 110th Congress (2007): Department of Peace and Nonviolence Act, *GovTrack.us* (database of federal legislation) [article online]; available from <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/billtext.xpd?bill=h110-808>; Internet, accessed 20 August 2008.

<sup>361</sup> Liora Danan and Alice Hunt, *Mixed Blessings: US Government Engagement with Religion*, 12.

director Thomas Farr suggested in a 2006 lecture on *Religion & Public Life* that “Over the long term, this almost exclusive focus on persecution and prisoners puts all three goals at risk.”<sup>362</sup> While ongoing internal debate on IRF is taking place, there is still the concern that within the USG system one agency or department capable of communicating directly to religious (and tribal) communities on behalf of the USG today does not exist.

The IRF’s limited appeal brings up a unique tension. Not having on board resources, a department, agency, or office to deal with broad international religious affairs, beyond those of religious freedom, contributes to potential communicative failure, considering the fact that most predominantly-Muslim countries (and those with significant religious populations) have a Ministry of Religious Affairs with trained diplomats that deal with broad international religious issues. This is the case today, for example, with countries such as: Turkey, Pakistan, Oman, Burma, Myanmar, China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Greece, Iraq, Brunei and Saudi Arabia – all of which have Ministries of Religion led by a Minister of Religious Affairs to address religious issues on the international stage. Not having a forward-thinking body or Ministry to deal with inter-religious relations, peacemaking or religio-political analysis, in effect stifles USG outreach capabilities within the Muslim world (especially after 2001). If most Muslim countries have Ministries with specific departments to address these issues with trained officials in inter-religious relations, conflict resolution, and religio-political analysis, what equivalence would this have within the State Department’s Office of International Religious Freedom (whose officials are generally cultural affairs officers limited in resources, and are based solely in Washington, DC)? None. Hence, acknowledging this limitation, and realising its inability to thoroughly engage the Muslim world on a nuanced-level, post-9/11 efforts by the State Department to communicate

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<sup>362</sup> Thomas F. Farr, “Legislating International Religious Freedom” event transcript, *The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life* (November 20, 2006).

with Muslim audiences were solely centred on raising favourability by employing public diplomacy and nation-branding resources through a pre-existing programme introduced by the Office of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.

### **5.3. Reintroducing a pre-existing plan: *The “Brand America” campaign***

In carrying out the agenda of the Bush administration, ad-hoc communication approaches were employed at the State Department as a benchmark for engaging the Muslim world prior to 9/11. A strategic programme geared toward facilitating US-Muslim world relations did not exist at the time, nor was there a separate department, agency, or office equipped with highly-trained USG officials that dealt specifically with conflict resolution, inter-religious relations or with broad religious affairs. Thus, five months prior to September 11, State Department efforts were implemented by then Secretary of State Colin Powell to employ a robust foreign policy option to raise US favourability ratings throughout the Muslim world. This robust effort was the Brand America campaign – a government-run marketing campaign to bolster America’s image among international Muslim audiences.<sup>363</sup>

According to Powell in 2001, this Brand America campaign was not about “just selling [U.S. foreign policy] in the old USIA way” but was about “branding foreign policy, marketing the [State Department], marketing American values to the world – and not just

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<sup>363</sup> See Simon Anholt and Jeremy Hildreth, *Brand America: The Mother of all Brands* (United Kingdom: Cyan Books, 2004); Dick Martin, *Rebuilding Brand America: What we Must Do to Restore our Reputation and Safeguard the Future of American Business Abroad* (New York: AMACOM Books, 2007); Since 2001, most marketing or public diplomacy campaigns which focus attention on making America more appealing or improving the image of an American-based consumer product is as well referred to as Branding America.



putting out pamphlets.”<sup>364</sup> Unfortunately, the events of September 11, 2001 would inevitably change the course of US-Muslim world engagement; attention would shift from 1) simply making attempts at raising US favourability ratings among Muslim publics to 2) selling American foreign policy and American values in order to pacify the vast majority of the Muslim world after 9/11. It is clear that a strategic long-term plan of action was not assessed, nor was serious analysis on how critical religious infrastructures in the Muslim world could serve as resources to improve foreign relations given. This would be the case, in part, because of the Bush Doctrine’s influence (regarding exemption to take up a post-secular recognition). In this case, Cold War, nation-branding and public diplomacy resources would serve as State’s new communication practises. Regarding public diplomacy as a communication resource,

[it would go on to deal] with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. [It would encompass] dimensions of international relation beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by government of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with another; the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy; communication between those whose job is communication, such as diplomats and foreign correspondents; and the process of intercultural communications.<sup>365</sup>

Unlike traditional diplomacy, public diplomacy goes beyond general conversation with nation-state officials and diplomats to establishing a broader conversation with foreign audiences to implement the art of persuasion. America’s public diplomacy machine has utilised this force in many areas, whether by working with private sector groups or

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<sup>364</sup> Jami A. Fullerton and Alice G. Kendrick, *Advertising War on Terror: The Story of the US State Department’s Shared Values Initiative* (Washington: Marquette Books, 2006), 20.

<sup>365</sup> Nicholas J. Cull, “Public Diplomacy before Gullion”, *The Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, ed. Nancy Snow and Phillip M. Taylor (New York: Routledge, 2009), 19; see also United States Information Agency Alumni Association, *What is Public Diplomacy?*, [document online]; available from [www.publicdiplomacy.org/1htm](http://www.publicdiplomacy.org/1htm); Internet, accessed 1 March 2008.

implementing its message through exchange programmes or in an effort to shape public opinion. With respect to nation-branding and public diplomacy together,

Both concepts have been defined and conceptualised as communication with a strong emphasis on the nation as the unit of analysis. As two-way communication is replacing one-way communication, relationship building is often mentioned as a means to achieve two-way communication or as an element of public diplomacy or nation-branding. Instead of communication (in the case of public diplomacy) and image creation (in the case of nation-branding), relationship building should be the central concept and ultimate goal of both public diplomacy and nation-branding whereas communication would be only a means – albeit very vital – to build and maintain relationships rather than an end in itself.<sup>366</sup>

Thus, neither communicative resource has existed without criticism. Sue Curry Jansen

criticises nation-branding for its *raison d'être*, which is commercial ambition as it transforms civic space into calculative space, constituted by marketing data and decision making rather than conceived in terms of social relations or governance. In her critical article she described nation-branding as a risky business which can easily backfire, since its success and effectiveness depends on the intuitive knowledge of industry 'creatives' and its calculative and manipulative approach and reductive logic 'dumbs down' public discourse. Jensen argues that nation-branding is the engine of neo-liberalism and its methodology is anti-democratic, even fascist [sic!].<sup>367</sup>

However, this fierce attack would not sway Powell's new choice to appoint Charlotte Beers as Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. In taking steps to employ this "Brand America" campaign, the approach of Beers – the "Queen of Madison Avenue" and a former commercial advertising executive with Ogilvy & Mather advertising agency, New York – would be to integrate brand management applications with public diplomacy and

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<sup>366</sup> Gyrogy Szondi, *Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding: Conceptual Similarities and Differences* [article online] available from [http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2008/20081022\\_pap\\_in\\_dip\\_nation\\_branding.pdf](http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2008/20081022_pap_in_dip_nation_branding.pdf); Internet, accessed 9 April 2009. 27. "Many countries' public diplomacy, however, relies on two-way communication, where country A's public diplomacy efforts in country B are as important as country B's public diplomacy in country A. This symmetrical approach enables dialogue to take place and can result in cooperation and mutual understanding rather than competition." Ibid., 16.

<sup>367</sup> Gyrogy Szondi, *Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding: Conceptual Similarities and Differences* [article online] available from [http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2008/20081022\\_pap\\_in\\_dip\\_nation\\_branding.pdf](http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2008/20081022_pap_in_dip_nation_branding.pdf); Internet, accessed 9 April 2009. 31; see also Sue Curry Jansen "Designer Nations: Neo-liberal Nation Branding – Brand Estonia", *Social Identities*, 14, No. 1 (2008): 121-142.

nation-branding resources to foster mass programming efforts to approach Muslim publics to improve America's image. As did her predecessor Evelyn Lieberman (under the Clinton Administration), Beers used her assumed authority of three public diplomacy bureaus – the Bureaus of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), International Information Programs (IIP) and Public Affairs – to carry out this task. Five points are clear as we move forward to examine Beers's and Karen P. Hughes's numerous (but failed) programming attempts:

- i) The State Department's Brand America campaign would exist months prior to 9/11;
- ii) The campaign served as a pre-existing programme to raise US favourability ratings among Muslim audiences;
- iii) After 9/11 a reluctance to re-evaluate/and reorganise the current public diplomacy campaign to address the Muslim world more directly and strategically was not considered;
- iv) This reluctance would result in the State Department taking a pre-existing plan and employing it to a new problem; and
- v) The State Department's employment of the pre-existing Brand America campaign contributed to the formation of a two-way communication problem between the US government and its foreign policy approach toward international Muslim audiences.

By reviewing the communicative programmes and practises introduced by Charlotte Beers and Karen P. Hughes, we are able to better understand how efforts between 2001-2008 were structurally and communicatively limited. In effect, their approaches would result in a far deeper decline of America's image and favourability rating by 2008.

### 5.3.1. Programming attempts: *Charlotte Beers*

During her brief service of one year as Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs at the State Department, Charlotte Beers introduced three public diplomacy programmes to aid the US State Department's efforts to connect with Muslim audiences in order to raise US favourability. They included the Shared Values Initiative (SVI) (a mass media public diplomacy and nation-branding campaign); the *Hi* youth magazine (directed at Arab young people in the Middle East and North Africa); and the Partnership for Leadership, (a teen exchange programme for young adults). While having a unique potential to reach Muslim audiences, these three campaigns were eventually terminated and replaced with similar programming initiatives by former Undersecretary Karen P. Hughes in 2003. The task of setting up widespread brand management campaigns to market American values and foreign policy to Muslims was not an easy sell for Beers to State Department diplomats (aside from Secretary Powell). Many of Beers' campaigns were criticised by US diplomats for their use of brand management approaches in addressing a large, culturally-based audience comprised of a traditional value system that carried mixed reviews of America after 9/11. Defending Beers in simplistic terms while addressing critics, Powell satirically implied, "[she] got me to buy Uncle Ben's rice, so what's wrong with getting somebody who knows how to sell something... we (the State Department) are selling a product. We need someone who can re-brand American foreign policy [and] re-brand American diplomacy."<sup>368</sup>

Beers' first major programming attempt was the Shared Values Initiative media campaign, which cost \$15 million. The objectives of the SVI media campaign were to

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<sup>368</sup> Jami A. Fullerton and Alice G. Kendrick, *Advertising War on Terror*, 24.

“highlight the common values and beliefs shared by Muslims and Americans, demonstrate that America is not at war with Islam and stimulate dialogue between the United States and the Muslim world.”<sup>369</sup> Despite State’s attempts to reach a broad Muslim audience by emphasising common values between American society and the Muslim world, the SVI media campaign and “television advertisement turned into embarrassments when countries such as Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan refused to air them.”<sup>370</sup> For example, SVI’s centrepiece television campaign, which it hoped would be broadcast on multiple occasions, turned out to have lacklustre appeal and was only aired briefly through the winter months of 2002-2003.

This multimedia campaign also included a booklet on Muslim life in America, speaker tours, an interactive Web site to promote dialogue between Muslims in the United States and abroad and other informational programs. The initial phase of the Shared Values Initiative was aired in six languages in Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia and Kuwait, as well as on pan-Arab media. The State estimates that 288 million people were exposed to these messages, but television stations in several countries, including Egypt and Lebanon, refused to air them for political and other reasons.<sup>371</sup>

After the SVI media campaign failure, additional initiatives were introduced. With a budget of \$4.5 million, Beers launched *Hi* magazine throughout the Middle East and North Africa. *Hi* publications were produced by a private sector firm, with the State Department estimating its “circulation to be about 50,000 in the Arab world. One official in Egypt, however, said that of 2,500 copies the embassy distributed monthly to newsstands in Cairo, often as many as 2,000 copies were returned unsold.”<sup>372</sup> In effect, the *Hi* publication, according to Middle Eastern critics, lacked substance and meaningful content. While the magazine, “focused on

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<sup>369</sup> US Government Accountability Office (GAO), Report to the Chairman, Subcommittee on Science, the Departments of State, Justice and Commerce and Related Agencies, House Committee on Appropriations, US *Public Diplomacy: State Department Efforts to Engage Muslim Audiences Lack Certain Communication Elements and Face Persistent Challenges*, GAO-06-535 (May 2006), 11.

<sup>370</sup> Liam Kennedy and Scott Lucas, “Enduring Freedom: Public Diplomacy and U.S. Foreign Policy” in *American Quarterly*, 2 (2005):320.

<sup>371</sup> GAO, Report to the Chairman, US *Public Diplomacy: State Department Efforts to Engage Muslim Audiences Lack Certain Communication Elements and Face Persistent Challenges*, 11.

<sup>372</sup> Ibid, 12.

articles with subjects like internet dating, snowboarding and yoga [its content was] criticised at home and abroad.”<sup>373</sup> Religious leadership and academics within Muslim publics regarded the magazine as an insult. The magazine went on to dampen the fact that critical social issues between the US and the Muslim world were occurring, and, in addition, it overlooked consideration to both the religious and cultural dimensions of the Muslim world by presenting a Western portrait to Middle Eastern youth. The third and final initiative Beers implemented (the \$150 million Partner for Leadership Program) was eventually suspended after three years while avenues were investigated as to how the State Department might reach more young adults, while lowering the cost of operations.

In defence of Beers’s public diplomacy and nation-branding approach to raise US favourability, researchers Fullerton and Kendrick affirm, in the text *Advertising the War on Terror*, “We needed to let people know that the idea of using advertising-based communication and other modern marketing techniques might be an appropriate and effective strategy in the war on terror after all.”<sup>374</sup> On the contrary, a May 2006 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report indicated later that “U.S. embassies involved in outreach to Muslim audiences lacked some of the vital communication elements used in the private sector to engage Muslim communities.” Regardless of the State Department’s ability to employ brand management communication approaches and its willingness to engage Muslim publics, such efforts proved unreliable, creating a unique space today for varied alternatives. Such alternatives might include engaging post-secular resources and critical religious infrastructures. Of GAO’s pressing results, the office recommended that while the State

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<sup>373</sup> Liora Danan and Alice Hunt, *Mixed Blessings*, 16; see also, Elliott Colla and Chris Toensing, “Never Too Soon to Say Goodbye,” *Middle East Report Online*, (September 2003), [online article]; available from [http://www.merip.org/mero/interventions/colla\\_interv.html](http://www.merip.org/mero/interventions/colla_interv.html); Internet, accessed 20 February 2008.

<sup>374</sup> Jami A. Fullerton and Alice G. Kendrick, *Advertising the War on Terror*, 14.

Department incorporated communication elements used by the private sector, these elements should include “having core messages, segmented target audiences, detailed strategies and tactics, in-depth research and analysis to monitor and evaluate results and a communication plan which brings it all together.”<sup>375</sup> To a degree, Mary Tutwiler would contribute to State efforts to reach Muslim audiences after Beers’s resignation in October 2003 (in her half-year stint as Undersecretary), and similar efforts would be made later by Karen P. Hughes, who would replace Tutwiler in July 2005.

### **5.3.2. Programming attempts: *Karen P. Hughes***

To date, Karen P. Hughes (former director of communications for George Bush as Governor) has served the longest term as Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs (September 2005-July 2007). Hughes would contribute to the State Department’s development of numerous brand management programmes during her term. Like Beers and Tutwiler, Hughes would continue the attempts to carry out the Brand America campaign to raise US favourability by persuading Muslim audiences that American foreign policy was in the best interest of the Muslim world. To reach this goal, pre-existing State Department academic and professional exchange programmes were expanded and massive communication efforts geared toward international Muslim publics were implemented. As Undersecretary of State, Hughes introduced three imperatives to ensure the success of her attempt at this process. They were set up to introduce to Muslim publics the values found in the US: freedom, justice and respect for all. The three areas Hughes primarily focused on were “expanding academic and professional exchange programmes, modernising State and

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<sup>375</sup> GAO, Report to the Chairman, US *Public Diplomacy: State Department Efforts to Engage Muslim Audiences Lack Certain Communication Elements and Face Persistent Challenges*, 4.

inter-government agency communication efforts and expanding US foreign assistance by placing a direct emphasis on promoting a ‘diplomacy of deeds’’.<sup>376</sup>

To ensure that efforts were being made to meet these three goals, the Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) was created in April 2006 and headed by Hughes. The high-level PCC was responsible for convening senior-level USG officials from all agencies for the strategic planning of new US programmes in predominantly Muslim countries. Similar sub-programmes were also developed, including the Rapid Response Unit, which monitors the coverage of US policies and anti-American propaganda on foreign media outlets; the establishment of three international Media hubs located in London, Brussels and Dubai, which gives US government officials easy access to foreign audiences via television or radio; and the Counterterrorism Communication Center (CTCC), set up in 2007, which aims to counter terrorist messaging which may hinder international support for US national objectives. In reviewing the State Department’s practices and programme areas implemented by Hughes, this section will consider four specific areas of service: academic and professional exchange programmes; reform through foreign aid; and Hughes’s attempt to approach the religious dimension.

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<sup>376</sup> In a June 2007 address at the Washington Foreign Press Center, Hughes implied that a “‘diplomacy of deeds’ was [a] concrete [way] in which we [the US] are partnering with people around the world to help them improve their lives, particularly in the areas of education and health and economic opportunity.” Karen Hughes, “Foreign Press Center Briefing: Expanding Outreach to the Muslim World,” *Remarks to the Washington Foreign Press Center* (June 27, 2007) [document online]; available from <http://2002-2009-fpc.state.gov/87485.htm>; Internet, accessed 20 February 2009.



### (a) Academic and Professional Exchange Programmes

According to Giles Scott-Smith of the Roosevelt Study Centre, “The ability of individuals to cross national boundaries has been a matter of major consequence since the arrival of the nation-state, and exchanges are naturally no exception. Even the most politically neutral of exchanges, such as those between high schools, have either political intent behind their creation or are promoted from the purpose of developing cross-border relations that can subsequently lead to political outcomes, such as a reduction in conflict.”<sup>377</sup> In the case we are considering here, the first programme attempt introduced by Hughes was set to expand pre-existing academic and professional exchanges (often referred to as *people-to-people* programming). Historically, many of State’s professional exchanges have serviced the State Department by promoting US foreign policy while targeting specific audiences. Two specific programming initiatives that were expanded to target academic, religious and professional leadership throughout the Muslim world (sponsored through ECA and IIP) were the International Visitor Leadership Program<sup>378</sup> and the flagship US Fulbright Scholars programme.<sup>379</sup> To ensure Powell’s Brand America campaign was carried out, much of

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<sup>377</sup> Giles Scott-Smith, “Exchange Programs and Public Diplomacy”, *The Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, ed. Nancy Snow and Phillip M. Taylor (New York: Routledge, 2009), 50.

<sup>378</sup> See the US Department of State Educational Exchanges [online website]; available from <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/ivp/>; Internet, accessed 20 February 2008. See also International Visitor Leadership Program [online website]; available from <http://www.nciv.org/>; Internet, accessed 20 February 2008.

<sup>379</sup> “Since 2006, enrollment in State affiliated programs for academics, professionals and cultural exchanges has expanded in the last three years from 27,000 participants to 40,000 with an estimation of 50,000 in late 2008.” Karen Hughes, *Foreign Press Center Briefing: Outreach to the Muslim World*, (June 27 2007). Emphasising this recent effort, the Office of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs points out that “The US issued a record number of 591,000 student and exchange visas in 2006 and is actively partnering with America’s higher education community to send a clear message.” US Department of State, “Major Accomplishments 2005-2007,” *Office of Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs*, (Washington D.C.: July 2008). This clear message is linked to the overall strategic imperative outlined by the Office of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, whose aim

Hughes' time as Undersecretary was given to launching programmes geared toward teenage Muslim audiences. Other major academic and professional exchanges launched under her tenure were:

- The **Youth Exchange and Study Program**<sup>380</sup>, launched in 2003 (after Charlotte Beers's resignation) was set up to give high school students from predominantly Muslim countries an opportunity to spend up to two years on academic exchange in the US.
- The **English ACCESS Micro Scholarship**<sup>381</sup>, launched in 2004, centres on teaching English to 'non-elite' Muslim teenagers in over 50 countries and has a current base of over 32,000 participants.
- The **National Security Language Initiative**<sup>382</sup>, launched in 2006, is an exchange programme between American students and foreign teachers to teach and/or study critical foreign languages.
- The **Community College Initiative**<sup>383</sup>, launched in 2006 by Dina Habib Powell<sup>384</sup>, which (in 2007) aimed to bring 1,000 Egyptian students to study in US community colleges for up to one year.
- The **Global Cultural Initiative**<sup>385</sup>, launched in 2006, has contributed to promoting 'cultural diplomacy' by advancing cultural partnerships between American and foreign artists.

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here is to promote core US values and foreign policy to young people, women, academics and professionals in the Muslim world.

<sup>380</sup> See also Youth Exchange and Study Program [official online website]; available from <http://www.yesprograms.org/>; Internet, accessed 17 February 2008.

<sup>381</sup> See The English Access Microscholarship Program [online website]; available from <http://exchanges.state.gov/englishteaching/eam.html>; Internet, accessed 21 August 2009.

<sup>382</sup> US Department of State National Security Language Initiative [website]; available from <http://exchanges.state.gov/nsli.html>; Internet, accessed 1 September 2009.

<sup>383</sup> Office of the Spokesman, *State Department Launches Community College Scholarship Exchange Initiative with Egypt* (12 December 2006) [online article]; from <http://www.communitycollegetimes.com/article.cfm?TopicId=35&ArticleId=38>; Internet, accessed 13 March 2008.

<sup>384</sup> Dina Habib Powell, is the former Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs.

<sup>385</sup> Bureau of Public Affairs, *Fact Sheet: The Global Cultural Initiative* (22 September 2006) [online article]; from <http://www.america.gov/st/washfile->

- The **Iraqi Young Leaders Exchange Program**<sup>386</sup>, launched in 2006, facilitated the recruitment of 200 Iraqi students to the US between 2007 and 2008 for educational exchanges centred around leadership development and educational training.

## (b) Mass Communication

Secondly, Hughes focused on meeting strategic State Department imperatives to raise favourability and connect with Muslims, by expanding mass communication efforts that included implementing brand management resources. In an effort to reach a broader, but much younger audience (in multiple languages), Hughes introduced communication projects that included utilising cyber-activity, television, radio and multimedia resources. (In keeping with this transition, to date, US ambassadors and diplomats are provided with media training through the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) to promote pro-American sentiments in the Muslim world.) For example:

In May 2007, [State officials in Europe] did 45 media interviews and top officials such as Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff, Assistant Secretary of State Daniel Fried, Assistant Secretary David Welch, Undersecretary Hughes, as well as Secretary Rice, appeared in multiple overseas media interviews. In June 2007, USG officials made 89 appearances on Middle East media, including Al Hurra, Radio Sawa, BBC Arabic, Al Jazeera English, Al Jazeera Arabic, VOA Persian and Al Arabiya.<sup>387</sup>

Introducing key State officials to the international eye became a public diplomacy tactic widely practiced by Hughes in her attempt at combating Anti Americanism toward US

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[english/2006/September/20060925152441jmnandeirf0.3944361.html](http://english/2006/September/20060925152441jmnandeirf0.3944361.html); Internet, accessed 20 February 2009; See also “US Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Global Cultural Initiative” [website]; from <http://exchanges.state.gov/>; Internet, accessed 20 May 2009.

<sup>386</sup> See the Office of the Spokesman, *President Bush Announces Iraqi Young Leaders Exchange Program* (25 July 2006) [online article] available from <http://merln.ndu.edu/archivepdf/iraq/State/69492.pdf>; Internet, accessed 14 March 2008.

<sup>387</sup> US Department of State, “Major Accomplishments 2005-2007,” *Office of Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs*, (Washington D.C.: July 2008), 14.

policy.<sup>388</sup> In addition, this method was used to prompt dialogue between State officials and international media outlets.

However, the majority of Hughes's brand management efforts were given to younger audiences and women within the Muslim world. Efforts grew tremendously between 2006 and 2007 with the creation of a flagship website, *America.gov*. This and other sites targeting Muslim youth provide an in-depth look at American life, international news from a US perspective, foreign policy and the benefits of practising democracy. Continuing the attempt to plant a seed in younger audiences, the research finds that Hughes and her team placed significantly more emphasis on targeting Muslim youth and female audiences. This approach was employed with the hope of developing a younger generation of Muslims who would be more accepting to US foreign policy and America's value system. For example, today this implemented in Greetings from America (GFA)<sup>389</sup>, a cultural exchange and youth-based radio programme which charts the experiences of both Pakistani and Indonesian foreign exchange students who participate in the exchange. Launched in 2005, it continues to encourage Muslim teens to communicate their story to younger audiences in their home country. GFA, at present, reaches "24 million 15-25 year old radio listeners in seven Indonesian media markets... [and] three million 15-25 year old listeners in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Karachi and Lahore."<sup>390</sup>

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<sup>388</sup> Ali S. Wyne, "Public Opinion and Power", *The Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, ed. Nancy Snow and Phillip M. Taylor (New York: Routledge, 2009), 39.

<sup>389</sup> See, Greetings from America [online website] available from <http://www.greetingsfromamerica.org/>; Internet, accessed 22 March 2008.

<sup>390</sup> US Department of State, "Major Accomplishments 2005-2007", 16.

### (c) Reform through foreign aid

The third goal in Branding America included Hughes's "diplomacy of deeds" programme. In remarks given on June 2007 at the Washington Foreign Press Center, she noted that a "diplomacy of deeds" would be one of "the concrete ways in which [the US would partner] with people around the world to help them improve their lives, particularly in the areas of education and health and economic opportunity."<sup>391</sup> Promoting a "diplomacy of deeds" is indicated by the Office of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs as a premiere area of US public diplomacy; but, considering its impact of reforming Muslim countries through foreign aid, it is the most important. Most efforts during Bush's presidency were made possible by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and private sector outlets. Each year, USAID manages around \$10 billion in US foreign aid, which supports USAID and State Department projects.

A range of projects which sought to reshape America's image and bolster US favourability through foreign assistance were: *the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief*<sup>392</sup>, *the US Middle East Breast Cancer Awareness and Research Partnership*<sup>393</sup>, *the US Malaria Initiative*<sup>394</sup> and *the use of Navy Hospital Ships*<sup>395</sup> (for disaster relief after the

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<sup>391</sup> Karen Hughes, "Foreign Press Center Briefing: Outreach to the Muslim World" (June 27, 2007).

<sup>392</sup> Office of the Secretary, *Fact Sheet: The President's Emergency Plan on AIDS Relief* (29 January 2003) [online article]; from <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030129-1.html>; Internet, accessed 20 February 2009.

<sup>393</sup> Office of the Spokesman, *US -Middle East Partnership for Breast Cancer Awareness and Research* (12 June 2006) [online article]; <http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2006/June/20060612155002hmnietsua0.6990473.html>; Internet, accessed 20 February 2009.

<sup>394</sup> See *Fact Sheet: President's Malaria Initiative* [online article]; from <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/malaria/>; Internet, accessed 12 February 2009.

<sup>395</sup> See Admiral Gary Roughead, Commander, US Pacific Fleet *Hospital Ship Mercy Deployment/Current Pacific Command Operations* [online article]; available from <http://2002-2009-fpc.state.gov/73140.htm>; Internet, accessed 12 February 2008. See also, Jane A. Morse, *U.S. Navy*

Tsunami). As a USG agency, USAID does not allocate funding according to a country's religion, but according to acting USAID Deputy Administrator James Kunder, "Over 50 percent of total US foreign assistance managed by USAID [in recent years] goes to countries with Muslim majority populations."<sup>396</sup> Take, for instance, the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), which was set up in December 2005 as a platform to oversee the vast majority of American foreign aid to be distributed throughout the Middle East. Its founding objectives were to ensure fair disbursement of funds across the Middle East region, while promoting within each country political, economic, educational and women's empowerment reform. "From the 1950s through 2001, US bilateral economic assistance to the Middle East and North Africa focused on promoting regional stability by providing funding for large bilateral military and economic programmes, chiefly in Egypt, Israel and Jordan and by fostering development."<sup>397</sup> Under this third goal to raise US favourability ratings, billions of US dollars in funding have gone towards restoring US confidence among Muslim audiences by working with NGO and private sector outlets which attempted to strengthen the ties between Muslim audiences and the USG through political and social reform.

Maintaining Bush's compassionate conservatism campaign to outsource social welfare initiatives, in the fiscal year 2002-2003 MEPI reported distributing 33 percent of \$129 million to Middle Eastern NGO and private sector organisations to disburse grants to local companies. "According to MEPI, their grants are intended to support innovative ideas which can be implemented quickly to produce concrete results, such as increasing women's

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*Hospital Ships Sail to Aid Tsunami Victims* [online article]; available from <http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2005/January/20050124151320ajesrom0.1452753.html>; Internet, accessed 12 February 2008.

<sup>396</sup> Karen Hughes, "Foreign Press Center Briefing: Outreach to the Muslim World" (June 27, 2007).

<sup>397</sup> US Government Accountability Office (GAO), Report to Congressional Requesters, *Middle East Partnership Initiative Offers Tools for Supporting Reform, but Project Monitoring Needs Improvement*, GAO-05-711 (August 2005), 6.

political participation”.<sup>398</sup> Since 2002, sources indicate that over \$430 million to over 350 projects in 17 countries was distributed.<sup>399</sup> However, the clear finding thus far suggests that such projects by the State Department and USAID during this period failed at any rate to raise US favourability ratings (or touch the core of Muslim publics by engaging critical religious infrastructures to influence serious change). In making up for this lacklustre appeal through massive foreign aid donations, how then would Hughes and others make an attempt at raising America’s morale? This would occur through erratic engagement efforts that would not ease US-Muslim world relations after 9/11, but further escalate tension and thereby serve to distort America’s image.

#### **(d) Approaching the religious dimension**

Hughes’s attempts at approaching the religious dimension of the Muslim world can be understood more clearly when with reference to the terms “direct approach” and “indirect approach”. To clarify these terms, “direct approach” is identified here as relationship building underpinned by a strategic project to incorporate the ideals, perspectives and voices of both sacred and secular players in the public sphere. Direct approaches are not public diplomacy inspired, neither are they outsourced to private third party organisations or NGOs; they are carried out directly by USG officials and sacred players within a socio-political forum. On the contrary, “indirect approach” refers to attempts to address religious establishments by constructing symbolic relationships to shore up attraction to critical public issues. An indirect approach provides limited attention to these critical issues – especially when public appearances are complete. Employing indirect approaches with Muslim publics was an

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<sup>398</sup> Ibid, 14.

<sup>399</sup> See Middle East Partnership [online website]; available from <http://mepi.state.gov/>; Internet, accessed 20 February 2008.

essential part of Hughes's September 2005 Middle East tour to raise US morale after US favourability ratings dwindled following the US's entering Iraq in 2003.

On her 2005 Middle East public diplomacy tour, Hughes would visit Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Indonesia. What was envisioned as an opportunity to trumpet American exceptionalism only illustrated the deep contrast between US foreign policy and the perspectives held in Islamic society. The tour was more of an assault on Islamic traditions and a public diplomacy embarrassment than the teachable moment for Muslims it was intended to be. Most of the 2005 tour included public speaking appearances with large crowds of elite Muslim women (as in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia on September 27). In Jeddah, Hughes would introduce American public diplomacy rhetoric by implying to an auditorium of 500 that Saudi women should one day be able to drive as American women and "fully participate in society."<sup>400</sup> Countering Hughes's position, the university auditorium erupted when one woman stood and stated "The general image of the Arab woman is that she isn't happy... well, we're all pretty happy."<sup>401</sup> This points out Hughes's mistake of employing indirect approaches as opposed to first listening and then cultivating a direct and sustainable relationship based on perspectives drawn from this particular venue. The same outcry would follow the next day in Ankara, Turkey with a group of twenty Turkish feminist leaders: when explaining the benefits of the Iraq war, Hughes' stated "I can appreciate your concern about war. No one likes war [but]...It is impossible to say that the rights of women were better under Saddam Hussein than they are today."<sup>402</sup> This same approach would follow in Istanbul,

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<sup>400</sup> Steven R. Weisman *Saudi Women Have Message for US Envoy* [article online] available from <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/28/international/middleeast/28hughes.html?ex=1187409600&en=253f58b29eb5383f&ei=5070>; Internet accessed 20 February 2008.

<sup>401</sup> Ibid.

<sup>402</sup> Steven R. Weisman *Turkish Women, Too, Have Words with US Envoy (On Iraq War)* [article online]; available from



Turkey while conducting a makeshift interfaith dialogue (after touring Istanbul's Topaki Palace) with Muslim, Eastern Orthodox, Jewish and Roman Catholic religious officials. Without addressing critical social issues, Hughes's interfaith efforts would only serve as a symbolic gesture that would "emphasise that countries with large Muslim populations should understand that many Americans are also guided by religious convictions" – and thus reducing post secular matters to simplistic cross-cultural affairs.<sup>403</sup> This event did not produce a critical dialogue session which centred on peacemaking or on how to employ conflict resolution issues, but rather served as a symbolic gesture to display America's position on religious tolerance and religious freedom.

#### **e) The State Department on interfaith (2005-2007)**

While holding a doctoral placement with the State Department in 2007 to conduct research on UN peacekeeping, sanctions and counter-terrorism issues with the Bureau of International Organizational Affairs (Washington, DC), an opportunity was presented to question various retired and active US ambassadors, diplomats and the Secretary of State (on US diplomatic engagement and broad international religious affairs). A respectful level of both senior-level diplomats and US ambassadors (in an informal setting) agreed that international issues had become a major factor which US foreign policy and US diplomacy, if given adequate training, should address. Most also agreed that encouraging direct approaches with religious leadership at overseas embassies – "though it would not be likely under the Bush Administration" – would be a practical step towards more direct approaches with religious infrastructures. However, in a more formal setting, the view of then Secretary of

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<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/29/international/europe/29hughes.html>; Internet, accessed 20 February 2008.

<sup>403</sup> Ibid.

State Condoleezza Rice differed from those of fellow diplomats on the notion of direct approaches when engaging critical religious infrastructures in the Muslim world.

When asked, “*Should scholars of theology and inter-religious relations engage channels of US diplomacy to resolve religious-based conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?*” Secretary Rice agreed that international religious affairs had become an important factor which must be addressed. However, her answer revealed hesitation in publically acknowledging that US diplomats and Ambassadors shared a specific role to directly approach religious leadership to promote peacemaking initiatives. Endorsing an indirect plan, Rice commented:

I don’t think the US Government has much to add to this discussion, but I think that we can facilitate others doing it... It is not something the US government can do principally, but we need to be loud spokespeople for the importance of interfaith dialogue, for the importance of research in these areas and for the importance of opening channels in which people can talk about their differences. If they don’t talk about their differences, they will not overcome them. If we can’t work to overcome some of the prejudices and myths that are sometimes at the bottom of religious differences and violence, then it’s going to be very difficult to build a political foundation on a very weak foundation of tolerance.<sup>404</sup>

The secretary’s position is grounded in a conservative posture to outsource social welfare issues relating to religion to NGOs and private third-party organisations (as with the MEPI).

Rice ends by stating:

The United States is a place in which, I think, our particular history has led to, over time, tolerance and religious difference. That’s really the message that we should send as a US government; beyond that, we should send a message that the people of good faith, or whatever that faith is, and even if people are not of any particular faith, need to work together on issues of tolerance.<sup>405</sup>

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<sup>404</sup> Condoleezza Rice, informal Interview/Student Question and Answer Session by Darrell Ezell, 3 April 2007, transcript provided by BNET Broadcasting, US Department of State Television Service, Washington, D.C.; see appendix for full question and answer.

<sup>405</sup> Ibid.

Rice does not imply that there are critical post-secular issues affecting international affairs that deserve direct application, but reduces the matter of whether scholars of theology and inter-religious relations should engage channels of US diplomacy to resolve religious-based conflict to an issue of culture to be regulated by tolerance. In effect, Rice's position suggests why indirect makeshift interfaith efforts would take precedence towards the end of Hughes's term as undersecretary.

Since 2007, the State Department's efforts to "encourage" or "facilitate" interfaith activity have taken place through the Bureaus of Education and Cultural Affairs, the International Information Programs and the International Visitor Leadership Program. Many of these initiatives support academic and professional exchanges and also Muslim outreach, however some have employed the proverbial phrase "interfaith dialogue" in order to gather religious leadership for symbolic "meet and greets" to bolster US morale. Unfortunately, neither of these initiatives directly engage religious elements within a socio-political forum to build sacred-secular relations, beyond symbolic presentations, or promote conflict resolution through peacemaking initiatives. Many of these staged events are associated with ECA and IIP bureau-sponsored programmes such as the new Fulbright Interfaith Community Action Program<sup>406</sup>, which has convened nearly 600 Muslim clerics in the US with the central aim of providing a remote forum where religious scholars and academics might converse with US religious leaders. The principal objectives as one exchange programme indicates, is "to

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<sup>406</sup> According to the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, "The Fulbright Interfaith Dialogue and Community Action Program provides a group of ten scholars/religious leaders from diverse religious communities in countries with significant Muslim populations with the opportunity for discussion, debate and collaborative learning centred on interfaith dialogue and community action. Drawing on the knowledge and experience gained from this programme, participants are asked to promote tolerance and community building with different faith communities." See Fulbright Newsletter for Community Representatives, *Interfaith Dialogue and Community Action Program Announced* [document online]; available from [http://www.cies.org/hud/fulbrightweb/nl/CREP/2006\\_winter/inter.htm](http://www.cies.org/hud/fulbrightweb/nl/CREP/2006_winter/inter.htm); Internet, accessed 12 March 2008.

engage in inter-religious dialogue with both lay and clerical counterparts from the broader American community of believers and to observe the compatibility of religious belief and practice in democratically oriented social and political structures.”<sup>407</sup>

Between 2005-2007 Undersecretary Hughes was successful in encouraging interfaith relations but failed significantly at devising a strategic long-term plan as to how interfaith relations would eventually open constructive foreign policy conversations between US diplomats and religious officials on issues relating to, for example, counter-terrorism and how to improve US-Muslim world relations beyond public diplomacy initiatives. Impressions were given that America might consider this option. While addressing the *UN High Level Dialogue on Interreligious and Intercultural Understanding and Cooperation for Peace*, she indicated that having a deep respect for and knowledge of other cultures advances mutual understanding.<sup>408</sup> Despite the impact of her speech and the need for the US to attend the high-level panel at the UN, Hughes did not indicate to panel members that US officials would participate in addressing religious leaders directly in a hosted partnership with representatives from the Alliance of Civilizations (AOC). After reviewing Hughes’s address, at first glance, one is led to believe that the US would fully cooperate with the AOC agenda to employ non-violent tactics for finding peace through sacred-secular interfaith practises. However, she does not suggest that the US will employ direct religious approaches with the Muslim world, but that the USG is currently conducting its own engagement efforts (though indirectly) which do not require stipulations or requirements which are often imposed by transnational organisations such as the UN:

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<sup>407</sup> US Department of State, “Major Accomplishments 2005-2007”, 21

<sup>408</sup> Karen P. Hughes, “Encouraging Inter-faith Dialogues and Conversations Between Cultures”, *Presentation to the UN High Level Dialogue on Inter-religious and Intercultural and Cooperation for Peace* (October 4, 2007) [article online]; available from <http://2001-2009.state.gov/r/us/2007/93259.htm>; Internet, accessed 20 October 2009.

We all have a role. America wants to partner in this dialogue. Through websites and communication alerts, we are working to highlight the many voices speaking out against terrorist violence and of greater inter-faith understanding. We are encouraging inter-faith dialogue and conversations between cultures. Through a new programme called “Citizen Dialogue”, we’ve sent Muslim American citizens across the world to engage with grassroots citizens in Muslim communities. We’ve brought clerics here and sent American clerics abroad. We’ve sponsored programmes for young people, teaching respect for diversity.<sup>409</sup>

Months before, Hughes’s last robust public diplomacy attempt was encouraging US ambassadors to conduct personal outreach in local Muslim communities by hosting Iftaar dinners at US embassies, which today still serves as an opportunity to encourage direct diplomatic engagement with religious officials.<sup>410</sup> In 2005 and 2006, Iftaar dinners were held at US embassies in: Burkina Fasso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Mozambique, Montenegro, Azerbaijan, in the Kyrgyz Republic, Syria, Kosovo and India.<sup>411</sup> While providing a safe space for Muslim participants, Iftaar gatherings held by US embassies, by State Department standards have “encouraged” mutual understanding and “facilitated” dialogue among representatives of local faiths. They provide interfaith panels (as in the Gambia) to discuss topics on religious tolerance. However, no instances of direct engagement between US diplomats and religious leadership have taken place to further peacemaking where intractable conflicts of a religious nature are present.

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<sup>409</sup> Ibid.

<sup>410</sup> The hosting of annual Iftaar dinners within the White House and State Department community under the Bush Administration is not uncommon. Since 2001, President Bush has hosted an annual Iftaar dinner to demonstrate that the US is not at war with Islam and to celebrate the Islamic faith and acknowledge the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. In recent years, Iftaar dinners at many US embassies have provided an opportunity for many Muslim-American employees to share stories and experiences of their faith. See also Office of the Press Secretary, *President Bush Attends Iftaar Dinner at the White House* (October 4, 2007) [article online]; available from <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2008/09/20080917-11.html>; Internet, accessed 17 October 2009.

<sup>411</sup> Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, “Supporting Human Rights and Democracy: The US Record 2005-2006”, *US Department of State* (2006) [document online]; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/shrd/2005/>; Internet, accessed 12 March 2008.

In Tanzania, US Ambassador Mark Green hosted two Iftaar celebrations. At the first he and the US Embassy in Tanzania's Public Affairs Section provided foodstuffs to the Fiy-sabili-llahi Tabligh Markaz community and orphanage, distributing sports equipment and joining the community on woven mats after the evening prayers to enjoy traditional Swahili cooking. At an event later in the month, Ambassador Green shared an Iftaar meal with the Mwinyibaraka Islamic Foundation's orphanage, pledging to provide bed nets to combat the high rate of malaria among the orphans.<sup>412</sup>

However, one of the closest attempts, where direct engagement by a US ambassador could have contributed greatly to initiating direct approaches to improve religio-political relations, was made in 2005 in Nigeria, with the hosting of annual Iftaar dinners in Abuja, Lagos and the Kawara State to encourage post-conflict peace-building efforts between Christians and Muslims.<sup>413</sup>

#### **5.4. Conclusion: Assessing State's outreach in the Muslim world**

As with any executive-level foreign policy, the Bush Doctrine, after 9/11, influenced the entire USG system as the principal position carried out by all departments and agencies. Without recognising that religious, tribal and cultural themes would be of great influence in both combating terror and improving US-Muslim world relations, the Bush Doctrine bypassed, publically and privately, the overall engagement of the concept of religion (or the religious voice) for the purpose of peacemaking. Hence, this position influenced the US Department of State's outreach practices throughout the Muslim world (between 2001 and 2008). A parallel between the doctrine's failure to recognise the impact of post-secularism in US-Muslim world affairs after 9/11 and the State Department's reluctance to address critical international religious affairs (beyond matters of religious freedom and religious tolerance) is

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<sup>412</sup> "U.S. Embassies Host Iftaar Dinners", *Public Diplomacy Update*, Vol. 2, Issue 4 (December 2007).

<sup>413</sup> See Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, "Supporting Human Rights and Democracy: The US Record 2005-2006", *US Department of State* (2006) [document online]; available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/shrd/2005/>; Internet, accessed 12 March 2008, 45-47.

present. On both ends, an encouragement to develop projects geared towards religious analysis, peacemaking or direct engagement with key religious players to meet America's national security objectives, did not take precedence. Nor would the White House or State Department design a strategic plan focused specifically on communication that was comparable to the Bush Doctrine for effectively engaging the vast majority of the Muslim world.

Coincidentally, State's pre-existing programme, the "Brand America" campaign (employed specifically for raising America's favourability ratings) was reintroduced after 9/11 to conduct outreach to key Muslim publics. Though results were devastating, State officials would consider this project to be a feasible alternative to peaceful engagement in order to bolster US credibility in the Muslim world. Despite contributing to a distortion in US-Muslim world communication, the State Department prolonged this lacklustre process by employing brand management resources to sell US foreign policy (through mass academic and professional programmes). In effect, three fundamental shortcomings are present with regards to the State Department's outreach practises in the Muslim world. These relate specifically to: inconsistent leadership, its use of brand management resources to communicate to Muslim publics, and State's inability to employ suitable approaches.

First, the State Department's organisational structure, and its inability to retain a committed Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs between 2001 and 2008, contributed greatly to various setbacks. Since 1998, the Office of International Religious Freedom remains State's principle office that publically addresses specific religious issues – as opposed to broad international religious affairs. Unlike Ministries of Religious Affairs throughout the Muslim world with government officials who are trained at

carrying out religio-political analysis, peacemaking and conflict resolution, the State Department (after 9/11) was forced to redirect efforts to conduct Muslim world outreach through the office of Public Diplomacy and Public relations. Adopting a pre-existing programme and its indirect efforts clearly indicates the limits of the State Department's organisational structure.

**Table 5**

**US Undersecretaries of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs**

<b>Undersecretary</b>	<b>Term in Office</b>	<b>Administration</b>
Evelyn Lieberman	October 1, 1999 – January 19, 2001	Bill Clinton
Charlotte Beers	October 2, 2001 – March 28, 2003	George W. Bush
Margaret D. Tutwiler	December 16, 2003 – June 30, 2004	George W. Bush
Karen P. Hughes	September 9, 2005 – December 14, 2007	George W. Bush
Position Open (1yr)	December 14, 2007-June10, 2008	George W. Bush
James K. Glassman	June 10, 2008 – January 15, 2009	George W. Bush
Judith McHale	May 26, 2009-Present	Barack Obama

For the first time in the State Department's history it would bear the responsibility for rebuilding America's image among foreign publics since terminating the United States Information Agency in 1998 and President Clinton's creation of a new undersecretary position for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. By Bush's term, the trend would be to nominate former Madison Avenue marketing executives to the post, convinced that brand management approaches would resolve a longstanding image problem that affected American foreign policy over the next few years. Throughout Bush's term in office this post would be held by four different undersecretaries, three of which would resign at the height of State's



Muslim world outreach campaign: Charlotte Beers would unexpectedly resign after a year, today serving as Director of Martha Stewart's Living Omnimedia Inc.; Martha D. Tutwiler resigned after six months of service to take a post with the New York Stock Exchange Euronext; and Karen P. Hughes would resign after two years of service, taking the position of Vice Chairman with the Burson-Marsteller PR firm. Between 2007 and 2008, the undersecretary position would remain unfilled until James K. Glassman (former business journalist) would serve a short-term of seven months before resigning. For this office to bear the responsibility of crafting America's communicative message to the Muslim world, the Bush administration's inability to nominate committed professionals demonstrated a lack of total attention to, and an inconsistency with, leading US-Muslim world relations.

The second fundamental shortcoming relates to the State Department's robust *Brand America* campaign, which would be remarkably unsuccessful at reaching its principal goal to improve America's image abroad and raise its favourability rating throughout the Muslim world. As its primary communication resource, public diplomacy and nation-branding, coupled by the Bush Administration's staunch military policies, contributed greatly to this decline after 9/11. Findings would prove this point true in Muslim countries polled in 2008, which displayed ratings below 50% that included: Turkey (12%), Egypt (22%), Jordan (19%), Indonesia (37%), and Pakistan (19%). State's inability to raise favourability ratings over the course of eight years indicates that a much deeper problem (relating to America's foreign policy decisions and communicative practises) fuelled this tension – not to mention its failure to employ direct approaches in critical settings.

Finally, the third shortcoming is associated with the State Department's inability to take seriously various US-Muslim world engagement opportunities (such as employing direct approaches and capitalising on interfaith dialogue opportunities at US embassies). Between 2005 and 2007, efforts by the State to employ direct communicative approaches between USG officials and Islamic leadership to encourage peacemaking, conflict resolution or religio-political analysis serve as valuable opportunities that were not employed. If the Office of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs were serious about employing direct approaches, it is likely that a more challenging communication approach would have been applied by State officials within these settings. Taking this direct communicative approach seriously could have inevitably contributed to the convening of US political officials with religious players in an effort to introduce the perspectives of Muslim publics into the US policymaking discussion. The State Department instead chose to employ brand management resources, and end results therefore culminated with diplomats and Ambassadors at annual Iftaar dinners, in professional exchange settings, and with Karen P. Hughes's Middle East tour, for example, turning a constructive environment into a public diplomacy stage to sell the "*American Story*".

Considering these three shortcomings, is it likely that the State Department genuinely wanted to improve US-Muslim world relations after 9/11? The seriousness and consistency needed to make an improvement was not a top priority. When key opportunities were presented, State chose to employ brand management resources; and, considering the frequency with which there arose a need to fill the undersecretary position, it seems clear that their Madison Avenue approaches to *Brand America* did not work, but served as a limitation that neither Beers, Tutwiler, Hughes or Glassman were trained to address. Chapter 6 considers a number of recommendations that call for direct approaches when State officials

engage broad international religious affairs – as opposed to brand management campaigns that prove beneficial in other circumstances, but, often lack the substance needed to establish long-term trusted relations at a grassroots level.

## CHAPTER 6

### SUPPORTING A MORE DIRECT APPROACH

#### 6.1. Introduction: *Premature efforts*

After making a critical review of the impact of the State Department's *Brand America* campaign, the question is what affect, if any, would this strategy have on the body of US-Muslim world relations? The inability of the Office of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs to restore US favourability ratings and improve America's image throughout the Muslim world clearly indicates that employing the communicative tools of public diplomacy and nation-branding was ineffective at selling US foreign policy to Muslims after 9/11. Taking this communicative approach to use brand management tools as entry points to engage Muslim audiences to peddle the "American Story" perhaps contributed more to damaging US-Muslim relations. Therefore, spending over \$1 billion in programming and foreign aid efforts (over the last decade) to make America and US foreign policy appealing to Muslims would be highly ineffectual – considering the Bush administration's defence strategy in South Asia and the abuse and torture of Muslims held at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay, which served to spread a message of fear throughout these audiences.

Though the State Department's programming attempts (the "Brand America" campaign and the Shared Values Initiative, etc.) at reaching this audience were reasonable, the argument still remains that its initial approach after 9/11 to sell an incoherent foreign policy, driven by fear and ideology, would contribute to a backlash in public opinion toward America. Hence, this thesis questions the State Department's prematurity in employing its

nation-branding and public diplomacy machine, especially before gathering the perspectives, understanding the beliefs and ideologies, or comprehending the religious, tribal, and cultural dimensions of the Muslim world.

The Gallup World Poll consistently confirms that the crucial issues in improving relations are the beliefs and perceptions of “the other,” which affect and need to inform foreign policies. The war against global terrorism has been fought on three major fronts: military, economic, and diplomatic. As military experts have noted, while the military can capture and kill terrorists, it is not equipped to win the struggle for minds and hearts.<sup>414</sup>

This is the job of the State Department’s Office of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, but the strategic planning necessary to understand its target audience was foregone. Hence, “If Public diplomacy centres on influencing public attitudes about the formation and execution of foreign policies,” why then use brand management resources to engage Muslim publics if the views of Muslims would not be utilised in foreign policymaking?<sup>415</sup> In their 16 June 2004 official statement on the dwindling of America’s popularity, Diplomats and Military Commanders for Change (twenty-seven retired US ambassadors, undersecretaries, and military officials) did confirm this premature step – due in part to Bush’s extreme position for restoring US-Muslim relations:

From the outset, President George W. Bush adopted an overbearing approach to America’s role in the world, relying upon military might and righteousness, insensitive to the concerns of traditional friends and allies, and disdainful of the United Nations. Instead of building upon America’s great economic and moral strength to lead other nations in a coordinated campaign to address the causes of terrorism and to stifle its resources, the Administration, motivated more by ideology than by reasoned analysis, struck out on its own. It led the United States into an ill-planned and costly war from which exit is uncertain. It justified the invasion of Iraq by manipulation of uncertain intelligence about weapons of mass destruction, and by a cynical campaign to persuade the public that Saddam Hussein was linked to Al Qaeda and the

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<sup>414</sup> John L. Esposito and Dalia Mogahed, *Who Speaks for Islam?: What a Billion Muslims Really Think* (New York, NY: Gallup Press, 2007).

<sup>415</sup> Public Diplomacy Alumni Association, *What is Public Diplomacy* [article online] available from <http://www.publicdiplomacy.org/1.htm>; Internet, accessed 20 August 2009.

attacks of September 11. The evidence did not support this argument.<sup>416</sup>

If the State Department acted prematurely in employing public diplomacy and nation-branding as a first option, then what other possibility for direct engagement is available? The outcry of Bush's foreign policy and leadership on Middle East affairs and the global war on terror have encouraged seasoned diplomats and military commanders to urge a reorganisation of America's foreign policies and a strategic emphasis on communication as a serious first step. To improve non-military US-Muslim relations (at the diplomatic level) will include rethinking the practise of communication in order to restore overall relations. Joe S. Nye Jr. indicates in, *Making Great Communicators*, "communicating with distant audiences, leaders need the ability to communicate one-on-one or in small groups. In some cases, the close communication is more important than public rhetoric. Organisational skill – ability to attract and inspire an effective inner circle of followers – can compensate for rhetorical deficiencies, just as effective public rhetoric can partly compensate for low organisational skills."<sup>417</sup>

This perspective opens up the possibility to think critically about a new alternative approach to foster direct communication at a grassroots-level with Muslim publics. This approach embraces socio-political interchange and direct communicative relations with key religious, tribal and cultural infrastructures to restore trusted relations (before brand management resources such as "Brand America" are considered). To develop this idea, consider the following four perspectives. These perspectives break new ground in that they challenge traditional State Department communication practises and its efforts to handle

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<sup>416</sup> Diplomats and Military Commanders for Change, *Official Statement* [document online] available from [http://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2004/06/16\\_diplomats-military-commanders.htm](http://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2004/06/16_diplomats-military-commanders.htm); Internet, accessed 20 August 2009.

<sup>417</sup> Joseph S. Nye Jr., "Making of Great Communicators", *The Korea Times* (August 12, 2009).

religion: the recommendations of Barry Rubin<sup>418</sup>, Ambassador John McDonald<sup>419</sup>, former Secretary of State Madeline Albright<sup>420</sup>, and Edward Luttwak<sup>421</sup>, when integrated, establish a firm position on why the State Department must consider a more direct approach with religious audiences. Their recommendations push beyond the State Department's secular agenda of handling religion (which centres on religious freedom and religious tolerance issues). However, they are not without limitations. These four recommendations will focus on four unique topics: religious analysis as an imperative; NGO practises; a new cadre to support these new efforts; and the establishing of a new State Department actor. Consideration to a potential alternative to foster direct communication will include the acknowledgment in this thesis of the value of a new State Department actor who is willing to implement a "dangerously unselfish" communication platform which promotes sacred-secular cooperation for restoring US-Muslim world relations.<sup>422</sup>

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<sup>418</sup> Barry Rubin, "Religion and International Affairs", *Religion: the Missing Dimension of Statecraft*, Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson, eds. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 20-37.

<sup>419</sup> Louise Diamond and Amb. John McDonald, *Multi-Track Diplomacy: A Systems Approach to Peace*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Connecticut: Kumarian Press, 1996).

<sup>420</sup> Madeline Albright and Bill Woodward, *The Mighty & The Almighty: Reflections on Power, God, and World Affairs* (London: MacMillan, 2006).

<sup>421</sup> Edward Luttwak, "The Missing Dimension", *Religion: The Mission Dimension of Statecraft*, Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson (Oxford Press: Oxford, 1994), 8-20.

<sup>422</sup> See Martin Luther King Jr., The Stanford University Martin Luther King Jr. Papers Project: "I've Been to the Mountaintop" (3 April 1968), [online document]; available from <http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/mlkpapers/>; Internet, accessed 22 March 2008.

To further King's position on the need for a "dangerous unselfishness" in public behaviour when considering one's moral responsibility in the world, this position may be related to the notion of "costly grace" over "cheap grace" as perceived by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. In the Christian theological sense, "Cheap grace means grace as a bargain-basement goods, cut-rate forgiveness, cut-rate comfort, cut-rate sacrament; grace as the church's inexhaustible pantry room in which it is doled out by careless hands without hesitation or limit. It is grace without a price, without costs. It is said that the essence of grace is that the bill for it is paid in advance for all time. Everything can be had for free, courtesy of that paid bill. The price paid is infinitely great and, therefore, the possibilities of taking advantage of and wasting grace are also infinitely great." For Bonhoeffer, this argument is related to the "advanced" suffering of Jesus Christ and his intimation that many recipients of the Christian faith may fail to understand the impact of Jesus's teaching, message, and death because grace has been easily bestowed upon them. Bonhoeffer presses this position further to argue, "What would grace be, if it were not cheap grace?" He states that, "Costly grace is the hidden treasure in the field, for the sake of which people go and sell with joy everything they have. It is the costly pearl, for whose price the merchant sells all that he has; it is Christ's sovereignty, for the sake which you tear out an eye if it

## 6.2. Rubin: *Utilising religious analysis*

Though a staunch opponent to US-Middle East foreign policy and possibly to this thesis's position on US-Muslim world relations, Barry Rubin (foreign policy analyst and director of the Global Research in International Affairs Centre, Herzliya, Israel)<sup>423</sup> has a unique recommendation for improving America's foreign policymaking. His recommendation includes integrating an analysis of religious issues into US decision-making which allows US officials to have a greater insight into the emerging post-secular climate. In presenting this case, Rubin opens up the secular modernisation thesis, debating why State Department officials, in this era, must be reluctant to bypass directly engaging broad international religious affairs, though uncommon to US foreign policymaking.<sup>424</sup> In the essay

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causes you to stumble... Above all, grace is costly, because it was costly to God, because it costs God the life of God's Son – 'you were bought with a price' – and because nothing can be cheap to us which is costly to God". Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 57-63. See Geoffrey B. Kelley and F. Burton Nelson, *The Cost of Moral Leadership: The Spirituality of Dietrich Bonhoeffer* (Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2003), 51-82. This argument is not meant to suggest that persons of world faith must take up Christian values in order to engage the Other effectively. The aim of presenting Bonhoeffer's perception is to demonstrate that a counteracting posture or alternative behaviour must be employed in order to encourage the needed shift from baseline *tolerance* to a radical, but needed, acceptance of *cooperation* between the state and religious communities.

<sup>423</sup> See the Global Research Centre in International Affairs (Israel), <http://www.gloriacenter.org/>

<sup>424</sup> "The secularisation thesis provided one of the major principles on which the eighteenth-century philosopher Auguste Comte founded the field of sociology – which, he predicted, would eventually supplant religion as the future source of major judgments. Quite often, the reaction against Western modernisation is framed in religious terms. This is a valid characterisation when one considers the modern, secularised, and rather compartmentalised approach to life standing in sharp contrast to and threatening the organic mixture of religious, political, and socioeconomic values and actors in so-called traditional societies. In addition to whatever instructional interest may exist on the part of religious authorities to preserve their prominent social role, the strict division between the sacred and the secular observed in the West is a relatively recent innovation – and is foreign to much of the rest of the world." Douglas Johnston and Brian Cox, "Faith-based Diplomacy and Preventative Engagement", *Faith-Based Diplomacy: Trumping Realpolitik*, Douglas Johnston, ed. (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2003), 11.



*Religion and International Affairs*, Rubin introduces three essential errors which contribute to incorrect analysis and policy responses by American foreign policymakers.<sup>425</sup>

In examining the second error only, Rubin draws our attention to the secular modernisation thesis prior to 9/11, and its general impact on the American foreign policy environment. He recalls:

The expectation that religion would inevitably decline in the process of Third World modernisation was wrong. Noting the secularisation process in most of the West during the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries, some observers have assumed that the rest of the world would follow the same pattern. It was expected that modern ideas, such as science, technology, secularism, and humanism, would overcome the religious concept of the universe that dominated pre-modern society.<sup>426</sup>

This historical view, as indicated in Chapter 2, holds a serious place within the State Department and other foreign policy agencies. However, Rubin identifies the downfall in this position, acknowledging that:

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<sup>425</sup>The second principal error is identified above. The two remaining errors that Rubin covers in *Religion and International Affairs* address: i) The argument that religion belongs to theology not politics, in the Western world: this point, which is drawn upon by intellectuals, inhibits religion from being taken seriously at the political level. Rubin says, “In modern times religion has increasingly been seen in the West as a theological set of issues rather than as a profoundly political influence in public life... Rather, religion plays its role as an important defining characteristic of politically contending communities. Yet, in the absence of a heated theological debate – or on the assumption by some modern Western scholars that such debates are trivial and abstracted from real consideration of power – religion as the primate communal identity has, until recently, been too often neglected.” iii) Rubin’s third principle addresses the misapplication of the Marxian thesis on the impact that religion may have on society. He argues, “The West – including the communist regimes – tended to misapply Marx’s concept, accepted widely in some quarters of the Western intellectual tradition, that religion is the opiate of the masses. This concept was taken to mean that religion was a distraction from the important things of life and that the chance to improve one’s existence in this world would obviate the need for a system that could only promise rewards in the world to come. Marx himself and many others neglected the point that opiates are addictive. Heroin addicts usually can be weaned from their drug only by the use of methadone, and equally addictive drugs which are dispensed by government authorities and provide no ‘high’. This is analogous to the role of the comprehensive secular ideologies which revolutionary regimes often try to push onto the masses from above in lieu of religion. They must be imposed continually and bring relatively little satisfaction. Moreover, the substratum of religious belief often continues to exist underground, awaiting some opportunity to reassert itself as an ideology.” Barry Rubin, “Religion and International Affairs”, *Religion: the Missing Dimension of Statecraft*, Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson, eds. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 20-21.

<sup>426</sup>Ibid., 21.

For several decades, the prevailing school of thought underlying US foreign policy has assumed that religion would be a declining factor in the life of the state and in international affairs. However, experience has shown and projections indicate that the exact opposite is increasingly true. To neglect religious institutions and thinking would be to render incomprehensible some of the key issues and crises in the world today.<sup>427</sup>

Though not agreeing totally with the position of this thesis on US-Muslim world relations, Rubin's fundamental argument, which supports advancing religious analysis, assures the incorporation of critical social elements in the State Department's examination. Hence, it is correct that when concepts of religion (tribal, cultural, and social components) are not included in the analysis, vital communicative sources in US foreign policy are often bypassed. This often includes critical elements as Jewish and Islamic fundamentalist social behaviour or the elements of post-modern terror which suggest the appropriate communicative position that US officials should take in most cases.<sup>428</sup> Agreeing with Rubin, not reflecting on the ethics and principles of these traditional audiences in US foreign policy efforts does more than just limit the possibilities for good decision-making; it ensures their failure.<sup>429</sup> For example, considering the political climate in Iran during the late 1970s, the State Department left out the communal element of religion, which proved to be fatal.<sup>430</sup> "The Iranian case raises a larger question about the difficulty that many members of the foreign policy community in the United States have in comprehending the role of religion in international affairs. Although religion is generally concerned with the problem of evil in the

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<sup>427</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>428</sup> See Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (Los Angeles: UC Press, 2003), 45-53, 219-243.

<sup>429</sup> In the Middle East, national identification is still largely a function of religious affiliation. One's community is either Sunni, Shiite Muslim, Alawite, Druze, Christian (Roman Catholic, Maronite, Copt, Eastern Orthodox, or Greek Catholic), or Jewish. Iran's Islamic revolution and Lebanon's civil war are only the most obvious and salient examples of this phenomenon, which is present in many other situations. The Arab attitude toward the conflict with Israel is heavily conditioned by religion. Pakistan's *raison d'être* is its Islamic composition. Religion is also a fundamental political issue in defining community in Sudan, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, and elsewhere. In sub-Saharan Africa, the Protestant and Catholic divisions have often manifested themselves along political lines as well. Ibid., 33.

<sup>430</sup> See, John D. Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981).

world, secular US diplomatic thought differs. Holding the rationale that national interests are the root of human and state motivation, many playmakers and diplomats have become incapable of understanding certain phenomena.”<sup>431</sup>

In essence, Rubin concludes that even though secular ideals have often been central to US foreign policymaking today, a more accommodating approach that integrates the perspectives of religious audiences must be incorporated. This recommendation corresponds, to a degree, with Habermas’s post-secular position, which suggests that secular officials within the nation-state encourage public awareness and respect between the religious ethos of the liberal secular state and secular society. Philosophically, both arguments aim to invoke a mutual respect, which allows for cooperation between the two worlds. Thus, Habermas’s argument parallels Rubin’s thesis, encouraging the view that within a post-secular society “there is an increasing consensus that certain phases of the ‘modernisation of the public consciousness’ involve the assimilation and the reflexive transformation of both religious and secular mentalities.”<sup>432</sup> Hence, “If both sides agree to understand the secularisation of society as a complementary learning process, they will also have cognitive reasons to take seriously each other’s contribution to controversial subjects in the public debate.”<sup>433</sup> When considering the fact that two mentalities will continue to exist within the public sphere for some time that will pose a major concern to American foreign policy, Rubin is correct to argue that taking a

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<sup>431</sup> Barry Rubin, “Religion and International Affairs”, 27.

<sup>432</sup> According to Jürgen Habermas, *post secular society* “refers not only to the fact that religion is holding its own in an increasingly secular environment and that society must assume that religious fellowships will continue to exist for the foreseeable future. The expression ‘post secular’ does more than give public recognition to religious fellowships in view of the functional contribution they make to the reproduction of motivation and attitudes that are societally desirable. The public awareness of a post-secular society also reflects a normative insight that has consequences for the political dealings of unbelieving citizens with believing citizens... If both sides agree to understand the secularisation of society as a complementary learning process, then they will also have cognitive reasons to take seriously each other’s contribution to controversial subjects in the public debate.” Jürgen Habermas and Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Dialectics of Secularization: On Reason and Religion* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005), 46-47.

<sup>433</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

proactive stance to embrace the potential in religious analysis may inevitably prove rewarding to US sacred-secular relations.

### 6.3. McDonald: *Integrating peacemaking tools*

During a 19 April 2007 interview, Ambassador John McDonald (co-founder and chairman of the Institute for Multi-track Diplomacy (IMTD)) identified two specific proposals for improving the US Department of State's communication practices.<sup>434</sup> McDonald's first proposal advised US diplomats to recognise and incorporate the contributions and approaches made by Track 2 (NGO) actors in its diplomatic efforts when in conflict-prone settings – thus supporting conflict transformation (see Figure below).<sup>435</sup> According to McDonald and IMTD co-founder, Louise Diamond, "Track II work is based on the assumption that unofficial discussions provide a latitude that is not available in formal settings. This freedom provides the opportunity to examine the root causes of and the underlying human needs in conflicts, to explore possible solutions out of public view, to identify obstacles to better relations, and to look ahead at issues not yet on the official agenda."<sup>436</sup> McDonald referenced Track 2 practises and that many of its accomplishments in international peacemaking could provide a deeper analysis and more personable interaction

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<sup>434</sup> While working at the US Department of State, I informally met former US Ambassador John McDonald in Arlington, Virginia on April 19 2007 at the Institute of Multi-track Diplomacy. I am grateful for this interview and the insight McDonald provided to this study.

<sup>435</sup> In this study, the term *conflict transformation* refers specifically to the systematic transformation of conflict situations to "peace systems". My position towards the usage of this term parallels that of Notter and Diamond, who state that, "Conflict transformation refers to the process of moving from conflict habituated systems to peace systems. This process is distinguished from the more common term of conflict resolution because of its focus on systematic change... Transforming deep rooted conflicts is only partly about 'resolving' the issues of the conflict – the central issue is systematic change or transformation. Systems cannot be 'resolved,' but they can be transformed." Notter and Diamond, "Building Peace and Transforming Conflict", 4.

<sup>436</sup> Louise Diamond and Amb. John McDonald, *Multi-Track Diplomacy: A Systems Approach to Peace*, 34.

between US diplomats and civil society in conflict prone-settings. These alternatives include non-violent and mutually empowering peacemaking methods which bring together religious, tribal, and political leadership on a grassroots level.

In taking this approach, the diplomat can tap into a host of what this thesis regards as *transformational elements* that are often at the disposal of Track 2 actors. These *transformational elements* focus on establishing peaceful networks which promote cooperation and strategic relationship-building through direct inter-personal, inter-cultural, and in some cases inter-religious engagement.

**Table 6**

**Tracks of the Multi-Track Diplomacy System**

Track 1: <b>Government</b> – <i>Peacemaking through Diplomacy</i>
Track 2: <b>Non-government/ Professional</b> – <i>Peacemaking through Professional Conflict Resolution</i>
Track 3: <b>Business</b> – <i>Peacemaking through Commerce</i>
Track 4: <b>Private Citizens</b> – <i>Peacemaking through Personal Involvement</i>
Track 5: <b>Research, Training and Education</b> – <i>Peacemaking through Learning</i>
Track 6: <b>Activism</b> – <i>Peacemaking through Advocacy</i>
Track 7: <b>Religion</b> – <i>Peacemaking through Faith in Action</i>
Track 8: <b>Funding</b> – <i>Peacemaking through Providing Resources</i>
Track 9: <b>Communications and the Media</b> – <i>Peacemaking through Information</i>

In order for the State Department to improve its communication practices, McDonald proposed secondly that, as a department, it should consider the value of taking a multi-track systems approach that encourages and helps to assist peacemaking efforts in conflict-prone settings. This multi-track diplomacy system is comprised of nine individual tracks which operate on separate levels, but, when integrated, formulate a system integral to the peacemaking process. Diamond and McDonald's (1996) research findings indicate that when this systems approach is taken, a systematic way to reaching peace occurs with actors becoming more accommodating to the mutual interests of a society in order to resolve conflict issues.<sup>437</sup>

To improve actors' relations in conflict-prone settings, McDonald advised the State Department to seriously consider this systems approach. In doing so, he noted that "diplomats must focus on preserving three areas: bridge-building, capacity-building, and institution building."

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<sup>437</sup> Louise Diamond and Amb. John McDonald, *Multi-Track Diplomacy: A Systems Approach to Peace*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Connecticut: Kumarian Press, 1996); "The term multi-track diplomacy is based on the original distinction made by Joseph Montville in 1981 between official, governmental actions to resolve conflicts (track one) and unofficial efforts by nongovernmental professionals to resolve conflicts within and between states (track two). Later, Louise Diamond coined the phrase 'multi-track diplomacy', recognising that to lump all track two activities under one label did not capture the complexity or breadth of unofficial diplomacy. Ambassador John McDonald then wrote an article expanding track two into four separate tracks: conflict resolution professionals, business, private citizens, and the media. This framework, however, still had the four unofficial tracks operating with the exclusive purpose of affecting or changing the direction of track one. In 1991, Diamond and McDonald expanded the number of tracks to nine. They added four new tracks: religion; activism; research, training and education; and philanthropy, or the funding community. More importantly, however, they reorganised the relationship between the various tracks. Instead of putting track one at the top of the hierarchy, with all the 'unofficial' tracks poised to change the direction of track one, Diamond and McDonald redesigned the diagram and placed the tracks with each connected to the others in a circle. No one track is more important than the other, and no one track is independent from the others. They operate together as a system. Each track has its own resources, values, and approach, but since they are all linked, they can operate more powerfully when they are coordinated." James Notter and Louise Diamond, "Building Peace and Transforming Conflict: Multi-track Diplomacy in Practice", *Occasional Paper – The Institute for Multi-track Diplomacy*, No. 7 (October 1996): 6-8.

1. **Bridge Building** – efforts to bring together parties in conflict to create mutual understanding, rebuild trust, and examine together the root causes, needs and interests that underlie each side’s stated positions.<sup>438</sup>

Communication practices, according to McDonald, are key in this area; however, stepping outside of employing traditional diplomatic approaches is necessary. Under this strategy the diplomat will shift from its traditional secular posture to an inclusive position which seeks to directly engage the interest of all actors in conflict by listening to the concerns of all parties (preferably by employing dialogue).

2. **Capacity Building** – efforts to develop skills in conflict resolution and reconciliation within a group of local peace builders who can then use these skills within and between their own communities. These skills include a creative blend of both the local, indigenous, traditional methods of addressing conflicts and Western-based methods... Capacity building is a key component of the social peace building process, which is about building a human infrastructure.<sup>439</sup>

This point suggests that diplomats should consider the value in blend approaches. This means that, when in a conflict-prone setting, diplomats become comfortable with combining some traditional State department methods with indigenous (or traditional) approaches. Many diplomatic failures in the past were a result of State officials not understanding how to engage critical indigenous practices, social infrastructures and hierarchy within cultures. If blend approaches were considered in most cases, US diplomats

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<sup>438</sup> Notter and Louise Diamond, “Building Peace and Transforming Conflict: Multi-track Diplomacy in Practice”, *Occasional Paper – The Institute for Multi-track Diplomacy*, No. 7 (October 1996): 14.

<sup>439</sup> Ibid, 15.

would not have to rely as much on outsourcing social engagement efforts to NGOs and private organisations (as in the case of the Bush administration).

3. **Institution Building** – efforts to help the local peace builders develop sustainable institutions – organisations, alliances, working groups, university programmes, etc. – that can further the work of peace building theory and practice in the conflict system and the broader region.<sup>440</sup>

This last position implies that US diplomats must work to maintain trusted and cooperative relations by constructing critical infrastructures within these regions. Hence, there are numerous post-conflict peace-building reform efforts currently underway (in the Middle East and South Asia), but the elements of trust and confidence among Muslim publics toward American leadership are generally low – contributing to setbacks and false starts. McDonald agrees with this point by acknowledging that the USG is overwhelmingly political and bureaucratic as well as deeply engaged in meeting secular demands rather than the mutual concerns of the “other”. In this case, “The negative potential [of the USG] is its rigidity, exclusivity, elitism, and potential abuse of power. Its institutes and thinking are strongly embedded in the state-centric mode of power politics, and its [resistance to] change.”<sup>441</sup>

This state-centric behaviour is what McDonald has essentially argued against thus far in his recommendations; he sees it as the key problem as to why the State Department and its senior officials are reluctant to recognise or even incorporate the many key methods offered by Track 2 actors. For the US diplomat, McDonald advises that a globally interdependent

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<sup>440</sup> Notter and Diamond, “Building Peace and Transforming Conflict”, 16-17.

<sup>441</sup> Louise Diamond and Amb. John McDonald, *Multi-Track Diplomacy: A Systems Approach to Peace*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Connecticut: Kumarian Press, 1996), 33.



methodology will, in fact, aid the outcome of State foreign policymaking, but it will also help US diplomats to develop mutually empowered responses while in the foreign sector. Embracing this perspective broadens the discussion to consider Madeline Albright's position, which integrates both Rubin's and McDonald's theses that push toward sacred-secular engagement within conflict-prone settings, thus employing a special diplomat within the US Department of State.

#### **6.4. Albright: *Improving religious relations***

Former Secretary of State Madeline Albright framed the third recommendation. The Albright thesis acknowledges that since living in a world without religion is highly unlikely, the neighbouring alternative should be that of dealing directly with religion to comprehend its methods and contributions to the world in which we live. The secretary puts forth that, "The challenge for [US] policymakers is to harness the unifying potential of faith, while containing its capacity to divide." Hence, "This requires, at a minimum, that we see spiritual matters as a subject worth studying."<sup>442</sup> Assuring the State Department's establishment of a course

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<sup>442</sup>Madeline Albright and Bill Woodward, *The Mighty & The Almighty: Reflections on Power, God, and World Affairs* (London: McMillan, 2006), 64. The Albright thesis complements the earlier Rubin-Habermasian argument which calls for a dual integration and respectful fellowship between the sacred and secular mentalities. This benefits the US Track 1 level. Such a dual integration between these two mentalities supports Max Horkheimer's claim that interdisciplinary analysis and "a critical theory" encourage practical responses over theoretical remedies. See Max Horkheimer, *Critical Theory* (New York: Seabury Press, 1982); Max Horkheimer and T.W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York: Seabury, 1972). As will be discussed later in this study, a critical theory, as indicated by Horkheimer, encourages a sense of "human emancipation" and liberation away from the otherwise oppressive views imposed by society, men, or institutions. Generally emerging in the face of many social movements (feminism, black and liberation theology, post-colonial race theory), a critical theory encourages alternative space and an alternative argument which allows what Horkheimer regards as "human emancipation" to emerge. In a larger sense, a critical theory moves from traditional examination to the alternative investigation and application of social ideas. In short, a critical theory of investigation is a radical expression which helps to formulate broader thinking on social issues; Max Horkheimer, director and leading architect of the Institute of Social Research, in Frankfurt, Germany (in the 1930s) agrees that "bringing different disciplines together would yield insights that [are] unobtainable by working within narrow and increasingly specialised academic

whereby broad international religious affairs are of central concern, four proposals are provided in *The Mighty and Almighty: Reflections of Power, God, and World Affairs* (2006).

Albright's first proposal (in parallel with Barry Rubin's recommendation) affirms "that US diplomats and foreign policymakers should critically study religious matters and incorporate their findings into progressive strategies for peacemaking at the US Department of State." Albright refers to J. Bryan Heir, Harvard University professor of Religion and Public Life and his indication that "there is an assumption that you do not have to understand religion in order to understand the world. You need to understand politics, strategy, economics and law, but you do not need to understand religion."<sup>443</sup> Taking this secular assumption a step further to comprehend the limitation of both political and religious leadership, international relations expert Walter McDougall of the University of Pennsylvania acknowledges that "very few scholars, much less pundits, theologians, or diplomats, display expertise in both fields. Some have a profound understanding of one or more religious traditions, perhaps also a personal faith, but lack knowledge or experience of the rough and tumble of politics. Others are wise in the ways of statecraft either from analysis or practice, but confess to being out of their depth in spiritual matters."<sup>444</sup> McDougall's argument emphasises Albright's point that an integration of sacred and secular mentalities and disciplines would support US diplomats when confronting religious issues. Albright states that:

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domains." James Gordon Finlayson, *Habermas: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005), 3.

<sup>443</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>444</sup> Walter A. McDougall *Religion in Diplomatic History*, *Orbis*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (March 1998) [article online]; available from [http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/archives\\_roll/2001\\_10-12/mcdougall\\_religion/mcdougall\\_religion.html](http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/archives_roll/2001_10-12/mcdougall_religion/mcdougall_religion.html); Internet, accessed 22 March 2008.

To anticipate events rather than merely respond to them, American diplomats will need to take Heir's advice and think more expansively about the role of religion in foreign policy and about their own need for expertise. They should develop the ability to recognise where and how religious beliefs contribute to conflicts and when religious principles might be invoked to ease strife... To lead internationally, American policymakers must learn as much as possible about religion, and then incorporate that knowledge in their strategies.<sup>445</sup>

(This position has the potential to encourage senior State Department officials such as the Secretary of State, the Director General of the Foreign Service, Undersecretaries of State for Political Affairs, Democracy and Global Affairs, and Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs to consider encompassing this directive. If this recommendation is not implemented from the top down, it is likely that diplomats will not take it seriously and will interpret it as insignificant and lightweight).

Albright's second proposal recommends the State Department to consider the use of religious negotiators to encourage conflict reconciliation in high-level discussions at the State Department. Drawing upon past experience she notes, "When participants in a conflict claim to be people of faith, a negotiator who has the credentials and credibility to do so might wish to call their bluff."<sup>446</sup> This suggests that, in most cases, and with the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, and senior State officials, a knowledgeable representative in international religious affairs should be available to convene parties to carry out conflict reconciliation. Often, a representative who carries "street credibility" among conflicting parties can make a special appeal at a much deeper (or spiritual) level than the traditional US diplomat. The traditional diplomat's diplomacy is most often rooted in game theory, promoting national interest, and decision-making. The appeal made by the religious negotiator may be along spiritual, cultural, or – in some cases – tribal lines, making a two-

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<sup>445</sup> Albright, *The Mighty and the Almighty*, 64-72.

<sup>446</sup> Ibid., 72.

way connection between the negotiator and the communal leadership of these communities.

She acknowledges:

If I were secretary of state today, I would not seek to mediate disputes on the basis of religious principles any more than I would try to negotiate along the more intricate details of a trade agreement or a pact on arms control. In each case, I would ask people more expert than I to begin the process of identifying key issues, exploring the possibilities, and suggesting a course of action. It might be well that my involvement, or the president's, would be necessary to close a deal, but the outlines would be drawn by those who knew every nuance of the issues at hand.<sup>447</sup>

In the third proposal Albright recalls that US diplomats and ambassadors should not allow assumptions regarding the Establishment Clause to condone an ignorance which may hinder their understanding of religious matters. As identified in Chapter 2 with the “crosscutting obstacles” presented by the CSIS 2007 report, a high level of scepticism by USG officials, with special regard to a misreading of the Establishment Clause, is linked to policymakers’ reluctance to engage religious matters and audiences directly – if at all.

If diplomacy is the art of persuading others to act as we would wish, effective foreign policy requires that we comprehend why others act as they do. Fortunately, the constitutional requirement that separates state from church in the United States does not also insist that the state be ignorant of the church, mosque, synagogue, pagoda, and temple. In the future, no American ambassador should be assigned to a country where religious feelings are strong unless he or she has a deep understanding of the faith commonly practiced there. Ambassadors and their representatives, wherever they are assigned, should establish relationships with local religious leaders.<sup>448</sup>

This fear and misreading of the Establishment Clause, has, in effect, created a wave of reluctance among senior State officials, in particular-diplomats and ambassadors, toward

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<sup>447</sup> Ibid., 73; Albright further states, “When I was Secretary of State, I had an entire bureau of economic experts I could turn to, and a cadre of experts on nonproliferation and arms control whose mastery of technical jargon earned them a nickname, ‘the priesthood’. With the notable exception of Ambassador [Bob] Seiple, I did not have similar expertise available for integrating religious principles into our efforts at diplomacy. Given the nature of today’s world, knowledge of this type is essential.” Ibid., 73.

<sup>448</sup> Ibid., 73.

directly engaging religious matters and audiences and incorporating direct approaches when necessary.

The final but most important proposal presented by the Secretary suggests that the “State Department should hire or train a core of specialists in religion to be deployed both in Washington and in key embassies overseas.”<sup>449</sup> This recommendation comes as no surprise, considering the former US secretary’s familiarity with Track 2 NGO peacemakers and their influence in resolving intractable conflict during her administration.<sup>450</sup> (Many US-based Track 2 NGOs, such as the United States Institute of Peace, the Institute for Multi-track Diplomacy, the Institute for Religion and Foreign Policy, the International Center for Religion and Diplomacy and even the Carter Center have for years employed highly-trained staff to address high-priority conflicts with religious dimensions). Taking note of the many positive results by Track 2 actors and their organisations, Albright adds that a reading from US diplomats and academics like Douglas Johnston and Brian Cox’s “faith-based diplomacy” would help rebuild and improve certain aspects of the State Department’s peacemaking efforts and the future development of a core of “Religious Specialists”.<sup>451</sup>

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<sup>449</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>450</sup> For example, Albright acknowledges this impact in the Track 2 sector in these words, “Over a period of years, Sant’Egidio usefully brokered negotiations ending a long and bloody civil war in Mozambique. It has also played a constructive role in, among other places, Kosovo, Algeria, Burundi, and Congo. The community sees prayer, service to the poor, ecumenism, and dialogue as the building blocks of interreligious cooperation and problem solving. Numerous other faith-based organisations, representing every major religion, are in operation. They are most effective when they function cooperatively, pooling their resources and finding areas in which to specialise. Some are most skilled at mediation; others are best at helping former combatants readjust to civilian life. Still others emphasise prevention, addressing a problem before it can explode into violence... Together, these activists have more resources, more skilled personnel, a longer attention span, more experience, more dedication, and more success in fostering reconciliation than any government.” Ibid., 75.

<sup>451</sup> See, Albright, *The Mighty and the Almighty*, 76.

According to Johnston and Cox's research, "Faith-based diplomacy, while conceptually new to the field of international relations, is a form of Track 2 (unofficial) diplomacy that integrates the dynamics of religious faith with the conduct of international peacemaking. As such, it is more about reconciliation than it is conflict resolution."<sup>452</sup> Albright's recommendation for a core of specialists in religion indicates that State Department officials will more than likely benefit from having an understanding of NGO intermediary approaches. The faith-based diplomacy that Albright refers to notes, "The peace that it pursues is not the mere absence of conflict but rather a restoration of healthy and respectful relationships between the parties."<sup>453</sup> Johnston asserts that reconciliation rather than resolution of a conflict should be the general aim. This requires then that Albright's Religion Specialist should have an in-depth knowledge of the core groups involved. However, the issue today is that US diplomats recruited to the Economic, Political, Public Diplomacy, Consular, or Management tracks within the US Foreign Service (as McDougall noted above), have little or no training in the areas of international religious affairs, conflict transformation or international relations, which suggests a critical need by the State Department to address Albright's final recommendation.<sup>454</sup>

This thesis argues that what may have prompted Albright's concern for the development of this future specialist may be the five characteristics of the "faith-based intermediary" which Johnston and Cox identify: (a) *be endowed with an ability to utilise spiritual principles in peacemaking*; (b) *operate with spiritual authority in times of crisis*; (c) *be able to respect the essence of other religious traditions*; (d) *understand the impact of*

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<sup>452</sup> Douglas Johnston and Brian Cox, "Faith-based Diplomacy and Preventive Engagement", *Faith-Based Diplomacy: Trumping Realpolitik* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2003), 15.

<sup>453</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>454</sup> For more on the various tracks associated with the US Foreign Service, see Shawn Dorman, ed. *Inside a US Embassy: How the Foreign Service Works for America* (Washington: American Foreign Service Association Press, 2005).

*utilising spiritual texts to connect with religious audiences at a deeper level and; (e) be recognised as having a spiritual perseverance which is grounded in their own faith tradition.*<sup>455</sup> Scott Appleby, director of the University of Notre Dame – Joan G. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, takes the Johnston-Cox position a step further, suggesting that (in addition to these five characteristics) the faith-based intermediary should also reconsider the use of traditional conflict resolution approaches, which most often overlook vital cultural and religious tenets beneficial to the conflict transformation process.

Faith-based diplomacy, therefore, is the work, at least in part, of insiders with expertise in the religious tradition(s) whose meaning and relevance for the contemporary conflict is being contested... Proponents of faith-based diplomacy are well advised to invite and honour the first-order discourse spoken by jurists, sages, gurus, bishops, theologians, and ethicists who elicit the concrete language of ‘diplomacy’ not from **the conflict resolution textbooks and tradition of the West** but from the vernacular of the religious and ethnic communities they represent... The faith-based [intermediary] is challenged to negotiate these psychodynamics, imbedded as they are in the social relations of the religious community, and to evoke the peacemaking option within that community.<sup>456</sup>

Drawing from Appleby’s argument, it appears that the faith-based intermediary must either come from or resonate with the conflict-habituated community. This action allows time and space for the intermediary to listen before dictating an unreasonable position. In addition, this is what Albright has envisioned of this future core of specialists on religious matters – a core respective of multi-religious beliefs, capable of engaging religious analysis while promoting sustainable US foreign policy; and individuals who are well prepared to engage religious audiences and leadership by invoking non-violent peacemaking options. Albright’s recommendation prepares a way for the research to think critically about a new type of US Foreign Service Officer or core of specialists for handling broad international religious

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<sup>455</sup> Johnston and Cox, “Faith-based Diplomacy and Preventive Engagement”, 16-18.

<sup>456</sup> Scott R. Appleby, “Retrieving the Missing Dimension of Statecraft: Religious Faith in the Service of Peacebuilding”, *Faith-Based Diplomacy: Trumping Realpolitik* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2003), 231-258.

affairs, which, in effect, improves State's communication practices. Her proposals (in favour of religious analysis, utilising religious negotiators, comprehending the limitations of the Establishment Clause, and a cadre of Religion Specialists) create an opportunity to review a more practical proposal than has taken this position seriously prior to her administration. In 1994, Edward Luttwak would make a similar case, but when integrated here with Albright's argument the vision of this potential player within the State Department becomes more apparent, thus allowing for a deeper exploration.

### 6.5. Luttwak: *An underdeveloped alternative*

Edward Luttwak, military strategist and former State and Defense Department analyst, offers the final recommendation on the role religious analysis shall contribute to US foreign policymaking when employing a special actor. As with Rubin's theory, the Luttwak thesis confronts the secularist modernisation argument (called secular reductivism<sup>457</sup>), adding that post-Kantian Enlightenment established a predisposition in the liberal-secular state against religion, which is often held by both US foreign policymakers and politicians.<sup>458</sup> Its

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<sup>457</sup> This term is synonymous with the traditional secularist modernisation position, which suggests that the influences of religion and religious issues are becoming reduced in international affairs. The secular reductivism premise, we know thus far, is unwarranted and is regarded in this study as insignificant to the promotion of religious analysis and peacemaking efforts, which involve direct engagement with religious audiences.

<sup>458</sup> Kant suggests that if man were to separate his thoughts, which were created by "*the self*" away from those of the sacred, then true enlightenment might emerge. In Kant's view, enlightenment emerged when man freed himself from the authority of the sacred. Since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, this philosophy has spanned the ages and is present in the formation of Western civil law, Western political decision making, and in US liberal secular reasoning. Kant argues in *What is Enlightenment*, "Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-incurred immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's own understanding without the guidance of another. This immaturity is self-incurred if its cause is not lack of understanding, but lack of resolution and courage to use it without the guidance of another. The motto of enlightenment is therefore: *Sapere aude!* Have courage to use your own understanding!" Since the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Western society, this philosophy remains central in encouraging the separation of sacred and secular thought in the public arena. See also Paul Guyer, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Kant* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2006).



position also suggests that religion be discarded and pushed to the fringe (considering its non-essential place in international affairs). Luttwak states:

Policymakers, diplomats, journalists, and scholars who are ready to over-interpret economic causality, who are apt to dissect social differentiations most finely, and who will minutely categorise political affiliations are still in the habit of disregarding the role of religion, religious institutions, and religious motivations in explaining politics and conflict, and even in reporting their concrete modalities. Equally, the role of religious leaders, religious institutions, and religiously motivated lay figures in conflict resolution has been disregarded – or treated as a marginal phenomenon hardly worth noting.<sup>459</sup>

The marginalisation of religious issues, according to Luttwak, is often the most important factor contributing to failure in both the US diplomatic and intelligence communities when they are at stake. He adds, “one should not perpetuate administratively the misconception that religion, with its institutions and leaders, is necessarily a marginal factor, or necessarily a diminishing force, or necessarily a purely political (or social, or economic, or ethnic) phenomenon in religious guise.”<sup>460</sup> In this situation, the challenge for the US foreign policymaker is to close the gap between sacred-secular relations and encourage the raw analysis of religion in international affairs to emerge within US foreign policymaking circles when needed.

Luttwak’s position comprehends the stakes and has seriously considered the vital contribution which religion, its actors, and its institution are likely to make in securing peace in conflict-prone settings. The absurdities of secular reductivism, related to the discarding of religion and evasion of direct religious engagement, are what Luttwak adds as further causes of the USG failure, especially in cases like the 1979 Iranian revolution. Secular reductivism intervened on numerous occasions during the decision-making process on Iran, distorting US

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<sup>459</sup> Edward N. Luttwak, “The Missing Dimension”, *Religion: The Mission Dimension of Statecraft*, eds. Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press: 1994), 9.

<sup>460</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

policy decisions and analysis relating to the impact of prominent Iranian leaders and the socio-religious factions posing a threat to Tehran and US national interests within the region. Overlooking the voice of “actual participants” within the Iranian revolt, US policymakers refused to include vital analysis to verify how, at the time, religion assumed a much larger role than the political or social ones which were suspected.<sup>461</sup>

Pushing the potential of religion analysis to the fringe during the foreign policymaking process reaffirms a much greater assumption: clearly, US foreign policymakers and diplomats today, as in 1979, are simply unaware of how to address or engage either the concept of religion, or religious audiences, effectively during hostile situations. Missed opportunities by US intelligence officers of the CIA to assess key religious dimensions linked to the Iranian revolution indicate that it is easier to overlook the role of religion in international affairs than it is for policymakers, intelligence officers or diplomats to concretely engage with it directly (as was the case under the Bush administration).

US monitoring of Iranian politics should always have included their religious dimension, at the very least to keep abreast of the attitudes and activities of the more prominent religious leaders. But in a particular dogmatic example of secular reductivism, the one-recorded attempt to do just that within the Central Intelligence Agency before the revolution was vetoed on the grounds that it would amount to mere ‘sociology’, a term used in intelligence circles to mean the time-wasting study of factors deemed politically irrelevant.<sup>462</sup>

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<sup>461</sup> The US, Luttwak argues, subsequently emphasises the following secular motives as root causes of the Iranian revolution, stronger than the impact of religion: a) political/constitutional opposition to autocracy; b) economic resentment at wealth inequalities, especially on the part of the newly urbanised masses; c) anger at the regime’s corruption; d) the specific social resentment of the traditional (Bazaari) merchant class at the rise of a new class of large-scale entrepreneurs; and e) “normal” repression. Ibid., 12.

<sup>462</sup> Edward N. Luttwak, “The Missing Dimension”, 12.; For further research into the missed opportunity of the CIA to analyse Iranian religious dimensions before its revolution see James E. Bill, *The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of American-Iranian Relations* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1988).

With the impact of religion, its institutions and audiences on international affairs, it is clear that it would be nonsensical for US policymakers to see it as politically irrelevant. In an effort to provide an effective alternative to secular reductivism toward international religious affairs, Luttwak recommends that a different posture is taken immediately within the US Department of State attending to direct religious engagement and religious analysis. He solidifies his claim by making what this thesis regards as the chief recommendation of those considered so far: *“religious attachés should be assigned to diplomatic missions and US intelligence agencies should recruit religious specialists to remedy US diplomatic and intelligence failures linked to their secular reductivist assumptions.”*<sup>463</sup> But what role might this religious attaché play within the diplomatic environment? Should we assume that this player will be capable of engaging religious audiences directly, and, if so, will it resort to employing public diplomacy and nation-branding communication resources to engage these publics?

## 6.6. Section conclusion

Despite the Bush administration’s reluctance to comprehend the impact of making a post-secular recognition, it is certain that, in order to counteract tension caused by the US-Muslim world communication problem, this recognition must be employed. Thus, between 2001 and 2008, the influence of the Bush Doctrine would dissuade any efforts for USG officials in making this recognition because of its confrontationalist posture to: *promote preemptive strikes, advance military primacy, support a coalition of the willing, and encourage the spread of democracy to combat terror and weapons of mass destruction*. In moving forward, the recommendations presented by Rubin, McDonald, Albright and Luttwak

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<sup>463</sup> Ibid., 16.

give attention to post-secularism by providing structural recommendations. These include modifying America's foreign policy/diplomatic landscape or recruiting a physical player into an already static system. As with various other proposals presented by leading American think-tanks (such as the Brookings Institute, the Council on Foreign Relations and the Heritage Foundation), the following recommendations have also omitted giving attention to the dynamics of communication between US diplomats and religious audiences.

Together, Barry Rubin and former Secretary of State Madeline Albright establish clearly that the only limitation the USG set toward engaging broad religious affairs is not put forth in the US Establishment Clause, but rather is located in partisan political assumptions that prolong public ignorance toward critical post-secular affairs. Their call to invite religious analysis or even religious negotiation within the national security/policymaking forum is bold, but limiting in that it falls short at linking this ambition to a communication path. To assure that permanent infrastructures are in place, McDonald acknowledges that trusted relations between the US and religious audiences must be established at a grassroots level to assure critical partnerships. His seasoned recommendation establishes a starting point, but does not go beyond a reliance on NGO partnerships and providing a structural system to work within. Conversely, what is missing is serious attention in their recommendations to clarifying how US players might apply a more engaged approach, that focuses specifically on communication, when addressing religious audiences.

Two points are made clear from these recommendations: a) improving US-Muslim world relations should not be entirely about raising favourability; and b) if the State Department is serious about improving present relations, critical attention shall be given to comprehending the value of building trusted partnerships (at a grassroots level) with key

players throughout the Muslim world. Carrying out these two points will more than likely require amplification of Luttwak's structural recommendation to demonstrate how either a religion specialist or religion attaché shall engage religious audiences communicatively. Considering the recent shift in the American political system, this study makes an invaluable contribution in Part 3 by introducing new methods to improve US-Muslim world communication under a new presidential administration. Hence, we will evaluate whether it is necessary to modify the current State Department's communication practices, thereby considering new ways to engage Islamic society directly. This will require taking Luttwak's recommendation a step further by exploring in detail the 2004 follow-up proposal by Douglas Johnston which called for a religion attaché to serve at a more concrete level in the US Foreign Service.

## **PART 3**

### **WHEN POSSIBILITY MEETS PRACTISE**

## CHAPTER 7

### STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION UNDER A NEW PRESIDENCY

#### 7.1. Introduction: *A transition of power*

On November 4, 2008, the United States of America embarked upon a historical and political transition which presented a fresh signal to the international community by its election of the first African-American President, Barack Hussein Obama.<sup>464</sup> This transition did not, by any means, occur in a straightforward manner. Arguably, it came into being in part due to the Obama campaign's grassroots stand in opposition to the failing Bush-Cheney White House and its consistent effort to restore confidence and hope to the US general electorate.<sup>465</sup> Some have even suggested that it was Obama's persuasive political rhetoric, re-emphasising to the American public the economic and foreign policy setbacks over the last eight years, that secured him the presidency.<sup>466</sup> It seems more probably to have been his clear-eyed, direct communicative approach to the US general electorate that embodied the power of the nation and convinced it that effective change came not from the top down, but from the bottom up. Therefore, if the electors were to embrace this change in course and elect a new administration, an Obama presidency would openly seek to restore American values at

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<sup>464</sup> See Mark Curtis, *Age of Obama: a reporter's journey with Clinton, McCain and Obama in the Making of the President 2008* (Ann Arbor: Nimble Books, 2009); Tim J. Wise, *Between Barack and a Hard Place: Racism and White Denial in the Age of Obama* (San Francisco: City Light Books, 2009).

<sup>465</sup> Michael D. Shear and Kevin Sullivan, *Obama Portrays Another Side of US* [article online]; available from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/04/07/AR2009040701405.html>; Internet, accessed 5 April 2009.

<sup>466</sup> See Jann S. Wenner, *How Obama Won: Two leading political experts on the historic election – and how it could usher in 'a brand-new nation'* (27 November 2008) [article online]; available from [http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/story/24200780/how\\_obama\\_won/print](http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/story/24200780/how_obama_won/print); Internet, accessed 5 April 2009.

home, promote transparent domestic and foreign policies and restore both America's international standing in the world and its ailing economy.<sup>467</sup> Since the presidential election and the electing of a Democratic Congressional majority, a newly kindled political spirit is present in the country. The fear of a unilateral US government engrossed in securing its own ends appears, to some degree, to be on the wane, and a renewed sense of hope for collaborative, global engagement is replacing it. But how will this significant transition affect the future of communicative relations between the US and the Muslim world?

As a US presidential hopeful, Obama publicly observed that an enlightened alternative to engaging US allies and foes alike deserved consideration for making and sustaining peace in the Near East.<sup>468</sup> This new position acknowledged a possible US response beyond total reliance on military might.<sup>469</sup> It also meant that a preliminary option of directly

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<sup>467</sup> Barack Obama, *Transparency and Open Government* (21 January 2009) [document online]; available from [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Transparency\\_and\\_Open\\_Government/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Transparency_and_Open_Government/); Internet, accessed 5 April 2009.

<sup>468</sup> See Barack Obama, *The Blueprint for Change: Barack Obama's Plan for America* [online document]; available from [www.barackobama.com/pdf/ObamaBlueprintForChange.pdf](http://www.barackobama.com/pdf/ObamaBlueprintForChange.pdf); Internet, accessed 5 April 2009.

<sup>469</sup> Looking back at how the USG, under the Bush Demonstration, sought to extend US military might in the Muslim world through congressional support is recognised with the Kyl-Lieberman Amendment (H.R. 1585) (S. Amdt. 3017). The resolution, in effect, set out to provide a pretext for the USG to extend its military presence from the Iraq war into Iran. The resolution is drawn from compounded sources that suggest an Iran-Iraq connection and the extent of Iran's support of Shi'a militia extremists in Iraq. The amendment suggests that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran is involved with turning "Shi'a extremists into an armed faction that services its interest by providing a 'proxy' war against the Iraqi state and coalition forces." To make this case, testimonies and research were collected from Gen. David Petraeus (then Commander of the Multi-national Force Iraq), US Ambassador to Iraq Ryan Cocker, *National Intelligence Estimates on Iraq* (August 2007), *The Report of the Independent Commission on the Security Forces of Iraq* (September 6, 2007), General James Jones (Ret.), President Mahmoud Ahmedinejad, and the Department of Defense's report to Congress (*Measuring the Stability in Iran*, September 18, 2007). Under the Kyl-Lieberman amendment, the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps of Iran is designated as being a foreign terrorist organisation, padding its argument to extend a US military presence in Iran. This decision is criticised as having the potential to undermine US security interests, which otherwise possibly allowing for full de facto authorisation of USG forces to enter Iran in an effort to "roll-back" its alleged influence in Iraq. This amendment passed, 76-22, in September 2007 with democratic leadership with then Senator Barack Obama abstaining support or voting against the amendment. See, H.R. 1585 – "Kyl-Lieberman Amendment" *Roll-call* (26 September 2007) [article online]; available



engaging international Muslim audiences in an effort to curb terrorist activities and sectarian violence, especially throughout Afghanistan and Iraq, should be employed.<sup>470</sup> During the campaign, it was less popular foreign policy to reject, as Obama did, the conservative Bush-Cheney posture of engaging US foes, like Syria and Iran, of the Muslim world. For example, in *The Blueprint for Change: Obama's Plan for America*, Obama outlines three major platforms regarding the government of the Islamic State of Iran. If given the opportunity, he would: a) exhaust the non-military peacemaking option in confronting potential threats; b) oppose any effort to extend the present Iraq war into Iran; and c) employ direct presidential diplomacy with Iran without preconditions.<sup>471</sup> This challenging blueprint presents an opportunity to rethink future US-Muslim world engagement by placing greater emphasis on the grassroots level<sup>472</sup>.

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[http://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll\\_call\\_lists/roll\\_call\\_vote\\_cfm.cfm?congress=110&session=1&vote=00349](http://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll_call_lists/roll_call_vote_cfm.cfm?congress=110&session=1&vote=00349); Internet, accessed 5 April 2009.

<sup>470</sup> Pondering why further efforts beyond direct Oval Office engagement are vital, see Juan Cole, *Engaging the Muslim World* (New York, Palgrave MacMillian, 2009); Stephen R. Grand and Kristin M. Lord, *To Rebuild US-Muslim World Relations Obama is Not Enough* [article online] available from [http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2009/0326\\_muslim\\_world\\_relations\\_grand.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2009/0326_muslim_world_relations_grand.aspx); Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

<sup>471</sup> Ibid; see Scott Lucas, (15 April 2009) *US-Iran Engagement: Washington to Drop Nuclear Precondition on Talks?* [article online] available from <http://enduringamerica.com/2009/04/15/us-iran-engagement-washington-to-drop-nuclear-precondition-on-talks/>; Internet, accessed 15 April 2009.

<sup>472</sup> My reference to this grassroots level refers specifically to the re-establishment of direct human-to-human engagement within predominantly Muslim publics where a restoration of US-Muslim world relations must first begin. My communication strategy (as we will discuss further in this chapter) shall be employed at this level when a key player engages critical infrastructures in the Muslim world to restore these relations. These key infrastructures relate specially to: religious and academic institutions, civic officials, religious and tribal leadership and, most importantly, the general public. The communication strategy this study finds most fitting must not resemble the communication approach that the USG will use to engage governments in the Muslim world (i.e. traditional diplomacy). This re-establishment of US-Muslim world relations calls, in effect, for an alternative communication strategy that ensures direct human-to-human interactivity that draws on specific tools to enhance relationship building.

However, many political and diplomatic developments have occurred since President Obama took office.<sup>473</sup> From the onset, the question: Will Obama translate what scholar Deborah P. Atwater has called a “*Political Rhetoric of Hope*”<sup>474</sup> into specific occasions of engagement between secular diplomats from his administration and key religious players within Muslim audiences? If his rhetoric does not connect with practise then there will probably be a gap between Obama’s political rhetoric of hope (which transcends US borders) and any diplomatic solution that attempts to satisfy international Muslim audiences.

The facts are clear: the communicative practises employed within the US Department of State between 2001 and 2008 to conduct Muslim outreach are, today, not credible resources for restoring trusted relations. The Obama administration must consider more formidable approaches that recognise the impact the emergence of post-secularism is having on US foreign affairs, thus creating policies reflective of these events and incorporating the

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<sup>473</sup> Many pressing developments since Obama’s January 2009 inauguration have centred around reshaping US multilateralism with the UN, US-China relations and most of all future US relations with Pakistan and Iran (its nuclear capabilities and the role it is likely to play in curbing terrorist activity in both South and Central Asia). See Johanna Mendelson Forman, *Investing in a New Multilateralism: A Smart Power Approach to the United Nations* (January 2009) [online document]; available from [http://www.csis.org/media/isis/pubs/090128\\_mendelsonforman\\_un\\_smartpower\\_web.pdf](http://www.csis.org/media/isis/pubs/090128_mendelsonforman_un_smartpower_web.pdf); Internet, accessed 9 April 2009; William S. Cohen and Maurice R. Greenberg, *Smart Power in US-China Relations: A Report of the CSIS Commission on China* (March 2009) [online document]; available from [http://www.csis.org/media/isis/pubs/090309\\_mcgiffert\\_uschinasmartpower\\_web.pdf](http://www.csis.org/media/isis/pubs/090309_mcgiffert_uschinasmartpower_web.pdf); Internet, accessed 9 April 2009; Daniel Markey, *Securing Pakistan’s Tribal Belt* (Council Special Report No.6, August 2008) [online document]; available from [http://www.cfr.org/content/publications/attachments/Pakistan\\_CSR36.pdf](http://www.cfr.org/content/publications/attachments/Pakistan_CSR36.pdf); Internet, accessed 9 April 2009; Michael Makovsky, et al., *Meeting the Challenge: US Policy Toward Iranian Nuclear Development* (September 2008) [online document]; available from <http://www.bipartisanpolicy.org/ht/a/GetDocumentAction/i/8448>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009; Robert Satloff and Patrick Clawson, et al., *Preventing a Cascade of Instability: US Engagement to Check Iranian Nuclear Progress* (March 2009) [online document]; available from <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/pubPDFs/PTF-Iran.pdf>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

<sup>474</sup> See, Deborah P. Atwater, “Senator Barack Obama: The Rhetoric of Hope and the American Dream”, *Journal of Black Studies*, 38, No. 2 (2007): 121-129; see also Barack Obama, “The World Beyond our Borders”, *The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream* (New York: Vintage Books, 2006), 320-382; Barack Obama, *Change We Can Believe In: Barack Obama’s Plan to Renew America’s Promise* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2008).

perspectives of moderate Muslims and Islamic scholars into the US foreign policy debate. To bombard international Muslim audiences with a robust propaganda campaign, as taken during the Bush era, only weakens America's popularity.

Chapter 7 will establish a new discourse on how the Obama administration may advance its communicative practises during this new era. While the international community will possibly become fatigued to Obama's newness, their scepticism toward US-Muslim world relations will remain. Notwithstanding the stockpile of policy options that will evolve during Obama's presidency, the most vital policy of this thesis is the restoring of trusted relations by the USG with international Muslim publics. This dubious task will require the State Department to rethink how past communicative resources (to "Brand America") seriously damaged US-Muslim world relations, and how a more engaged approach may possibly restore these relations.

## **7.2. Treating communication under an Obama administration**

What the Obama administration should recall is that, for some time, the US Department of State has felt tension over its communication efforts with the Muslim world. In the last decade, excessive dependence on a robust public diplomacy campaign to placate Muslim publics by promoting outreach, while the Bush White House trumpeted a *Realpolitik* throughout Afghanistan, Iraq and northern-Pakistan, has exacerbated the tension. Since 2001, many governments in Muslim countries have become sceptical of the political inconsistencies in US-Muslim world relations.<sup>475</sup> The US-Muslim Engagement Project, comprising thirty-

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<sup>475</sup> See, Meg Bortin, *Global Poll Shows Wide Distrust of the United States* [article online] available from <http://www.globalpolicy.org/empire/challenges/general/2007/0627polldistrust.htm>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

four American leaders and led by former Secretary of State Madeline Albright and Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, have acknowledged that:

During the past several years, it has become clear that military force may be necessary, but is not sufficient, to defeat violent extremism in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, or to prevent attacks elsewhere. Moreover, military action has significant costs to US standing in the world, and to our ability to gain the cooperation of other countries in counterterrorism, and counterinsurgency operations. Senior US defence and military leaders have recognised the primary importance of diplomatic, political, economic, and cultural initiatives in combating extremism.<sup>476</sup>

According to the project, they maintain that the US military option should not be employed to support a unilateral agenda, but only as a last resort to sustain peace in hostile regions. In addition, they indicate that secular resources should be pooled with religious, political, cultural and economic resources to reconcile the deep-seated tension that often overflow with such hostile factions as Al-Qaeda, the Taliban and other terrorist networks in Central and South Asia. In essence, the Obama administration has agreed with this recommendation that US diplomacy serve as a first option, as opposed to military force, in future cases.

As indicated above, efforts to revitalise the State Department's communicative practises are not a new set of concerns. The GAO addressed them during State's Muslim world outreach campaign in their 2005 report, *US Public Diplomacy: Interagency Coordination Efforts Hampered by the Lack of National Communication Strategy*, and in 2006, in *State Department Efforts to Engage Muslim Audiences Lack Certain Communication Elements and Face Significant Challenges*. The latter report identified clear

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<sup>476</sup> Report of the Leadership Group on US-Muslim Engagement, *Changing Course: A New Direction for US Relations with the Muslim World* [online document] available from [http://www.usmuslimengagement.org/storage/usme/documents/Changing\\_Course\\_-\\_A\\_New\\_Direction\\_for\\_US\\_Relations\\_with\\_the\\_Muslim\\_World.pdf](http://www.usmuslimengagement.org/storage/usme/documents/Changing_Course_-_A_New_Direction_for_US_Relations_with_the_Muslim_World.pdf); Internet, accessed 9 April 2009, 2.

observations for the State Department, that it should: a) implement guidance modelled on private sector best practices for its public diplomacy strategy; b) establish a sample country-level communication plan that could be adapted for local use by posts; and c) set up a systematic mechanism for sharing best practice data to address long-standing programme challenges. Near the end of Bush's term, the findings conclude that the State Department communicated with the GAO, by sending follow-up reports indicating that it would correct these practises – but no concrete efforts were implemented.<sup>477</sup>

In addition to this appeal, the US-Muslim Engagement Project has, since 2008, called for a new strategy to advance four specific goals:

- a. The elevation of diplomacy as the primary tool for resolving key conflicts involving Muslim countries by engaging both allies and adversaries in dialogue;
- b. Support of efforts to improve governance and promote civic participation in Muslim countries;
- c. Help to catalyse job-creating growth in Muslim countries to benefit both them and the US; and,

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<sup>477</sup> “In May 2006, GAO reported (U.S. Public Diplomacy: State Department Efforts to Engage Muslim Audiences Lack Certain Communication Elements and Face Significant Challenges) that State Department efforts to communicate with the Muslim audiences faced challenges related to staffing and security at posts in the Muslim world and that State lacked a systematic mechanism for sharing best practices, which could help address these challenges. GAO recommended that State strengthen existing systems of sharing best practices in order to more systematically transfer knowledge among embassies around the world. In response, State expanded its INFOCENTRAL Web site for public diplomacy practitioners; this site now prominently features a link to a best practices database intended for public diplomacy staff to share ideas and find information on managing programs. In addition, in January 2007 State held a worldwide Public Affairs Officer conference, which, according to the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, was intended for officers to share best practices and to hear updates from State Department and interagency colleagues from the field and in Washington.” GAO Report (GAO-06-535 May 3, 2006) *U.S. Public Diplomacy: State Department Efforts to Engage Muslim Audiences Lack Certain Communication Elements and Face Significant Challenges* [online document] available from <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-06-535>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

- d. Improve mutual respect and understanding between Americans and Muslims around the world.

The *symptoms* of insufficient and indirect US communication with the Muslim world have developed into what appears to be a labyrinth of miscommunication. *Causes* behind these symptoms relate, in part, to the many grievances held by hostile parties over American leadership and its foreign policies within/toward predominantly Muslim countries and America's political realism posture to overlook religious and cultural elements within the foreign affairs debate. In seeking a new way forward, first, it is necessary to review recent suggestions made by Obama's administration to employ *proactive measures* to treat communicative relations with international Muslim audiences. To attain the *fourth* goal of the US-Muslim Engagement Project, to improve mutual respect and understanding between American and Muslims around the world, this position warrants meaningful consideration.

Since taking office, Obama has committed himself to direct Oval Office engagement with the Muslim world – raising suspicion among conservative leadership in Washington.<sup>478</sup> Within Obama's first 100 days as President, his administration put forth a robust *domestic and foreign policy balancing act*, giving equal attention to the global economic meltdown and foreign affairs associated with drawing down troops in Iraq and potentially increasing troops in Afghanistan to address escalating tension along the North-West Frontier Province

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<sup>478</sup> While speculation grew around Obama's limited foreign policy experience and his evolving foreign policy on the Israeli-Palestinian debacle, Robert Dreyfuss of *The Nation* notes of other foreign policy matters that were of concern to conservatives and liberals alike: "In some important areas, Obama would alter or reverse course: he'd draw down forces in Iraq; open talks with adversaries such as Iran, Syria and Cuba; end torture and close Guantánamo; renounce unilateralism and preventive wars; rebuild ties with allies; and re-engage with the Kyoto climate change initiative. He's also pledged to halt the development of and to seek a 'world without nuclear weapons.' In sharp contrast to presumptive GOP nominee John McCain, Obama would start to put the threat of terrorism in its proper perspective, elevating the importance of other threats to security, from poverty to pandemic disease to global warming." Robert Dreyfuss *Obama's Evolving Foreign Policy* [article online] available from <http://www.thenation.com/doc/20080721/dreyfuss>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

(SWAT Valley). In an initial effort to treat communication differently in the Middle East, both Senator George Mitchell and Richard Holbrooke were sent as special envoys to the Middle East and South Asia. Their tasks included rebooting the Middle East peace process and addressing the USG's tough stance against a nuclear Iran while reviving US relations with key regional players such as Syria and Pakistan, and Afghanis (i.e. key Pashtun tribesmen and moderate Taliban leaders). As head of state, Obama publically pledged that his administration would directly engage the Muslim world (adopting a set of similar proposals comparable to the US-Muslim Engagement Project) upon taking office. Emphasising the role of the US to usher in a new era of peace, President Obama stated in his inaugural address (January 20, 2009):

To the Muslim world, we seek a new way forward, based on mutual interest and mutual respect. To those leaders around the globe who seek to sow conflict or blame their society's ills on the West, know that your people will judge you on what you can build, not what you destroy... To those who cling to power through corruption and deceit and the silencing of dissent, know that you are on the wrong side of history, but that we will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist.<sup>479</sup>

The Obama Doctrine on engaging the Muslim world starkly contrasts with that of the Bush Doctrine, which states, "The strategy to counter the lies behind the terrorists' ideology is to empower the very people the terrorists most want to exploit: the faithful followers of Islam." Thus the Bush administration, "will continue to support political reforms that empower peaceful Muslims to practice and interpret their faith."<sup>480</sup> As a first option on this issue, it appears the Obama Doctrine stands "to empower moderate Muslims," while also incorporating aspects of religious discourse into US foreign policymaking.

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<sup>479</sup> Barack Obama, *President Barack Obama's Inaugural Address* [document online] available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/inaugural-address/>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

<sup>480</sup> "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America" (March 2006) [online document] available from <http://www.marforres.usmc.mil/docs/nss2006.pdf>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009, 11.



In setting a new tone (only seven days into the presidency), Obama affirmed this stance in his first prime-time interview. Rather than addressing the Muslim world via a US news agency (CNN, NBC or CBS), surprising both the Muslim world and the American public, the Dubai-based (and part Saudi owned) Arabic and Farsi language news agency, Al-Arabiya syndicated this White House interview. As an initial step in treating communication differently, the President emphasised what activities were already under way. In the active and aggressive US peacemaking efforts between the Israelis and Palestinians (and the administration's call for a two-state solution), Obama noted of his recent envoy, led by Senator George Mitchell:

He is one of the few people who has international experience brokering peace deals. *And so what I told him is start by listening, because all too often the United States starts by dictating – in the past on some of these issues – and we don't always know all the factors that are involved. So let's listen.* He's going to be speaking to all the major parties involved. And he will then report back to me. From there we will formulate a response. Ultimately, we cannot tell either the Israelis or the Palestinians what's best for them. They're going to have to make some decisions.<sup>481</sup>

Unlike previous cabinets, the Obama administration has taken early measures to address the Middle East crisis. Steps have included taking a broad and holistic approach to the region, thus comprehending that the Israeli-Palestinian crisis is not a solitary event, but more accurately an “interrelated” activity which fuels intractable conflicts in Pakistan, Syria, Lebanon, Iran, Afghanistan and Iraq.<sup>482</sup> Efforts to end these widespread events will demand

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<sup>481</sup> Obama further states, “He’s going to be speaking to all the major parties involved. And he will then report back to me. From there we will formulate a specific response. Ultimately, we cannot tell either the Israelis or the Palestinians what’s best for them. They’re going to have to make some decisions. But I do believe that the moment is ripe for both sides to realise that the path that they are on is one that is not going to result in prosperity and security for their people. And that instead, it’s time to return to the negotiating table.” Hisham Melhem (27 January 2009) *President Gives First Interview Since Taking Office to Arab TV: “Obama Tells Al Arabiya Peace Talks Should Resume”* [online transcript] available from <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2009/01/27/65087.html>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

<sup>482</sup> Acknowledging the importance of taking a holistic approach to the region, Obama, in agreement with Melhem, asserted, “I do think that it is impossible for us to think only in terms of the



an Obama administration that is diplomatically prepared from the outset to acknowledge (as Esposito claims) the turmoil of the Israeli-Palestinian debacle and the necessity of a new change in course.<sup>483</sup>

In introducing an alternative approach to treating US-Muslim world communicative practises, as nominee to become Secretary of State Senator Hillary Clinton disclosed in her senate confirmation hearing that the State Department would move to employ from the start a strategy of *smart power*. Clinton stated:

As we focus on Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan, we must also actively pursue a strategy of smart power in the Middle East that addresses the security needs of Israel and the legitimate political and economic aspirations of the Palestinians; that effectively challenges Iran to end its nuclear weapons program and sponsorship of terror, and persuades both Iran and Syria to abandon their dangerous behavior and become constructive regional actors; that strengthens

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Palestinian-Israeli conflict and not think in terms of what's happening with Syria or Iran or Lebanon or Afghanistan and Pakistan. These things are interrelated. And what I've said, and I think Hillary Clinton has expressed this in her confirmation, is that if we are looking at the region as a whole and communicating a message to the Arab world and the Muslim world, that we are ready to initiate a new partnership based on mutual respect and mutual interest, then I think that we can make significant progress." Ibid.

<sup>483</sup> See John Esposito, (28 January 2008) *Obama and the Muslim World: Building a New Way Forward* [article online] available from [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-l-esposito/obama-and-the-muslim-world\\_b\\_160392.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-l-esposito/obama-and-the-muslim-world_b_160392.html); Internet, accessed 9 April 2009. Reaffirming his administration's commitment to taking a holistic approach and embracing direct engagement was again made clear when answering a question posed by Caren Bohan of Reuters at the White House on 10 February 2009 regarding the White House's proposed strategy for engaging Iran (whilst addressing the need for congress passing the 2009 Stimulus Bill). In his acknowledgement of the US taking a new course, Obama affirmed, "...[Even] as we engage in this direct diplomacy, we are very clear about certain deep concerns that we have as a country, that Iran understands that we find the funding of terrorist organisations unacceptable, that we're clear about the fact that a nuclear Iran could set off a nuclear arms race in the region that would be profoundly destabilising. So there are going to be a set of objectives that we have in these conversations, but I think that there's the possibility, at least, of a relationship of mutual respect and progress. And I think that if you look at how we've approached the Middle East, my designation of George Mitchell as a special envoy to help deal with the Arab-Israeli situation, some of the interviews that I've given, it indicates the degree to which we want to do things differently in the region." CBS News, *Transcript: First Obama Press Conference* [online transcript] available from <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/02/10/politics/100days/main4789627.shtml>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

our relationships with Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, other Arab states, with Turkey, and with our partners in the Gulf to involve them in securing a lasting peace in the region.<sup>484</sup>

Coined by distinguished Harvard University professor Joseph S. Nye Jr., “smart power” is a relevant term which highlights a much-needed global partnership.<sup>485</sup> Instead of relying too long on *hard power* “to ensure America’s place as a strategic player on the world stage, both *hard* and *soft power* must be incorporated to assure that a complex interdependence is established.”<sup>486</sup> The 2006 CSIS Commission on Smart Power led by Armitage and Nye recognises this:

Smart power is neither hard nor soft – it is the skilful combination of both. Smart power means developing an integrated strategy, resource base, and tool-kit to achieve American objectives, drawing on both hard and soft power. It is an approach that underscores the necessity of a strong military, but also invests heavily in alliances, partnerships, and institutions at all levels to expand American influences and establish the legitimacy of American action.<sup>487</sup>

In this early phase of the administration, uncertainties abound as to how the cabinet will implement this smart power approach, and the effects which its pre-established hard power might have (in Afghanistan and Iraq) before seeking a balance. Yet, the Obama administration has concisely stated what form its diplomacy, comprised of direct approaches, will take, thus sending a clear signal, in contrast to the USG’s previous *Realpolitik* which takes no account of the moral, religious or cultural dimensions of predominately Muslim publics.

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<sup>484</sup> See, Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Nomination Hearing to be Secretary of State* (13 January 2009) [online transcript] available from <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/01/115196.htm>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

<sup>485</sup> For additional literature on Nye’s research on smart power and governance, see Joseph S. Nye, *The Power to Lead* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs Press, 2004); Joseph S. Nye and Robert Keohne, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition* (Boston: Little Brown, 1977).

<sup>486</sup> Richard L. Armitage and Joseph S. Nye, ed. *CSIS Commission on Smart Power: A smarter, more secure America* (Washington, The CSIS Press, 2007); Document [available online] [http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/071106\\_csissmartpowerreport.pdf](http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/071106_csissmartpowerreport.pdf); Internet, accessed 5 April 2009.

<sup>487</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

Two additional challenges warrant further consideration from the Obama administration, apart from the five critical areas proposed by the *CSIS Commissions on Smart Power*: rebuilding the foundation for responding to global challenges; developing a more unified approach through global development; improving access to international knowledge and learning; increasing the benefits of trade for all people; and addressing climate change and energy insecurity.<sup>488</sup> Consideration must be given to these two additional concerns:

- a) The USG must not only see the Muslim world as a set of countries where the practice of Islam is central to the culture, but as a world comprised of multiple socially constructed worlds and traditional frameworks that have to be engaged as a whole; and,
- b) The employment of *smart power* (if it is to be effective in this task) must be accompanied by a strategy of smart communication, which successfully convenes critical religious and political players into a socio-political forum.

Given this information, the Obama administration must factor more lengthy variables into its process with the Muslim world. Apart from Obama's direct Oval Office engagement and the sending of special envoys to the region, the current administration must review, before implementing a new strategy, the application and failure of Brand America, thus realising that today this is not an applicable first option in improving America's image in the Muslim world. Some administrators often make the mistake of believing that already-created foreign policies are so productive that they are sellable to any audience – despite the downturn in previous relations. To bypass more extensive damage to America's image in the

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<sup>488</sup> Ibid.

Muslim world, no consideration should be given to the Brand America option, but emphasis should be placed on employing more direct, grassroots approaches.

### 7.3. The limitations of the “Brand America” campaign in the Muslim world

As covered in Chapter 6, the State Department’s employment of brand management communicative resources (public diplomacy and nation-branding), to date, offer a shallow occasion for a more engaged opportunity at improving US-Muslim world relations. According to Nye and Armitage, the history of this failure is traceable to 1999 when the Clinton administration merged the public diplomacy apparatus USIA into the US Department of State.<sup>489</sup> The reasons behind many of the public diplomacy failures in the Muslim world relate, to some degree, to US budgetary shortfalls in spending and even failed programming efforts (as suggested by high-ranking State officials and according to Assistant Secretary of State for Central and South Asian Affairs, Richard A Boucher).<sup>490</sup> Even though these are the primary reasons for public diplomacy failures, additional variables are contributing factors (i.e. foreign policy and indirect approaches). First, American public diplomacy efforts were waning significantly before September 11; and secondly, after USIA Cold War public diplomacy resources would lose their appeal State officials would falter in making the required transition to critically comprehend the vital dimensions of the Muslim world.<sup>491</sup>

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<sup>489</sup> Richard L. Armitage and Joseph S. Nye, ed. *CSIS Commission on Smart Power: A smarter, more secure America* (Washington, The CSIS Press, 2007) 47; Document [available online] [http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/071106\\_csissmartpowerreport.pdf](http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/071106_csissmartpowerreport.pdf); Internet, accessed 5 April 2009.

<sup>489</sup> Ibid.

<sup>490</sup> Former State Department Spokesman Richard Boucher made note of these failures in his 27 August 2007 press conference, see The US Department of State, *Boucher Reviews US Public Diplomacy to the Muslim World* [article online] available from <http://www.usembassy-israel.org.il/publish/peace/archives/2002/august/082804.html>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

<sup>491</sup> In Nancy El-Girdy’s essay, *Why US Public Diplomacy Failed in the Arab World*, she makes note of the direction US public diplomacy must reach if it is to be successful in connecting

However, referencing the financial impact, Nye and Armitage would argue that:

Although the Clinton administration created a new Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy in 1999 and overall spending on information and educational and cultural affairs rebounded in 2001 under the Bush administration, spending has remained at levels well below the USIA budgets at the start of the 1990s. Current annual public diplomacy spending is just under \$1.5 billion – comparable to what France and Britain each spend annually on public diplomacy efforts [See Figure 1].<sup>492</sup>

Though it is vital to ensure a robust financial package when courting foreign approval through the practice of public diplomacy, it is questionable as to what use this is vis-à-vis the Muslim world if US foreign policymakers and State officials know too little of, or do not want to engage directly with, key infrastructures in the Muslim world. In this case, it appears that the shift from an extensive American public diplomacy campaign throughout Europe to one throughout the Arab, African and Asian world would be met with unsuspected resistance.

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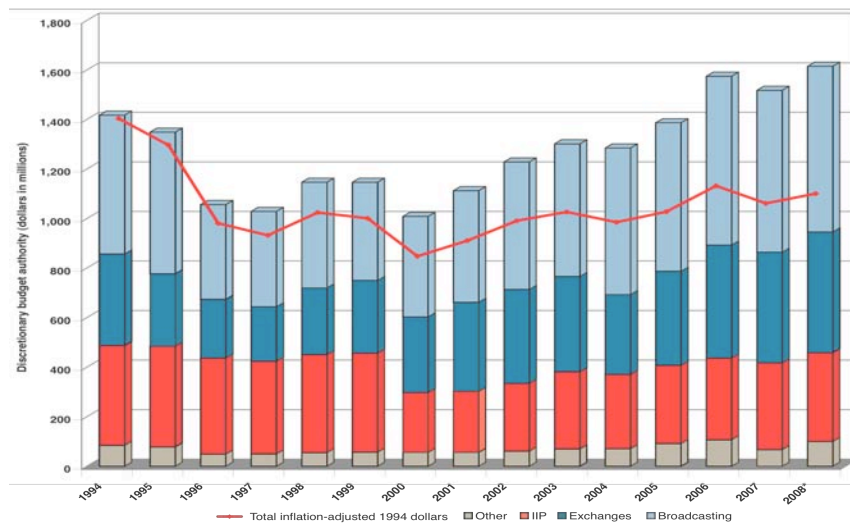
with the Muslim world. She writes, “If the US intends to make another attempt at strengthening its public diplomacy efforts, possibly the best strategy would be to restructure the State Department's efforts so they reach the lower classes through the use of respected and trusted religious leaders and authority figures in small towns to spread moderate teachings of Islam and denounce the use of violence for political ends.” Nancy El-Girdy, *Why US Public Diplomacy Failed in the Arab World* (August 2005) [article online] available from <http://ics.leeds.ac.uk/papers/vp01.cfm?outfit=pmt&folder=7&paper=2433>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

<sup>492</sup> Armitage and Nye, *CSIS Commission on Smart Power*, 47. However, The American Academy of Diplomacy (AAD) in its 2008 proposal *Fixing the Crisis in Diplomatic Readiness* put forth seven recommendations aside from increasing budgetary spending to advance US public diplomacy efforts. They are: a) Increase employment shortfalls and workload increases, expand academic and professional exchanges; b) Incorporate internet and other modern technology infrastructures through public diplomacy output, c) Establish or re-establish at least 40 American culture centers; d) Reinvigorate Binational Centre operations in Latin America; e) Increase the strategic speaker series; f) Enhance programme and activity evaluations; and, g) Expand Media Hubs to Latin America and Asia. These seven recommendations put forth manageable opportunities to invigorate US public diplomacy, thus ensuring foreign audiences of interest become knowledgeable about the US. The American Academy of Diplomacy, *A Foreign Affairs Budget for the Future* (October 2008) [online document] available from [http://www.academyofdiplomacy.org/publications/FAB\\_report\\_2008.pdf](http://www.academyofdiplomacy.org/publications/FAB_report_2008.pdf); Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

During the 1980s and 1990s, American public diplomacy consisted of a political action-centred message which directly connected European publics with US policy to shape the image of America “behind the Iron Curtain.” For at least a quarter of a century, USIA’s central message was to make new ties and build foreign relations with European countries which had values in common (either culturally or politically); this may have made its public diplomacy efforts less tenuous today. Thus, the aftermath of the fall of the Soviet Union saw the establishment of twenty-plus US embassies throughout the Balkans and in Central and Eastern Europe, which still serves as a source of today’s deficit in foreign service staffing.<sup>493</sup>

**Figure 1:**

**US Public Diplomacy Spending, 1994-2008**<sup>494</sup>



<sup>493</sup> Nicholas John Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945-1989* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2008); see also Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: Raising the Iron Curtain* (Pennsylvania: PSU Press, 2003).

<sup>494</sup> Provided by US Office of Management and Budget; see Armitage and Nye, *Commission on Smart Power*, 48.

In 1994 an annual budget nearing \$1.4 billion was spent (mainly) on targeting former Soviet nations.<sup>495</sup> By 2001, there was funding to support American public diplomacy under the *Diplomatic Readiness Initiative* programme of Secretary of State, Colin Powell and with the *Shared Values Initiative* of Undersecretary Charlotte Beers it was hopeful that US favourability would rise throughout the Muslim world. However, it is arguable that nothing could have prepared the State Department for what it would face after the transition from behind the Iron Curtain to approach the Muslim world. Its failure to raise Muslim approval for the US and the reluctance of Muslim audiences to “buy into” the American public diplomacy message (alongside its questionable foreign policy) relates back to the USG’s failure to consider the many perspectives held throughout the Muslim world. It should not be assumed that the same methodology used to engage foreign publics behind the Iron Curtain is realistic or sufficient for Muslim audiences as a first option.<sup>496</sup>

The American Academy of Diplomacy acknowledged recently,

...the Secretary of State lacks the tools – people, competencies, authorities, programmes and funding – to execute the President’s foreign policies. The status quo cannot continue without serious damage to our vital interests. We must invest on an urgent basis in our capabilities in the State Department, USAID, and related organisations to ensure we can meet our foreign policy and national security objectives. There must be enough diplomatic, public diplomacy, and foreign assistance professionals equipped and trained to be out, engaged with the populace and, where needed, working closely with the nation’s military forces to advance America’s interests and goals.<sup>497</sup>

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<sup>495</sup> See also, *Appendix to Armitage-Nye Joint Testimony before US Senate Foreign Relations Committee: A Smart Funding Strategy?* (April 24) [online document] available from [http://www.csis.org/media/csis/congress/ts0804024Armitage-Nye\\_Appendix.pdf](http://www.csis.org/media/csis/congress/ts0804024Armitage-Nye_Appendix.pdf); Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

<sup>496</sup> See Nancy Snow and Phillip M. Taylor, *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (New York: Routledge Press, 2009); Nancy Snow, *The Arrogance of American Power: What US leaders are Doing Wrong and Why it’s Our Duty to Dissent* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing, 2007).

<sup>497</sup> The American Academy of Diplomacy, *A Foreign Affairs Budget for the Future* (October 2008) [online document] available from [http://www.academyofdiplomacy.org/publications/FAB\\_report\\_2008.pdf](http://www.academyofdiplomacy.org/publications/FAB_report_2008.pdf); Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

While public diplomacy is a constructive tool in which nation states may address foreign audiences through programming initiatives and mass communication, this thesis disagrees that it should be implemented as a first option to engage the Muslim world. In the case of the State Department's outreach to the Muslim world, its efforts are equivalent to applying a sponge to a gaping wound. In addition to monetary shortfalls and the inability to engage directly, the State Department's addiction to employing brand management commercial resources greatly contributed to its failure. Nation-branding and public diplomacy, when combined, are formidable options for strengthening the US's credibility and image in particular regions (such as Europe and Latin America). Gyrogy Szondi comments, "Branding is very much image-driven, with the aim of creating positive country images. It is largely one-way communication where the communicator has control over the message, which tends to be simple and concise and leaves little space for dialogue and interactions."<sup>498</sup> Thus, the communicative practise taken by the USG to engage audiences behind the Iron Curtain are today ineffective and lack the ability to mobilise Muslim publics. While quick-fix advertising approaches are common within American society and are often customary for selling consumer goods, there is an undeniable sense of unease in Muslim circles toward the selling of American values and foreign policy to Muslim publics. This is the essential reason why the Obama administration must put forth a smarter form of communication in order to restore relations that assure US national security goals. Taking the ineffective brand management resources position a step further, if the Obama administration seeks to employ such practices it must only look at the dynamic of what generally occurs when outside elements attempt to indirectly engage socially constructed publics to see the potential failure of such an approach.

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<sup>498</sup> Ibid., 16.



#### 7.4. Comprehending social construction to employ direct engagement

Based on our findings, it is clear why an alternative to engaging the Muslim world is necessary. In addition to this point, it is important for America to comprehend why the Brand America campaign should serve as the State Department's last resort (as a communication option) when approaching international Muslim audiences. Since the Muslim world (often less discussed by scholars) is socially constructed, any form of communication with this environment will require a more direct, grassroots approach to restoring relations and trust between the USG and the Muslim world. Quick fixes (such as "marketing" America to Muslims) are clearly unreliable. Thus, it is important that the Obama administration recognises that if it employs or reintroduces the Brand America campaign as a first option of addressing Muslim publics on any level, it is unlikely to attain positive results because of the impact that social constructionism has on the composition of this audience.

According to social theorists Mary and Kenneth Gergen, social constructionism as a way of looking at traditional societies (in our case religious-, tribal- and ethnically-based publics), as found throughout the Muslim world, has multiple roots deriving from many conversations that "span the humanities and the sciences. In this sense, social constructionism is not a singular and unified position. Rather, it is better seen as an unfolding dialogue among participants who vary considerably in their logics, values, and visions."<sup>499</sup> In their change of course, it is vital that State officials today try to better understand traditional societies and what it will, in fact, take to penetrate its core when formulating relations. This posture shift in

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<sup>499</sup> Mary Gergen and Kenneth J. Gergen, *Social Construction: A Reader* (London: Sage Publications, 2003), 3.; see also Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckman, "The Social Construction of Reality", Craig Calhoun, et al., *Contemporary Sociological Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 42-50; Robert Heiner, *Social Problems: An Introduction to Critical Constructionism* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2009), 1-19; Herbert Blumer, *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall Press, 1969).

American politics goes into understanding exactly how the Obama administration will attract the Muslim world to its politics to attain a mutually respective outcome.

Vivien Burr notes that the knowledge of these audiences “is sustained by social processes. It is through daily interactions between people in the course of social life that our version of knowledge becomes fabricated.”<sup>500</sup> As socially linguistic creatures, we come to understand what is regarded as social reality on the basis of the many events that we encounter through our positive or negative relations with other groups and (in this case) nations.<sup>501</sup> In their study *Moral Conflict: When Social Worlds Collide*, W. Barnett Pearce and Stephen Littlejohn take this point a step further, noting:

Social reality has been described as a production in which a group’s ‘resources’, or meanings and assumptions, are tightly intertwined with its practices. Doing and thinking cannot really be separated. Our ways of thinking (our resources) are affected by our practices, and our practices are affected by our ways of thinking. A moral order, then, which is at the root of a group’s resources, is constructed and reconstructed in what that group says and does.<sup>502</sup>

This piece of simple fabric within groups is what audiences outside the society often interpret as a complex network or complex custom (as in the case of the Muslim world, which is comprised of 57 different nations with predominantly Muslim populations). Given this structure in the context of most Muslim countries, it is clear that specific sets of assumptions

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<sup>500</sup> Vivien Burr, *Introduction to Social Constructionism* (London: Routledge, 1995), 2-5.

<sup>501</sup> Burr draws attention to this by pointing out what she regards as micro and macro social constructionism. Macro social constructionism “acknowledges the constructive power of language but sees it as something derived from, or at least related to, material or social structures, social relations and institutionalised practices. The concept of power is therefore at the heart of this form of social constructionism.” On the other hand, micro “sees social construction taking place within everyday discourse between people in interaction. It includes those who refer to themselves as discourse psychologists. For micro social constructionism, multiple versions of the world are potentially available through this discursive, constructive work, and there is no sense in which one can be said to be more real or true than others.” In essence, I would agree with Burr that neither macro nor micro social constructionism are mutually exclusive of one another. *Ibid.*, 21-22.

<sup>502</sup> Barnett Pearce and Stephen Littlejohn, *Moral Conflict: When Social Worlds Collide* (California, Sage Publications, 1997), 51-52.

exist which comprise a moral order by which a specific group “understands its experience and makes judgments about proper and improper actions”; it is based upon the social experiences and laws that emerge out of this group’s religious traditions.<sup>503</sup> As in many non-secular Muslim countries, the practice and principles of the Islamic faith determine what is politically and socially appropriate and inappropriate. This is the case in countries where political Islam is widespread, such as Iran, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Yemen and Sudan. There, religion (within the *umma*) is interconnected and centralised, spanning every level of society and binding communal, social, political, and economic activities together. Though not as robust in such secular Muslim countries as Turkey, Senegal, Indonesia, Albania or Azerbaijan, the residue of religion, to a degree, is present, but not as prominent.

As covered in Chapter 1, America’s foreign policy episodes of containment and intervention between 1950 and 2001 have contributed to threatening the socially-constructed core (moral order) of predominantly Muslim societies.<sup>504</sup> In addition, many of these impasses result from a breakdown in communication among groups, players, and state powers during the engagement process or from the lack of direct engagement creating what Pearce and Littlejohn refer to as *moral conflict*: “vexing disputes that ordinary discourse will not[and cannot] resolve.”<sup>505</sup> In these traditional societies, the disputes are often culturally-based and value-defined, originating from the way in which these audiences interpret the actions, beliefs, and behaviour of outside players and systems.

Moral conflicts – sometimes termed *cultural wars*, *ethnic conflicts*, *ideological conflicts*, and *intractable conflicts* – occur [in the context of US domestic affairs] on issues such as which textbooks to use in elementary schools, whether creation science should be taught, whether abortion should be legal, how the environment should be protected, which rights gays and

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<sup>503</sup>Ibid., 51.

<sup>504</sup> Monte Palmer and Princess Palmer, “Islam, Muslim Extremism and Anti-Americanism”, *At the Heart of Terror: Islam, Jihadist and America’s War on Terror* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publisher, 2004), 9-38.

<sup>505</sup> Ibid., 5.

lesbians should have, what the roles of women and men should be, what place religion should take in society, and how justice should be served.<sup>506</sup>

Presently, throughout the Muslim world (in the Near East and South Asia), these conflicts are more intense, igniting violent hostilities and political and social setbacks. This is present in the growing revivalist movement of political Islam in Iran, Wahabism's conservative Sunni influence in Saudi Arabia, or with the stateless extremists associated with former *Tehrik-i-Taliban* leader Baitullah Mehsud and current amir Hakimullah Mehsud in South Waziristan.<sup>507</sup> Some will argue that this is the very reason for needing brand management – to defend against political Islamist ideologies. But if the American policy designed is sellable neither at home nor abroad, or seeks to threaten the core of Islamic society, then such a communication practise will inevitably fail. This thesis argues that if direct relations are not established, as indicated, at the grassroots level, a tension between Muslim publics and State actors will continue to exist.

How do such groups endure when their socially-constructed ideas are challenged? Jim Kenney of the Inter-religious Engagement Project supports similar cases by looking at similar problems through the lens of cultural coexistence, with new ideas and outside policies and the problems which often materialise. Discussing the impact of cultural coexistence upon and within predominantly religious societies, Kenney acknowledges that cultural evolution from within a society can become the leading agent in setting off moral conflict (or what he refers to as *crossings*). He writes:

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<sup>506</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>507</sup> See Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *The Shia Revival: How Conflicts Within Islam Will Shape the Future* (New York: Norton, 2006); Juan Cole, "Combating Muslim Extremism", *The Nation*, 285, No. 16 (2006): 26. See also Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trial of Political Islam* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2002); Mohammed Ayoob and Hasan Kosebalaban, *Religion and Politics in Saudi Arabia: Wahbism and the State* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishing, 2009).

In a time of major evolutionary cultural exchange, when prevailing patterns are challenged and disrupted, the life experience of individuals and groups are disturbed in a deeply felt 'emptying' of the familiar and 'filling' with the new. If the perturbation affects a sufficient number of persons or groups or challenges significant concentrations of power, a major counterflow – an *eddy* – can form. In culture, as in nature, there is no change without resistance.<sup>508</sup>

Paying attention to the impact that social constructionism has on Islamic society proves vital in this case. The many *crossings* made daily are what key players in the Obama State Department will have to come to grips with if they are to directly engage with Muslim audiences at a grassroots level to resolve conflict and restore relations. What is clear in this case is that *smart power*, according to Secretary of State Clinton, will be at the forefront of future US foreign relations. But to comprehend the impact that social construction will have on US-Muslim world relations, it is plausible to argue that smart power will have to be accompanied by smart communication. Clinton adds:

With smart power, diplomacy will be the vanguard of foreign policy... One need only look to North Korea, Iran, the Middle East, and the Balkans to appreciate the absolute necessity of tough-minded, intelligent diplomacy – the failures that result when that kind of diplomatic effort is absent. And one need only consider the assortment of problems we must tackle in 2009 – from fighting terrorism to climate change to global financial crises – to understand the importance of cooperative engagement.<sup>509</sup>

Clinton's willingness to employ smart power and the emerging contentions directly related to post-secularism illustrates why direct engagement will be the Obama administration's sole option to assure positive results. Taking this more engaged approach assures positive results by building upon *direct human-to-human relations*. However, acting upon this sophisticated

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<sup>508</sup> Jim Kenney, *Cultural Evolution and Religious Change*, notes presented at the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference of the World Congress of Faiths in association with the University of Birmingham (Birmingham, England), 23-24 October 2006; see Jim Kenney, *Sea Change: Cultural Evolution in the Early 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (July 2004) [online article] available from <http://www.interreligiousinsight.org/July2004/July04Kenney.pdf>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

<sup>509</sup> Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Nomination Hearing to be Secretary of State* (13 January 2009) [online transcript] available from <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/01/115196.htm>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

opportunity will require taking seriously the Edward Luttwak (1994) CSIS recommendation, which inevitably calls for the recruitment of US religion attachés to be placed in US embassies in order to facilitate direct engagement with critical infrastructures throughout the Muslim world.

### **7.5. Conclusion: *Assuring a more specific administrative measure***

Today, in an increasingly political environment where Americans are more cognisant than before of US foreign policy and international affairs, many await the next approach by the US Department of State toward the Muslim world, and its outcome. Two factors are clear: first, President Obama's direct Oval Office approach since January 2009 will become insufficient if he wishes to engage the Muslim world beyond interest-based affairs. Utilising executive-level engagement on these specific occasions is sufficient (i.e. when addressing Israeli/Palestinian settlement issues or when engaging Iran's nuclear capabilities). However, this form of engagement will not be as beneficial if his administration wishes to broadly engage Islamic societies. Thus, the second factor clearly becomes that the Obama administration must recognise that reintroducing the Brand America campaign to engage the Muslim world will add to already damaged relations. Data provided by numerous research groups affirm that honest, direct forms of interaction between religious and political players at a grassroots level is acknowledged as the most reliable form of restoring trusted relations.

Recently, Walter R. Roberts of the Public Diplomacy Alumni Association counted "More than thirty reports... issued since 9/11 by reputable foreign affairs organisations and think-tanks recommending actions and reorganisation to strengthen American public

diplomacy.”<sup>510</sup> However, not enough of these think-tanks have stressed the importance of teaching communication or employing direct communication approaches between State Department officials and critical infrastructures in the Muslim world. Many side-step this difficult task, placing an emphasis on upgrading programming, youth and entrepreneurship, rather than recognising that the entry point into Muslim communities depends on establishing and restoring effective communication between sacred and secular players. Today, the Obama administration must face the harsh reality of winning a war on terror (or defeating terrorism per se). And while doing so it is also confronted with addressing a post-secular cataclysm, which will arise from the most disturbing international affairs over the last decade and the future, and will be linked to religious activity. Aside from keeping with its liberal secular posture, the Obama administration must strengthen its ability to incorporate some religious perspectives that may contribute to deterring religious violence, which means employing a more specific administrative measure.

International religious activity has become more potent (due in part to American policy) than most hard-line secularists are willing to credit. Instead of casting aside the sacred or pushing its contribution to the fringe, USG foreign policymaking, in today’s escalating climate, must embrace Troy Dostert’s position to strengthen its communication capabilities. This framework is represented by Dostert’s observation on the potential of what he regards as *dialogical creativity*. Instead of embracing the Rawlsian position that secular resources should be used in dialogues to control the religious voice, *dialogical creativity* assures sacred and secular players the ability to employ more fluid and diverse approaches, and integrates

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<sup>510</sup> Walter R. Roberts, *Rebooting America’s Image Abroad* [article online] available from <http://www.publicdiplomacy.org/105.htm>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

religious convictions and public debate between one another.<sup>511</sup> Efforts to improve present US-Muslim world engagement hinge on communication training and strengthening US relations in the public sphere at a grassroots level which can only be identified and facilitated by an alternative diplomatic player. This in turn requires Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to implement a specific administrative measure that includes employing trained professionals to carry out this communicative task.

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<sup>511</sup> See Troy Dostert, *Beyond Political Liberalism: Toward a Post-Secular Ethics of Public Life* (Notre Dame, Notre Dame Univ. Press, 2006), 180.



## CHAPTER 8

### REVISITING THE RELIGION ATTACHE

#### 8.1. Introduction

Diplomatic opportunities that push beyond the traditional which seek to invite the religious voice into the political arena (at both the executive and grassroots levels) are appropriate measures for restoring US-Muslim world relations. On June 23, 2009, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton appointed Farah Anwar Pandith as the US's first Special Representative to Muslim Communities. Pandith (an American Muslim born in Kashmir, India) would be sworn in on September 15, 2009, bringing attention to President Obama's inaugural call to put forth a new strategy to engage Muslims around the world. As Special Representative, her office is responsible for executing Clinton's vision to engage Muslim communities (especially younger audiences) at a "people-to-people and organisational-level." However, Pandith is not a new face but was hired in 2007 to serve as former President George W. Bush's senior advisor to the Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian affairs on Muslim Outreach in the region. A part of Hughes's public diplomacy machine, it is questionable as to whether Pandith's token role will differ from that of any other high-profile State Department official working on Muslim world outreach on the international stage.

Considering the ongoing development of Clinton's official plan to engage Muslim publics at this early stage, Pandith opened her recent address with the remark that,

[Clinton] has asked me to find ways to build strong partnerships and create new connections and joining together with grassroots organisations to effect positive change. Under the

leadership of Secretary Clinton, the Department of State is recalibrating the way in which we work with Muslim communities around the World. Guided by her passion, leadership and dedication to an issue that is not new to her – she has been active on these issues for decades – this office will advise her and the Department on issues related to Muslim engagement. Through this office we will engage Muslim communities to solve collaboratively the most pressing problems facing these communities around the world.”<sup>512</sup>

In a vague description, Pandith asserts (in so many words) that a top-down approach is likely. Considering the Obama administration’s first steps to enhance State Department programming efforts, the administration must be cautious that it does not return to the clutch of rebranding America by overemphasising public diplomacy geared toward youth and women as a first option, by implementing top-down approaches. Unfortunately, State’s move to hire Pandith brings with it two specific concerns:

- a) State’s unwillingness to implement broad post-secular approaches to engage Muslim publics directly and;
- b) The Pandith/Clinton posture which is currently not in step with leading recommendations (by Albright, McDonald and Johnston) on approaching predominantly religious publics.

Pandith begins her post by presenting a strategy that is workable from the top down, but is not communicatively sound for reaching the core of Islamic society. Her approach (within its first few months) fails at recognising the importance of building America’s credibility from the ground in the Muslim world, which begins with publically assuring less arrogant policies and that State Department diplomats will directly engage specific networks to revitalise and restore relations.

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<sup>512</sup> See *Swearing-in Ceremony for Frarah Pandith Special Representative to Muslim Communities* (September 15, 2009) [article online] available from <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/09/129209.htm>; Internet, accessed 10 November 2009.

As of late, Secretary Hillary Clinton has proposed applying *smart power* when engaging the Muslim world. At the “Forum for the Future”, held in Marrakesh, Morocco on November 3, 2009, Clinton opened up by indicating three uniquely secular but broad areas that the administration, in the coming year, will gear its attention toward: i) An emphasis on job creation in the Muslim world, ii) Advancing science and technology, and iii) Promoting wide-spread educational opportunities. None of these broad approaches have factored in the dynamics of communication and the role US diplomats will need to play in restoring relations with Muslims. Though these networks are target audiences with regards to shifting the focus of America’s image in the Muslim world, broader approaches that include multiple direct engagement efforts by trained officials deserve consideration at the grassroots level in order to restore pre-existing relations. While State is taking positive strides, it must comprehend that though the issue is in part an image problem, it is, more sufficiently and historically, a communication problem that exists between America and Islamic society. Four points are clear:

- i) The approaches presented by Pandith and Clinton are in no way in step with those of former State official recommendations by Douglas Johnston and Edward Luttwak, but offer a similar proposal to Karen P. Hughes that looks to reintroduce a token public diplomacy approach geared toward a single player system (i.e. a special representative at the executive-level implementing the Secretary’s strategy);
- ii) State’s move to hire Pandith does not strengthen America’s engagement with the Muslim world at the grassroots level; it merely strengthens its executive-level capabilities. This presses the issue Clinton must comprehend that what is really needed is a cadre of Foreign Service Officers dedicated to restoring US-Muslim relations at a grassroots level;

- iii) In essence, this will require Clinton to shift State's focus from upgrading public diplomacy programmes to communication-building; and
- iv) This will require Clinton to place an emphasis on training a special cadre of FSOs in a new communication approach to aid in restoring relations.

Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen is correct in his 2009 analysis, *Strategic Communication: Getting Back to Basics*. He acknowledges that America is not facing a horrific problem of capturing men in caves, but it is faced with defeating a longstanding credibility problem which is linked to the USG's unwillingness to deliver on its promises within the Muslim world. In effect, Mullen has picked up on what Clinton and Pandith, recently, have overlooked – the importance of employing effective communication which hinges on communication training. In contrast to State's weak public diplomacy appeal between 2001 and 2008, Mullen writes that:

The irony here is that we know better. For all the instant polling, market analysis, and focus groups we employ today, we could learn a lot by looking to our own past. No other people on Earth have proven more capable at establishing trust and credibility in more places than we have. And we've done it primarily through the power of our example... And make no mistake – there has been a certain arrogance to our 'strat comm' efforts. We've come to believe that messages are something we can launch down range like a rocket, something we can fire for effect. They are not. Good communication runs both ways. It's not about telling our story. We must also be better listeners. [In effect] We cannot capture hearts and minds. We must engage them; we must listen to them one heart and one mind at time – over time.<sup>513</sup>

Credibility, as Mullen identifies, is not earned by establishing an executive-level single player system. It is created when trained professionals are dispersed through the

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<sup>513</sup> Michael G. Mullen, "Strategic Communication: Getting Back to Basics" (28 August 2009) [article online] available from [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/08/28/strategic\\_communication\\_getting\\_back\\_to\\_basics](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/08/28/strategic_communication_getting_back_to_basics) Internet; accessed 1 February 2009.

Muslim world. This would include their communicating a respectful US foreign policy message by integrating the voices of both sacred and secular players. Establishing an executive monopoly on US-Muslim world engagement over time will distort the restoration of future relations and the potential in rebuilding current ties. After addressing The Washington Institute for Near East Policy in August 2009, Pandith demonstrated her limited ability as a single executive player in approaching the vortex of US-Muslim world relations. As Rami Khouri stated, in a nutshell,

Everything that Pandith said is exactly what Adm. Mullen seemed to criticise in his article. She listed an impressive list of activities to engage Muslim communities worldwide on the basis of “mutual interest and mutual respect” – break down stereotypes, work with youth at the grassroots level, and build new partnerships via education, technology, business, sports and culture. None of Pandith’s rhetoric has a chance in hell of going anywhere, while the majority of Muslims, Arabs and others in our region broadly perceive American foreign policy as being tilted toward Israeli priorities or the incumbency of Arab autocrats, as has been the case for about four decades now. Tough American patriots like Gen. Petraeus and Adm. Mullen seem to grasp this, probably because they have escaped the diversionary lunacy of American ‘public diplomacy’ and the choke-hold of single-interest lobby groups in Washington.<sup>514</sup>

If Secretary of State Clinton wishes to get this right, her agenda must include approaches broad enough to integrate the perspectives of Muslims which may add fuel to the larger foreign policymaking discussion, but must be direct enough to reach the core of Islamic society. In addition, Clinton must wrestle with the real picture that is currently disfigured due to an ongoing communication breakdown. As opposed to simply enhancing America’s executive-level public diplomacy capabilities (foreign aid and programming initiatives), it is apparent that real attention is needed at a grassroots-level in the US Foreign Service which will include recruiting, training and deploying highly skilled diplomats versed in communication theory and broad international religious and political affairs. Giving

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<sup>514</sup> Rami G. Khouri, “Sensible US Courage and Hapless US Imbecility”, *Agence Global* (August 31, 2009).

consideration to this position, Chapter 8 commences by revisiting the basic components of an inevitable religion attaché model, and the dynamics that are currently missing in making it an applicable resource.

## 8.2. Johnston's religion attaché model

If Clinton observes Edward Luttwak's (1994) chief recommendation to enhance State Department relations with international Muslim audiences, it is likely that major consideration will be given to recruiting a new Foreign Service Officer (FSO). Luttwak's recommendation, in calling for a religion attaché, attempts to assure the availability of trained actors at the State Department for i) providing adequate assistance in analysing international religious affairs, ii) honing capabilities to perform multiple tasks to improve direct engagement; and iii) employing foundational skills to make clear emerging religious matters that are of particular interest to US national security.<sup>515</sup> Douglas Johnston (founder of the International Centre for Religion and Diplomacy) revitalised Luttwak's recommendation. In the 2002 Foreign Service Journal article, *The Case for a Religion Attaché*, Johnston, nearly a decade later, reintroduces Luttwak's recommendation as a practical model. He acknowledges, "Consideration of religious factors within US foreign policy would be considerably enhanced by the creation of new religion attaché positions within the Foreign Service. These attachés would be assigned to those [diplomatic] missions in countries where religion has particular salience in order to deal more effectively with complex religious issues."<sup>516</sup>

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<sup>515</sup> Edward N. Luttwak, "The Missing Dimension", *Religion: The Mission Dimension of Statecraft*, eds. Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press: 1994).

<sup>516</sup> Douglas Johnston, *Faith-based Diplomacy: Trumping Realpolitik* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004), 24-25.

Considering the State Department's structural limitations in addressing broad international religious affairs, it is likely that a religion attaché may be recruited from outside the ranks of the foreign service. Candidates with a shared background in religion and politics deserve consideration, since such recruits are able to analyse broad international religious affairs. "Obvious places to search for recruits who would have such qualifications would be from among seminary graduates or religion majors as well as from within ranks of the Foreign Service itself (where those already possessing such skills might welcome the new challenges). With the necessary skills and strong support from the top, the religion attaché could go far in closing the existing gap in religious understanding."<sup>517</sup>

The attaché's responsibilities would include building partnerships and restoring trusted relations with groups. With these tasks, the attaché would be able to re-establish embassy contacts that will inevitably go toward drafting the annual report on International Religious Freedom.<sup>518</sup> In addition, an attaché could obtain "additional insight into new developments in the critical arena at both the grassroots and national levels, and become attuned to concerns that local religious leaders may have about numerous interests, ranging from actions that the West may be taking or contemplating to schemes of local or national demagogues who may be seeking to manipulate religion for their political ends."<sup>519</sup> To make this connection requires that the attaché be familiar with the groups' foreign language, which requires the State Department to either recruit or train pre-existing diplomats in critical languages (e.g. Arabic and Farsi).

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<sup>517</sup> Douglas M. Johnston, "The Case for a Religion Attaché", *Foreign Service Journal* (February 2002), 36.

<sup>518</sup> See, *The 2009 Report on International Religious Freedom* [document online] available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2009/index.htm>; Internet, 2 November 2009.

<sup>519</sup> Douglas M. Johnston, "The Case for a Religion Attaché", 36.

Today, many students attending American seminaries and interdisciplinary programs often have these language capabilities. Taking these foreign languages requires that the attaché be culturally astute – meaning she/he needs to be aware of and sensitive to these cultural settings and the general concerns of its members. Addressing broad international religious affairs and comprehending local tribal issues in a diplomatic context are critical. While this thesis regards Johnston's religion attaché recommendation as the most undervalued proposal in the American foreign policy arena, it is only appropriate that Secretary of State Clinton considers the depth of this recommendation along with the benefits in financing and deploying this new diplomat.

### 8.2.1. Financing the attaché

Since 2001, the United States Congress has approved over \$700 billion for defence-related activities such as Operation Enduring Freedom<sup>520</sup>, Operation Noble Eagle<sup>521</sup> and Operation Iraqi Freedom<sup>522</sup>, which includes base security, reconstruction, foreign aid and embassy costs.<sup>523</sup> Further resources of \$250 billion were approved with the passing by the US Senate of H.R. 2642, *The Supplemental Appropriations Act*,<sup>524</sup> on June 30, 2008, bringing the estimated total for the fiscal year 2009 to \$857.3 billion. To date, the USG has spent an estimated \$656 billion on the Iraq war, \$173 billion on the war in Afghanistan and \$29 billion

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<sup>520</sup> Operation Enduring Freedom is the official name for the USG's contribution to the Global War on Terror. This contribution is executed through its umbrella operations in: Afghanistan, the Philippines, the Horn of Africa, Trans Sahara, and Kyrgyzstan.

<sup>521</sup> Launched on September 14, 2001, Operation Noble Eagle services US territory through its defense patrol of US airspace.

<sup>522</sup> Launched on March 19, 2003, Operation Iraqi Freedom is the official name representing the US-western/ally-led invasion of Iraq.

<sup>523</sup> Amy Belasco, ed., "Congressional Research Service: The Cost of the Iraq, Afghanistan, and other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11", *CRS Report for Congress* (June 23, 2008).

<sup>524</sup> *H.R. 2642 – 110th Congress (2007): Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008*, *GovTrack.us* (database of federal legislation) [article online]; available from <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/billtext.xpd?bill=h110-2642>; Internet, accessed 20 August 2008.



on enhanced security in the South Asian region.<sup>525</sup> Johnston makes the reasonable argument that funding a cadre of religion attachés is unlikely to reach half of US defence spending by some top departments/agencies.<sup>526</sup>

For example, “A conservative estimate of global requirements suggests the need for a cadre of 30 such attachés at an initial total of \$10 million. The figure is based on a State Department budget office estimate of \$250,000 to \$300,000 per year to field a person in a new position (including salary, benefits, transportation to and from the post, shipping of household effects, outfitting of a new office and any allowances for hardship, danger pay, cost of living adjustment and housing).”<sup>527</sup> Since 2002, a slight rise in funding 30 or more attaches is a potential but non-threatening concern: a conservative estimate of \$11-15 million per year, taking into account inflation and a rise in the State Department’s budget, might fund 30 or more attachés. It is suspected that \$300,000–\$350,000 per attaché would suffice to ensure their deployment, whether or not they are serving at a hardship embassy post in a conflict-prone setting. Despite this minimum cost adjustment, the cost for assuring peace through peacemaking is not comparable to the surmounting cost (nearly \$1 trillion by 2010) of maintaining an American military presence in both Afghanistan and Iraq, that is unable to resolve intractable religious violence in the regions.

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<sup>525</sup> See Anup Shah, *World Military Spending* (September 13, 2009) [article online] from <http://www.globalissues.org/article/75/world-military-spending>; Internet, accessed 20 October 19, 2009.

<sup>526</sup> Douglas M. Johnston, *Faith-based Diplomacy: Trumpeting Realpolitik* (Oxford, Oxford Univ. Press, 2002), 24-25.

<sup>527</sup> “The total also includes an increment for the added training that would be required. Annual recurring costs would be somewhat less, so even a slight shift from the reactive to preventive side of the ledger in our budget priorities would more than suffice to fund this initiative.” Johnston, “A Case for the Religion Attaché”, 36.

### 8.2.2. Attaché deployment

Johnston indicates in his proposal that nine regions warrant the presence of a religious attaché. In 2002, he recommended that the State Department deploy at least 30 attachés through these regions, which included three in the Arab world and Turkey, three in South Asia, one-two in Central Asia, four in China and Southeast Asia, one in Russia, five in Latin America, four in Sub-Saharan Africa, four in the Balkans and one in Central and Eastern Europe. With a rise in religious violence in many of these regions and an escalation in anti-Americanism, the case for additional attachés is advisable. Additionally, considering the constant ebb and flow of intractable disputes in many of these regions, the need for an attaché presence will be a constant concern. If the Clinton State Department were to take this position into account, a number of adjustments due to emerging international events should also be factored in, thereby slightly increasing attaché deployment. For example:

- In each of the five regions (China and Southeast Asia; Latin America; Russia; and Sub-Saharan Africa), there needs to remain, as Johnston recommends, four to five attachés.
- Emerging intractable events and the pressures of political Islam's influence throughout the Arab worlds and Turkey suggest deployment be increased from three to eleven attachés. Johnston is correct in saying that "Israel, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Lebanon, Algeria, Sudan, and Turkey would all benefit from a full-time religion attaché"<sup>528</sup>
- In South Asia (especially in Afghanistan, India and Pakistan), where approximately 1.5 billion Muslims reside, increased tension between non-state combatants, such as the Taliban

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<sup>528</sup> Ibid.

and Al-Qaeda, presents new threats. From three to approximately seven attachés are recommended.

- Johnston argues that religious fundamentalism is a growing concern throughout the Central Asian region. This may potentially influence Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan, which suggest that preventive measures should be employed. This increases the required attaché presence from one-two attachés to approximately four.
- Today, religious peacemaking continues to play a crucial role in sustaining peace within the Balkans. Considering the diverse religious composition of the region and the undercurrent of tension, relations remain fragile. Attaché presence should be increased from four to seven in this region.

In order to address emerging religio-political conflicts throughout Central and Eastern Europe, this thesis argues that this discussion should be expanded to include Western Europe. In Johnston's 2002 assessment, he failed to recognise emerging post-secular affairs in Western Europe, and included only one attaché to serve through Central and Eastern Europe. Unfortunately, emerging activities relating to a surge in Islamic sleeper-cells throughout the UK, Germany and France, tension in Northern Ireland and religio-political tension in France, encourage a deployment of five attachés across Western, Central and Eastern Europe. With this adjustment, instead of Johnston's 30 religion attaches, approximately 50 are considered suitable. Making this adjustment to Johnston's proposal raises the proposed \$10 million to roughly \$16.2 million to fund the project.

Taking into account the recommendations of Rubin, McDonald, Albright and Luttwak, Douglas Johnston's proposal does not fall short at covering the basic composition of this

model, which include giving attention to the attachés' diplomatic responsibilities, cost assessment, embassy deployment, and recruitment plan. As important as these surface-level matters are, a perceptible shortcoming is present: often, plans to engage the Muslim world or religious audiences are met by the State Department when projecting America's image upon these communities, as opposed to USG officials using communicative approaches to gather varied perspectives before implementing policies. If Johnston's religion attaché model were endorsed by Secretary of State Clinton, a focus on enhancing human-to-human interactivity deserves critical consideration beyond the executive level. This means taking seriously the communication functions of the attaché, and in fact forcing them to be able to communicate with both the sacred and secular players in specific settings. With regards to the Muslim world, a much broader approach which seeks to engage the core of Islamic society must be implemented. This implementation needs to include ways to i) *comprehend better vital aspects within Islamic society by depending more on its diplomatic infrastructures*; ii) *build direct relations with Muslim audiences, in doing so, which pay due heed to the traditional voice of Islam*; and iii) *restore relations at a grassroots level which build on mutual understanding and mutual interests, extending the voice of key religious players within Islamic society*. In order for this to occur, communication procedures must be top priority. This forces the reluctant question, "What strategic communication approach is most effective for US State officials when engaging religious audiences?"

### 8.3. Conclusion: *Reshaping the communicative context*

In order for the US Department of State to improve future relations with international Muslim audiences, it must invest in reshaping the current communicative context, which will include teaching communication. This is a three-fold process which will include a) employing a religion attaché at key US embassies, b) providing attaché training in direct communication, and c) encouraging the attaché to employ post-secular communication practices that are capable of restoring sacred-secular relations. If the Clinton State Department were to employ Johnston's religion attaché model, its perceptible shortcoming must be addressed. To do this, State must decide how the attaché will function and communicate with religious audiences, which requires it to employ a more strategic plan of communication. This means incorporating religious and political voices within a diverse setting. Instead of projecting a commercial message (in order to receive positive results), the paradigm must shift in this setting. Besides carrying out its embassy responsibilities, the attaché, when in the public sphere, will practise human-to-human communication differently. With Muslim publics the attaché will be able to engage the core of these social worlds more effectively. By communicating effectively, according to W. Barnett Pearce and Stephen Littlejohn, the actor will be able to "express moral difference eloquently in ways that build understanding and respect."<sup>529</sup> In negotiating settings, the actor must encounter a new language in which each side can understand the moral order of the other" – thus, this will mean treating emerging post-secular issues with a post-secular treatment.<sup>530</sup>

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<sup>529</sup> Barnett Pearce and Stephen Littlejohn, *Moral Conflict: When Social Worlds Collide* (California, Sage Publications, 1997), 122.

<sup>530</sup> *Ibid.*, 122-123.

In dealing with the Muslim world, the attaché must embrace a new mindset which will probably benefit not only State's foreign agenda but Islamic society as a whole. Taking this posture means that the attaché will be capable of working between the many stories and constructed realities present in Islamic society.<sup>531</sup> In a sense, this transcendent posture is really a form of post-secular communication in that it seeks to assure diversity between sacred and secular voices while recognising the emerging religious voice in the public sphere. It is designed to evaluate the entire paradigm that confronts US foreign affairs and Islamic society, rather than blithely looking through these emerging issues. Pearce refers this communicative procedure as taking a communication perspective, something often overlooked in the field of public diplomacy. "The *communication perspective* demonstrates that by looking into the process of communication rather than through it, we treat communication itself as substantial and consequential."<sup>532</sup>

This is somewhat troubling, in the sense that, though Albright and others have presented breakthrough research on why creating a new FSO position is important, their research fails to explore the dynamic of communication and the usage of this new officer (the attaché). Communication is power and power is essential to the potential and life of US foreign policy. If this is true, then we may agree that communication is the backbone of foreign policy and the vehicle that ensures foreign policymaking. Paraphrasing Pearce, "if the attaché adopts a post-secular communication approach she/he will understand what most FSOs already know, rather than the other way around. Communicating in a way that embraces the sacred-secular and taking into consideration the entire paradigm allow wise

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<sup>531</sup> Ibid., 122.

<sup>532</sup> See W. Barnett Pearce, *Claiming Our Birthright: Social Constructionism and the Discipline of Communication*, Essay presented in conjunction with The National Communication Association and The Crooked Timbers Project (Albuquerque, New Mexico, August 1-4, 2006, photocopied), 7.

decisions to be made on constructing the best USG foreign policy for predominantly Muslim audiences.”<sup>533</sup> If the State Department were to consider Johnston’s religion attaché model as a practical alternative, employable at a grassroots level for improving US-Muslim world relations, it will immediately recognise the missing dimension – a communication approach. In the final chapter, the communication strategy of interfaith diplomacy will be delved into in order to comprehend the benefits of integrating sacred and secular voices to improve US-Muslim world relations when employing religion attachés.

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<sup>533</sup> Pearce first indicates this idea in a communication context to examine what he considers the importance of “bifurcation points” within a conversation. According to Pearce, these bifurcation points are vital points within the conversation that have the potential to sway the direction of it, leading to either a positive or negative end. He writes of this matter while suggesting, “The communication perspective is the knack of looking *at* communication rather than *through* it, but this isn’t enough. In a real sense, we see what we know rather than the other way around, and our ability to discern bifurcation points and to make wise decisions about how to act into them requires some sharper conceptual tool for understanding communication.” W. Barnett Pearce, *Communication and the Making of Social Worlds* (Santa Barbra, California: Field Graduate University, date unknown, photocopied essay), 2.

## **CHAPTER 9**

### **TOWARD A POST-SECULAR COMMUNICATION STRATEGY OF INTERFAITH DIPLOMACY (IFD<sup>2</sup>)**

#### **9.1. The concept of interfaith diplomacy**

This study has focused on what occurs when the US Department of State applies corporate logic to resolve America's communication problem with the Muslim world. The study hypothesises that robust American public diplomacy resources were employed prematurely between 2001 and 2008 to engage the Muslim world. Islamic society, like other predominantly religious communities, are socially-constructed worlds which require more direct grassroots engagement by the USG. The USG's failure to evaluate this critical finding is primarily linked to an American history of political apprehensiveness toward religion. Its blatant disregard toward analysing Islam as a religion and the Muslim world as a socially constructed body (as opposed to a social problem) contributes to numerous setbacks in US-Muslim world communicative relations.

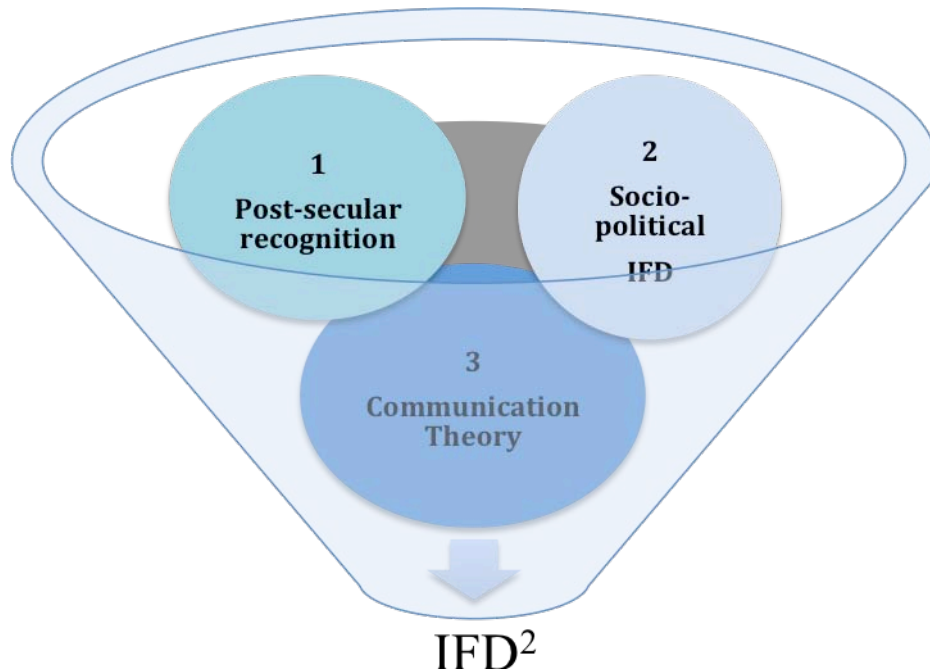
Among the many scholars with research dedicated to the field of Religion and US Diplomacy, none provide an examination which illustrates the strategic benefits of training diplomats in a post-secular communication strategy. Post-secular political engagement is useful for diplomats: when working in predominantly religious settings, diplomats benefit by having knowledge of religious tolerance and diversity. And they are likely to improve relations if they adopt aspects of the contemporary interfaith movement as socio-political interfaith dialogue. While religious issues and the voices/perspectives of Muslims will remain principal to US foreign affairs throughout President Obama's first term in office, it is vital for



the State Department to take learning communication seriously. This means ensuring that the new Foreign Service officers, like the religion attaché, are trained to communicate effectively to apply a foreign policy that sets out to restore relations at a core grassroots level. In order for the State Department to accomplish these tasks, it must observe the *Post-Secular Communication Strategy of Interfaith Diplomacy* (IFD<sup>2</sup>) when training religion attaché in the Foreign Service.

This communication strategy is not considered the last word on communication, but rather an academic and practical starting point for communication to be applied by the religion attaché. As a treatment to both a rise in post-secular affairs and the US-Muslim world communication problem, IFD<sup>2</sup> is committed to enhancing sacred-secular relations; it is communication-centred; it incorporates key elements of religious pluralism (diversity) and helps secular players build relations of shared interests and mutual understanding with the support of critical religious infrastructures.

This more direct communicative way of engaging religious publics is distinguished as IFD<sup>2</sup>. To comprehend this communication strategy requires taking a step back to appraise specific aspects of communication theory and the conceptual framework of interfaith diplomacy. In doing so, let us take a look at the figure below to comprehend the three steps to practicing this communication strategy.

**Figure 2****Components of IFD<sup>2</sup>**

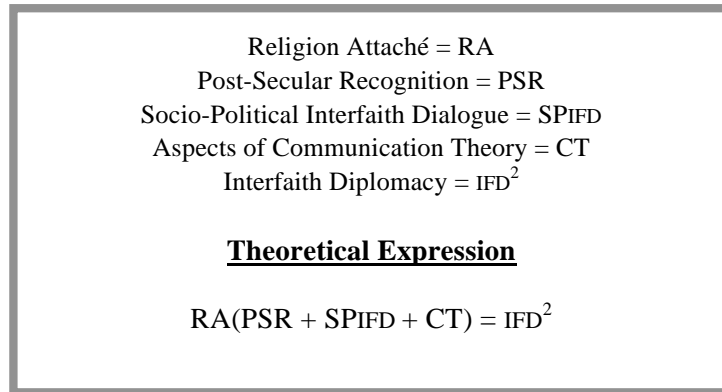
This communicative strategy is represented by a funnel comprised of three steps the attaché must learn in order to successfully practice interfaith diplomacy.

The first step, before entering into the dialogue situation, begins with the attaché making a post-secular recognition. The second step requires the attaché's entrance into an atmosphere accommodating to sacred-secular dialogue, which produces integrated approaches of resolving critical social issues confronting religious audiences. The third step, which is the most valuable, requires the attaché to integrate aspects of the communication theory into the SPIFD setting in order to present the USG's core foreign policy message directly. This takes place through the medium of language. As a communication strategy, IFD<sup>2</sup> is activated once the attaché integrates the steps. The variables of this theoretical formula are represented by **RA** for the religion attaché, **PSR** for post-secular recognition, **SPIFD** for

socio-political interfaith dialogue, and **CT** for aspects of communication theory. When the religion attaché integrates itself with each step the end result is **IFD<sup>2</sup>** *interfaith diplomacy*.

**Figure 3**

**Theoretical Expression of Interfaith Diplomacy**



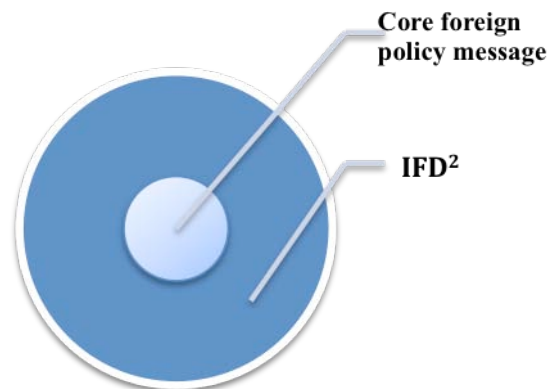
Interfaith diplomacy is a post-secular communication strategy which emerges out of the practise of SPIFD. Recalling information outlined in Chapter 2, SPIFD is one of three modes of interfaith dialogue prompted by the rise of religious forces in the public sphere which has encouraged both religious and nonreligious players to enter into communication to address critical post-secular issues affecting society. SPIFD provides an arena where US liberal secular state officials can advance diverse sacred-secular relations through a religious narrative in order to promote peaceful coexistence. This ability is what establishes IFD<sup>2</sup> as a formal post-secular treatment. As a communicative strategy, it sets out to assure that the attaché will recognise post-secular issues, while ensuring a unique way of restoring communicative relations.

Considering the present communication problem which has persisted between the US and the Near East, as a pragmatic communication strategy IFD<sup>2</sup> provides a robust

communicative framework whereby the core US foreign policy message may be transmitted directly and coherently to Muslim audiences.

**Figure 4**

**Transporting Interfaith Diplomacy**



Interfaith diplomacy as it protects the core foreign policy message to ensure that direct communicative engagement occurs between the secular State Department player and the players belonging to key opinion-formers within Muslim publics.

Between presenting a substantive core message and building formidable relations with sacred and secular players, it is important to keep a communication balance. This system of balance is *sacred-secular equilibrium*.<sup>534</sup> This equilibrium requires the assurance of the

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<sup>534</sup> The structure of my sacred-secular equilibrium is drawn in part from the Nash Equilibrium designed by John F. Nash (Princeton, May 1950). Nash's doctoral research on the *equilibrium point* acknowledges that "Each player's mixed strategy maximises his payoff if the strategies of the others are held fixed. Thus each player's strategy is optimal against those of the others." In this sense, interfaith diplomacy borrows here from Nash findings of the two-person bargaining problem to develop the sacred-secular equilibrium which subsequently requires both (religious and non religious) players in the dialogue setting to take into consideration the strategy/decision-making of the other player so as to establish a mutually beneficial outcome. Nash writes of the two-person bargaining situation that it "involves two individuals who have the opportunity to collaborate for mutual benefit in more than one way. In the simpler case... no action taken by one of the individuals without the consent of the other can affect the well-being of the other one." John F. Nash, "Non-Cooperative Games", *The Essential John Nash* (Oxford: Princeton Univ. Press, 2002), 85-87; John F. Nash, "The Bargaining Problem", *The Essential John Nash* (Oxford: Princeton Univ. Press, 2002), 37.

parties in dialogue that relationship-building, negotiations and agreements will be pursued. It is vital we understand that a *sacred-secular equilibrium* is based on altruism; it is objective in character and far removed from the teleological actions which traditional secular US diplomatic relations draw upon in non-cooperative game theory. This is where the aim is to manipulate one's opponent to reach a predetermined end – which is often the case with public diplomacy or when resorting to brand management resources. Whilst assuring an equal system between sacred-secular players, IFD<sup>2</sup> is capable, in this respect, of elevating mutual understanding above success, maintaining joint relations, securing long-term partnerships and cooperating through communicative talks in the pursuit of sacred-secular relations. However, what allows the *Post-Secular Communication Strategy of Interfaith Diplomacy* to move from a set of theoretical principals to a practical exercise is its reliance upon a key player. The key player deployed in this game scenario is the Johnston religious attaché model – which is devoid of a communication practise. In this final chapter, let us fill the perceptible gap in this model with IFD<sup>2</sup>, displaying the communicative training necessary (in three steps) for indicating how US-Muslim world relations may be enhanced at a grassroots level.

## **9.2. Step one: Making a post-secular recognition**

The first step to practising IFD<sup>2</sup> commences with the attaché making a post-secular recognition. Trends relating to post-secular activity have been seen over the last two decades as: *the re-emergence of religion in public life* and *a rise in domestic and broad international religious affairs*. Academics studying post-secular activity and what is called the “post-secular age” conclude that politicised religious activity is reappearing in international

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relations and must be taken seriously by USG officials.<sup>535</sup> If the US liberal secular state is to make a substantive contribution to US-Muslim world engagement, it cannot push the religious voice and broad international religious affairs to the fringe; it must allow this voice to demonstrate its perspective in the public sphere by encouraging dialogue. But levels of political apprehensiveness have deterred this integration. In this sense, a Morgenthau-led political debate over the last four decades has strongly affected contemporary US political willingness to engage with international religious audiences based on what American political elites consider legitimate.<sup>536</sup>

In taking this step, the attaché must not look at current post-secular issues related to religion as the “clash of civilisations” perspective presents them. Instead, she/he will reconsider the potential of religion as a progressive narrative in understanding the re-emergence of politicised religious events, in understanding the concerns of religious audiences and how best to approach their concerns. In this step, the attaché rejects political apprehensiveness which has deterred many hard-line secularists from integrating the religious voice into political discourse. The best partnership for establishing direct communication is rooted in inclusion, not the reverse. This in turn requires the attaché to be aware that, in cases with international religious audiences, the innovation of sacred-secular discourse is more beneficial than exclusive political realism. So, to practise the first step, the religion attaché must: a) be mentally prepared to make a post-secular recognition, including becoming

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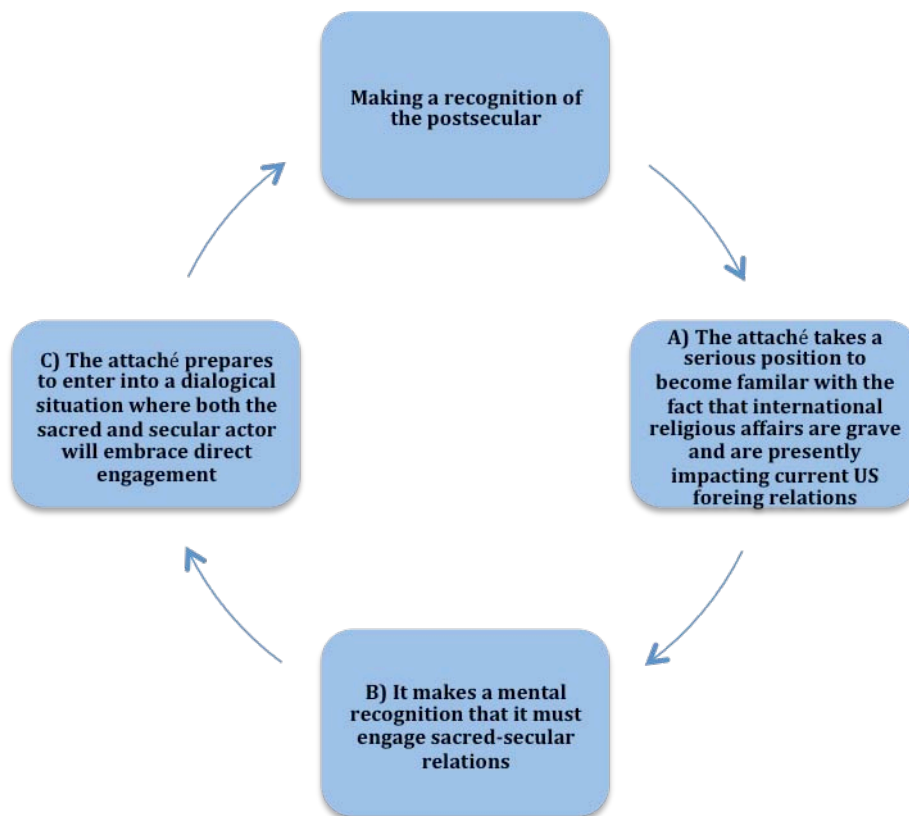
<sup>535</sup> Roger Trigg, *Religion in Public Life: Must Faith be Privatized* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2007); Jose Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1994), 320. See also Jose Casanova, “Rethinking Secularization: A Global Comparative Perspective”, *Hedgehog Review* (Spring/Summer, 2006): 7-22; Phillip S. Gorski and Ates Altinordu, “After Secularization?”, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 34 (2008), 55-86.

<sup>536</sup> See, Jonathan Fox and Shmuel Sandler, “Overlooked Dimensions”, *Bringing Religion into International Relations* (New York: Palgrave, 2006), 9-34. See also, Jonathan Fox, “Religion, politics and International Relations: The rise of religion and the fall of the civilization paradigm as explanation for intra-state conflict”, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 20, No. 3 (September 2007).

familiar with the complex relationship of emerging international religious affairs with US foreign relations; b) make critical decisions away from an American history of political apprehensiveness; and c) prepare to accept entering into a diverse dialogue situation where both sacred and secular players shall convene. (See Figure 5.)

**Figure 5**

**The Cycle of Making a Post-Secular Recognition**



It is towards the end of this phase that the attaché moves from recognition of *what is* to preparing to enter into a diverse arena of *what can be*, where substantive dialogue may connect with sacred players. At this next level, a central base (or arena for engagement) is established and the integration of ideas and philosophies develops to allow full dialogue.

### 9.3. Step two: Entering an arena of socio-political IFD

Ingredients taken from the contemporary interfaith movement aid the attaché's training in reaching a *sacred-secular equilibrium*. Contrary to academic opinions that the practice of interfaith dialogue is exclusively for multi-religious interaction, its overall objectives are in fact two-fold. The practice of IFD not only presents a conventional arena for religious players to communicate with one another within a multi-religious setting, but functions as a secular outlet to which the attaché in our case may:

- i) Engage international religious audiences more effectively to build relations; and
- ii) Become better informed on the emergence of post-secular events.

The historical objectives presented by the World Parliament of Religion on September 11, 1893 have matured today into what is widely acknowledged as a contemporary interfaith movement (encompassing a global network). This vastly popular movement offers the US liberal secular state four concrete reasons why its efforts are beneficial. Over the last century, its actions within the private sphere are to: *resolve intractable disputes non-violently, aid public deliberations, embrace multi-religious opinions by promoting mutual understanding and provide a safe space for plural engagement*.

Communicative training shifts in this step from recognition to action. Recalling the interfaith sphere, in this step, the attaché learns that socio-political interfaith dialogue, as opposed to spiritually-centred or religio-comparative IFD, is more accommodating in terms of enhancing sacred-secular negotiation and restoring communicative relations. Generated by social conditions or post-secular events, SPIFD offers a base to convene sacred and secular players in a public setting. SPIFD is more influential in this case than other modes, as it is less



religious and more accommodating to both players.

**Table 7**

**Three Steps to Practising Socio-political IFD**

<b>1. Initial step</b>	Draw on key ingredients from the IF movement.
<b>2. Secondary step</b>	Bring both sacred and secular players into a diverse arena.
<b>3. Final step</b>	Aspire to employ “real-talk” while in the plural dialogue setting.

Activities and forums held by the United States Institute of Peace, the Alliance of Civilisations, and, for example, between US military commanders and moderate members of the Taliban or with members of the Sons of Iraq, often fall into the category of SPIFD. For the religious attaché to successfully practise the official language of IFD<sup>2</sup> – *real-talk* – it must set out to integrate its core foreign policy message into this proposed communication strategy. This language is not success-oriented or dominated by either player’s coercive behaviour of manipulating the other player, as with traditional game theory. In this case, the religion attaché’s actions, in this second step, are largely non-verbal. Even the practice of *real-talk* does not officially take place in step two. Both players should anticipate it as a major component of IFD<sup>2</sup> in step three. In assessing IFD<sup>2</sup>, it is easy to misread that if the religious attaché attains only the first two steps, it will still be able to engage international religious audiences directly. This is not so. The religion attaché’s presence alone will suggest failure to religious audiences unless step three, the most essential, is integrated with the previous two.

#### 9.4. Step three: Practising post-secular communication

Over the last decade, scholars in both the academic and NGO communities (working on conflict resolution, peacemaking and diplomatic issues) have written extensively on the need to improve engagement, but have overlooked researching the value that political communication has on enhancing US-Muslim world relations. This is the case with numerous reports and study groups in recent years, which fail to acknowledge or incorporate aspects of communication theory or demonstrate pragmatically how secular players might successfully engage with international religious audiences.<sup>537</sup> In reviewing many of these reports, it appears that more than a few have taken for granted that direct communication is vital outside of brand management resources that are often employed by the USG. As this study, makes clear, communication is a learning process which requires understanding one's targeted audience or society. To say the least, a detailed plan of why the USG should engage the

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<sup>537</sup> This point is taken up with the "grand strategy" put forth by *The Princeton Project on National Security* (2006). While the project had it correct that greater forms of communication are needed to connect with Muslim publics in particular, I argue that the project falls short in its proposal that US public diplomacy officers employ a public relations technique to "sell" US foreign policy and its message to these audiences. The *Princeton Project* states, "In addition, the United States should shift its public diplomacy efforts from a public relations approach to a sales approach. While public relations involves one-way communication strategies, a sales-based approach requires understanding what motivates the recipient of a message to 'buy' or inhibits the recipient from accepting and embracing the ideas being proffered. The United States could improve its understanding of foreign populations and the effectiveness of its sales pitch by conducting face-to-face meetings with communities overseas, recruiting more Muslim-Americans to participate in public diplomacy efforts, evaluating foreign service officers and military personnel based on their public diplomacy record, promoting greater education in Arabic and other strategic languages, and providing scholarships to encourage young Americans to study in the Middle East." I agree that one-way communication is ineffective and understanding over success is reasonable. However, their recommendation on engagement and communication is somewhat entrenched in ambiguity and sits between a want to embrace direct diplomacy through face-to-face meetings and (on the other end) selling the US's core foreign policy message. This thesis has identified thus far that both positions cannot reside in the same space to ensure an authentic impact when engaging socially-constructed religious and tribal publics. A more direct and candid form of engagement will be respected in these settings. G. John Ikenberry and Anne-Marie Slaughter, ed., *Forging a New World of Liberty Under Law: US National Security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Final Report of the Princeton Project on National Security)* [online document]; available from <http://www.princeton.edu/~ppns/report/FinalReport.pdf>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

Muslim world sounds impressive in theory when it comes from a popular think-tank, but it may subsequently prove insufficient or fail for other reasons if a special emphasis on communication training and practise are not observed.

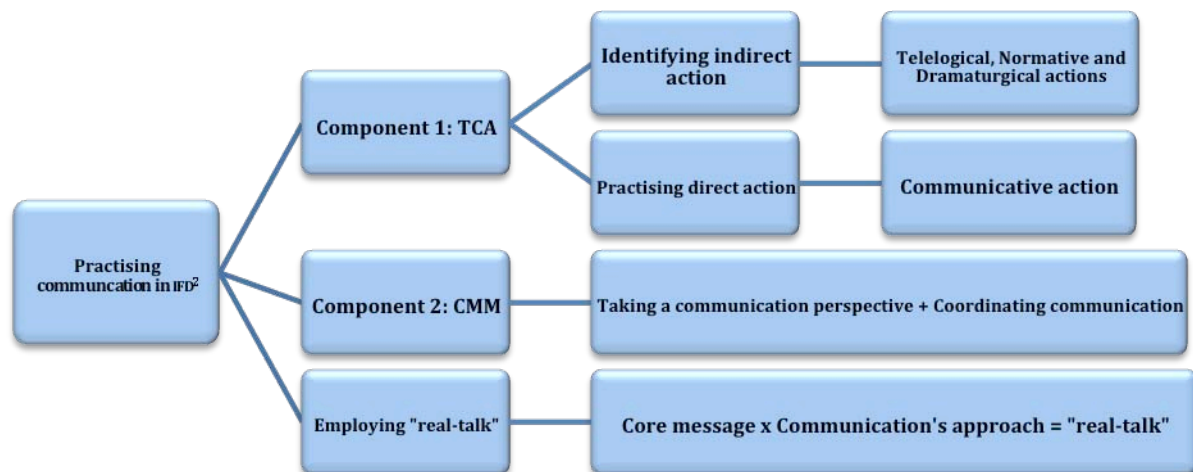
In taking up this missed opportunity, it is important we look at this shortcoming. Many readers may not be as familiar with such communication terms as *coordination*, *communicative action*, *bifurcation points* and the importance of *making a validity claim* in dialogue situations. However, these are key variables in the science of communication theory. Step three is the most important step in this strategy for the attaché, for it is here that she/he learns about communication theory and how direct communication at a grassroots level can yield productive results.

However, what is clear is that game theory functions in most liberal-secular state scenarios as the central practice wherever decisions in the public sphere are generally made – suggesting that the secular player approaches these issues with an attitude which prefers *success* over *understanding*. What this makes clear is that logic, in most cases, rules the political decision-making process and that this in turn makes it hard to engage with socially-constructed societies. The *Post-Secular Communication Strategy of Interfaith Diplomacy* proposes something different as a way for the player to communicate with these religious audiences, and places a major emphasis on communication theory. The last step begins with the attaché understanding the nature of strategic communication. Drawing on Jürgen Habermas’s pragmatic theory on communication, in this step the attaché must observe that strategic communication focuses, in a profound way, “not on what language *says*, but on what language *does*; it is a theory of language in use” – hence, it is the missing link in the

USG's engagement with the Muslim world over the last decade.<sup>538</sup>

**Figure 6**

**Practising Communication in IFD<sup>2</sup>**



So, how should this new Foreign Service Officer understand communication? Take Karl Bühler's position on language, for example:<sup>539</sup> "Buhler [sets out to] assign three functions to language corresponding to the perspective of the first, second, and third person respectively: the 'cognitive' function of representing a state of affairs; the 'appeal' function of directing requests to addressees; and the 'expressive' function of disclosing the experiences of the speaker."<sup>540</sup> Bühler's model, though seemingly congested when first read, is in fact clear-cut. James Finalyson of the University of Sussex says that Bühler is contending "that any instance of language-use involves a triangle comprising speaker, hearer,

<sup>538</sup> James Gordon Finlayson, *Habermas: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005), 32; see also John G Oetzel and Stella Ting-Toomey, *The SAGE Handbook of Conflict Communication: Integrating theory, research, and practice* (Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications 2006).

<sup>539</sup> See Karl Bühler, *Theory of Language: The Representational Function of Language* (Amsterdam: J. Benjamins Publishing, 1990).

<sup>540</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

and world, and that the theory of language must do justice to them all.”<sup>541</sup> Doing justice to language means that directness takes precedence over indirectness. The attaché, in this case, is unlikely to convey a substantive (or what she/he perceives as a substantive) message if it is not perceived as direct or coherent during human-to-human engagement. “Habermas argues that the primary function of speech is to coordinate the action of a plurality of individual agents and to provide the indivisible tracks along which interaction can unfold in an orderly and conflict-free manner.”<sup>542</sup> Step three is comprised of two sub-components. To understand the value in communication, component one offers a re-reading of Habermas’s Theory of Communicative Action, which consist of four sociological concepts expressed by players as actions which are either *teleological*, *normatively regulated*, *dramaturgical* or *communicative*. The attaché may understand here how a particular concept has either dampened US-Muslim world relations or, in the case of communicative action, seeks to enrich it.

#### 9.4.1. Component One: *Theory of Communicative Action*

(a) The attaché learns that the first concept, *teleological action*, is a form of “indirect encounter” displayed by the player to the world. In this case, “[player A] attains an end or brings about the occurrence of a desired state by choosing means that have promise of being successful in the given situation and applying them in a suitable manner.”<sup>543</sup> This action by player A is what Habermas refers to as being “interest-based”. It is a method in which player A sets out to achieve an interest-based aim through “indirect relations” with player B (or B’s audience). In order to do so, player A looks to bring about its own preconceived end by

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<sup>541</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>542</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>543</sup> Habermas, *Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, 85.

controlling player B's outcome in a given encounter which is solely in A's best interest. "It is this model of action that lies behind decision-theoretic and game-theoretic approaches in economics, sociology, and social psychology."<sup>544</sup> Habermas further acknowledges that, in the success-oriented culture of teleological action, "Success in action is also dependent on other actors, each of whom is oriented to his own success and behaves cooperatively only to the degree that this fits with his egocentric calculus of utility."<sup>545</sup> Teleological activity goes beyond implementation by a select player to the power-complex of US foreign relation in the Near East since 1945.

(b) *Normatively regulated action* refers in part to player interactivity, where a player seeks to relate to "members of a social group [by orienting its actions] to common values... [Here, the player] does not have the cognitive sense of expecting a predicted event, but the normative sense that members are entitled to expect a certain behaviour. This normative model of action lies behind the role theory that is widespread in sociology."<sup>546</sup> In a sense, it is culturally-based and allows a player to enter other people's social settings, thus transforming the player's character to suit the dominant public through indirect means. Roger Bolton acknowledges "that often this action is performed almost automatically, in rote fashion, from second nature, out of deeply extended shared habits and regarded as unproblematic by the actors, rather than in a calculated instrumental way."<sup>547</sup> This point applies to US public diplomacy initiatives which encourage audiences in the Muslim world to participate (i.e. in

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<sup>544</sup> Ibid., 87. "With regard to ontological presuppositions, we can classify *teleological* action as a concept that presupposes *one* world, namely the objective world. The same holds for the concept of *strategic action*. Here we start with at least two goal-directed acting subjects who achieve their ends by way of an orientation to, and influence on, the decisions of other actors." Ibid., 87.

<sup>545</sup> Ibid., 87-88.

<sup>546</sup> Ibid., 85.

<sup>547</sup> Roger Bolton, *Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action and the Theory of Social Capital* [article online] available from <http://www.williams.edu/Economics/papers/Habermas.pdf>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009.

professional and academic exchanges) in settings constructed by USG officials, entailing rules and objectives established by secular players.

(c) Unlike teleological and normatively regulated action, the attaché must recognise that *dramaturgical action* is slightly different, in that it employs indirect player relations with a mass audience. It relates “neither to the solitary actor nor to the member of a social group, but to participants in interaction constituting a public for one another, before whom they present themselves.”<sup>548</sup> Though indirect in his/her actions, “[the player] has privileged access to his own intentions, desires, etc., but can monitor public access to them.”<sup>549</sup> Habermas adds, “This, the central concept of the presentation of self does not signify spontaneous expressive behaviour but stylising the expression of one’s own experiences with a view to the audience.”<sup>550</sup> Player A, within this context, presents a set of rehearsed or well-expressed actions to a public which may in fact be categorised as stereotypical, indirect and stylised.

(d) The last, but yet most important, social concept offered by Habermas is *communicative action*. Unlike the “indirect encounter” presented by the previous concepts (relating to the release of perlocutionary effects, our attaché understands the limits entailed in the previous concepts surrounding indirect encounter. Here, the establishment of interpersonal relations, and the expression of subjective experiences is vital), communicative action, juxtaposed with the others, refers “to the interaction of at least two subjects capable of speech and action who establish interpersonal relations (whether by verbal or by extra-verbal means). In this case, [players A and B]... seek to reach an understanding about the action situation and their plans of action in order to coordinate their action by way of agreement.

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<sup>548</sup> Habermas, *Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, 85.

<sup>549</sup> Roger Bolton, “Habermas’ Theory of Communicative Action and the Theory of Social Capital”.

<sup>550</sup> Habermas, 86.

The central concept of interpretation refers in the first instance to negotiating definitions of the situation which admit of consensus.”<sup>551</sup> Within this last concept, the presupposition of the linguistic medium of language reflects that actor-world relations is given a prominent place.<sup>552</sup> Unlike teleological, dramaturgical and normatively regulated action – which clearly take a one-sided and indirect approach to communal relations – communicative action ensures directness and even-handedness through player accountability. Within this specific concept lies an opportunity for the *attaché*, who is the *hearer*, to raise, for example, a validity claim<sup>553</sup>; or even to fall back on the fact that rules of discourse exist which may keep both the *speaker* and *hearer* candid throughout their verbal engagement.

Communicative action is concerned primarily with building direct human-to-human relations. Teleological concerns are present in all of the four actions identified by Habermas. Teleological concerns, led by subjectivity and egotism, are present in all social and indeed human activity. Though direct relations are more likely to be set up at this level, it is almost impossible to eliminate the human desire to exercise one’s will in this special situation. The difference with communicative action is that it makes subjectivity and egotism easy to identify (and most likely to be challenged by the *hearer*), unlike the previous situations which are less structured.

For example, parallels exist between Habermas’ first three concepts of action and the indirect broad management communicative resources employed by the State Department between 2001 and 2008. “The one-sidedness [in communication] of the first three concepts of language can be seen in the fact that the corresponding types of communication singled out

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<sup>551</sup> Ibid.

<sup>552</sup> Ibid., 94.

<sup>553</sup> Finlayson, *Habermas: A Very Short Introduction*, 34-39.



by them prove to be limited cases of communicative action.”<sup>554</sup> If we place the TCA in context with previously-defined diplomatic efforts to connect with Muslim publics, we are able to see the potential of communicative action and its benefit to the attaché.

#### **a) Teleological action**

In an international effort to combat terror and stop WMDs from falling into the hands of terrorist organisations, a unilateral foreign policy agenda was set by the Bush administration to insure US national security interests. The Bush doctrine’s central focus on weaponry, defence and engaging an extreme segment of the Muslim world influenced State’s outreach efforts, which were teleological. In addition, they were non-cooperative (to a great extent) and zero-sum (i.e. allowing one player to win only at the expense of the other), as illustrated by its “Brand America” marketing campaign, which hinged on commercial marketing efforts. Its diplomatic efforts were generally indirect. Evidence supporting this claim include: a) the Bush Doctrine’s pre-emptive military strategy toward and within the Muslim world; b) its mass public diplomacy campaign, involving an increase in US foreign aid to predominantly Muslim countries; and c) its academic and social programming, which intended to build US credibility among Muslim audiences by overtly selling the *American Story* in order to reach a predetermined end. Such efforts were teleological.

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<sup>554</sup> Ibid., 94.

## **b) Normatively regulated action**

This is recognised within State's Muslim world outreach programme that employed the "Brand America" option. Among Muslim audiences in certain venues, key players of the Muslim world oriented their actions to fit into models predesigned by State officials in the form of professional and academic exchanges. Instead of the USG (as the uninvited party) transforming its behaviour to accommodate the cultural norms of the Muslim world, the normative action was reversed. Players in the Muslim world were persuaded to enter into a predesigned public diplomacy sphere created by the State Department and controlled by State diplomats. Under the Bush administration selected key players, by participating, would contribute indirectly to an exchange relating to shared values (in particular), and would unknowingly contribute to the dominant public (the US) reaching a predetermined ends.

These normatively regulated activities by the State Department included, for example, Charlotte Beers's Shared Values Initiative (a mass media campaign), *Hi* youth magazine (directed at Arab young people in the Middle East and North Africa), the Partnership for Leadership (an exchange programme aimed at young people in the Muslim world), the Global Cultural Initiative, Greetings from America, and even the Middle East Partnership Initiative. To build upon these branding efforts during her tenure, Karen P. Hughes underwrote this normative action by mainly focusing on what she saw as three strategic imperatives: to '*expand academic and professional programs, modernise state and intergovernmental agency communication efforts and expand US foreign assistance*'. Each imperative contributed to bringing players in the Muslim world into the US public diplomacy sphere (as opposed to a mutually defined pluralist arena) so that the USG might attain its predetermined ends.

### c) Dramaturgical actions

Dramaturgical actions were most evident in the way in which the stylised image that key government officials and Muslim audiences were on board with the Bush administration was maintained. In an orchestrated effort to gain legitimacy among both US and Muslim audiences, USG officials including Secretary Condoleezza Rice, Karen P. Hughes, Michael Chertoff, David Welch and numerous ambassadors and diplomats, for example, participated in commercialised communication projects linked to cyber-activity, multimedia programming and radio and television appearances. These were employed in order to raise attention and public support for US policies in the Muslim world (without directly engaging critical issues or concerns). A strong emphasis may be placed on symbolism, in the sense that while on the surface it seemed that high-ranking US players and key officials in predominantly Muslim countries were building a partnership, it is arguable that there was a central failure to establish substantive policies for the benefit of the audiences.

Examples of dramaturgical efforts in action would be officials' public displays in five-minute press conferences with, for example, then Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf and Secretary Rice; or the countless meetings between Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri-al-Malaki and President Bush in press conferences to shore up support for US-Iraqi relations and in quieting sectarian tension within the region. At embassies, actions included ambassadors addressing Muslim audiences by holding civic Iftaar dinners in countries such as Cameroon, Ethiopia, Syria and India.<sup>555</sup> These actions were not in the least a form of "symbolic

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<sup>555</sup> Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, "Supporting Human Rights and Democracy: The US Record 2005-2006," *US Department of State* (2006) [document online]; available from <http://www.state.gov/documents/organisation/64057.pdf>; Internet, accessed 12 March 2008; "U.S. Embassies Host Iftaar Dinners", *Public Diplomacy Update*, Vol. 2, Issue 4 (December 2007).

interaction”, as acknowledged by the social theorist Herbert Blumer, since players “did not act toward things on the basis of the meaning which those things had for them.”<sup>556</sup> US player’s actions were performed to an audience, again, to reach a predetermined end.

#### **d) Communicative action**

Based on past findings, we know today that just as secular US establishments are apprehensive about their tradition being assaulted by the sacred, socially-constructed religious and tribal communities are nervous about the reverse. In communicative relations, a *sacred-secular equilibrium* is important between the two. Hence, the State Department had not fully assessed the Muslim world before employing its high-brow “Madison Avenue” “Brand America” campaign, and therefore was more success-oriented and less concerned with the key opinion-formers in Islamic society. Habermas stresses that these actions generally fit into what is described as an *instrumental* action model, which is success-oriented. The attaché must recognise that success-oriented approaches, when geared toward socially-constructed worlds, end in failure.

Here, “Success is defined as the appearance in the world of a desired state, which can, in a given situation, be causally produced through goal-oriented action or omission.”<sup>557</sup> The effects of action comprise both the results of action (which the player foresaw and intended,

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<sup>556</sup> In the essay, *Symbolic Interactionism*, Blumer identifies that, “Symbolic Interactionism rests on three primary premises. First, that human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings those things have for them, second that such meanings arise out of the interaction of the individual with others, and third, that an interpretive process is used by the person in each instance in which he must deal with things in his environment.” Herbert Blumer, *Symbolic Interactionism* [article online] available from <http://www.cdharris.net/text/blumer.html>; Internet, accessed 9 April 2009; See also Herbert Blumer, *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method* (Englewood Cliff: Prentice-Hall, 1969).

<sup>557</sup> Habermas, *Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, 285.

or made allowance for) and the side-effects (which the player did not foresee).<sup>558</sup> Habermas makes clear that it benefits players more to gear their actions toward understanding, and what he calls a strategic action model is typified by its preference for understanding over success. The German language helps in comprehending this point: he notes that the act of reaching understanding is *Verständigung*, while the interaction between actors is *Einigung*. The like-mindedness which these two players should reach is *Gleichgestimmtheit*, which occurs as a part of the *strategic* (but not *instrumental*) action model. This is formed by our fourth social concept, communicative action, where *direct human-to-human action* between players is “under the aspect of following rules of rational choice and assessing the efficacy of influencing the decisions of a rational opponent.”<sup>559</sup>

Here, the religion attaché discovers a formidable way to improve USG human-to-human capabilities at a grassroots-level: when learning this first component the religion attaché realises that she/he should not seek an end which is motivated by success over mutual understanding. We gather that the attaché must be willing, in future US-Muslim world engagement, to use: **i)** *constructive engagement with Muslim audiences through language*; **ii)** *communicative relationship-building through agreed rules of engagement*; **iii)** *direct communication which allows players in Muslim audiences to keep the religion attaché’s message candid by raising validity claims about the core US foreign policy message*; and, **iv)** in this case, *an understanding-over-success model for social engagement when interacting with Muslim audiences*.

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<sup>558</sup> Ibid.

<sup>559</sup> Ibid., 285.

#### 9.4.2. Component Two: *Coordinated Management of Meaning*

The second component that contributes to enriching the attaché's communicative development is integrated with the Habermasian theory of communicative action, which focuses on the medium of language. This integration introduces into the *Post-Secular Communication Strategy of Interfaith Diplomacy* an avenue for the religion attaché to practise direct communication. An alternative action of this kind would make it easier for both parties in dialogue to allow understanding to trump success-oriented models. Given the nature of the communication action to be performed by the religious attaché, how can the player integrate this action in its language when directly engaging key players within Muslim publics? The answer lies in the second integral component at this level, W. Barnett Pearce's practical theory of the *coordinated management of meaning* (CMM).

Pearce's theory lifts IFD<sup>2</sup> by informing the attaché that there are "two concepts" in comprehending the general purpose of communication. The two models which reveal the relevance of communication are the *transmission* and *social construction* models. "[First, the] transmission model defines the purpose of communication as the transfer of information from one mind or place to another... [which] works best when messages clearly and accurately represent the meaning in the mind of the person who says, writes, draws, or performs them."<sup>560</sup> From a simple but basic form of ordinary communication – human interaction – Pearce suggests that the participants (in our case the religion attaché and sacred player) must aspire to a more substantive and detailed form of exchange. This brings us to the, "...social construction model [which] is more of a way of making the social world rather than talking about it, and this is always done with other people. Rather than, 'What did [the Muslim

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<sup>560</sup> W. Barnett Pearce, *Making Social Worlds: A Communication Perspective* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 30.

clerics] mean by that?’ the relevant questions are ‘How are we making it?’ and ‘How can we make better social worlds?’”<sup>561</sup> These are critical queries which must be asked by the practitioners of interfaith diplomacy when engaging with religious players and key opinion-formers in the Muslim world. In this training, with CMM, the emphasis is geared now toward communicating one’s core message coherently and directly in order that critical religious infrastructures at a grassroots level are comprehended respectfully.

Communication, which is at the heart of IFD<sup>2</sup>, is not about replicating talking points or producing a well-rehearsed (stylised) message to an audience in a diplomatic setting where the player appears. Communicating by practising IFD<sup>2</sup> is about entering into, and making better, social worlds by establishing new worlds and reconstructing old worlds through substantive dialogue and practical discourse within a socio-political interfaith context. In building these new social worlds communicatively, the religion attaché will undoubtedly meet setbacks. When re-reading Pearce, we comprehend that in many of these dialogue situations with religious and tribal audiences the player will be confronted by four basic prospects as she/he attempts to develop grassroots relations when employing the second component in this strategy:<sup>562</sup>

- Upon entering the previously constructed social worlds of Muslim audiences, the religion attaché is likely to feel confused about regarding the basic function of these communities.
- International Muslim audiences are, on the whole, socially constructed by critical knowledge and function towards one another on the basis of mutual understanding.

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<sup>561</sup> Ibid., 30-31.

<sup>562</sup> Ibid., 40-41.

- The religion attaché must come to realise that there is not one unique social world to be associated with Muslim audiences; this is why the numerous techniques which are not success-oriented deserve consideration.
- If the religion attaché is to work within the Muslim world, she/he must understand that she/he will be involved in constructing new social worlds out of these newly formed sacred-secular relationships.

Recalling Habermas's *strategic action model*, we understand again why this approach is vital. Hence, it stops the religion attaché from taking a success-driven posture by first coming to grips with understanding Islamic society, and then re-building trusted relations along the lines of mutual understanding and mutual interest.

To ensure that the attaché will contribute evenhandedly in the dialogue setting, IFD<sup>2</sup> integrates two additional concepts taken from Pearce's practical theory of the "coordinated management of meaning." In recalling his theory, CMM explores, in all, four concepts for understanding dialogue (the communication perspective, coherence, coordination and mystery). Our strategy places most value on two: the *communication perspective* and *coordination*. Let us first look at the communication perspective: taking a communication perspective in the dialogue setting urges the attaché to take communication seriously and, as a player, to act wisely to understand a situation and [even] act wisely in those situations.<sup>563</sup> "The *communication perspective* demonstrates that by looking into the process of communication rather than through it, we treat communication itself as substantial and

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<sup>563</sup> Ibid., x-xvi.



consequential.”<sup>564</sup> Pearce first indicates this idea in the context of a communication situation in the importance of a player to identify “bifurcation points” when in conversation. These bifurcation points, which are regarded as the most important episodes (as detailed below), are moments within the conversation that have the potential to sway the direction of communication, leading to either a positive or negative end. “In a real sense, we see what we know rather than the other way around, and our ability to discern bifurcation points and to make wise decisions about how to act into them requires some sharper conceptual tool for understanding communication.”<sup>565</sup> Three basic instructions implied by Pearce’s research, which encourage the religious attaché to assure even-handedness in its dialogue situation, are:

- (i) The attaché must be willing to see “organisations, families, persons and nations as deeply textured clusters of persons-in-conversation.”<sup>566</sup> Many traditional outlets within predominantly Muslim audiences are part of an entire system which our player must recognise as integral to the communication process, not as an extended entity apart from the political, economic and social structure of that community (or the *umma*). It is this entire entity that the player must initially engage as a whole before change is likely to occur. Pearce points out, “In a similar way, organisations [shall be recognised] as clusters of conversations and managers as orchestrating conversations rather than embodying information or power. Matters of efficiency, morale, productivity, and conflict can be handled by attention to what

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<sup>564</sup> W. Barnett Pearce, *Claiming Our Birthright: Social Constructionism and the Discipline of Communication* Essay presented in conjunction with The National Communication Association and The Crooked Timbers Project (Albuquerque, New Mexico, August 1-4, 2006, photocopied), 7.

<sup>565</sup> W. Barnett Pearce, *Communication and the Making of Social Worlds* (Santa Barbra, California: Field Graduate University, date unknown, photocopied essay), 2.

<sup>566</sup> W. Barnett Pearce and Kimberly A. Pearce “Taking a Communication Perspective on Dialogue”, R. Anderson and L.A. Baxter et. al., *Theorizing Difference in Communication Studies* (Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications, 2003), 39-56.

conversations occur, where, with what participants, in what type of language, and about what topics.”<sup>567</sup>

(ii) Next, the attaché should understand that communication is substantial and that its properties have consequences. Pearce draws attention to Deborah Tannen’s study, *The Argument Culture: Moving from Debate to Dialogue*, which acknowledges that US commercial communication is dominated by adversarial forms of communication.<sup>568</sup> In fact, this “sell-sell hostile” debate culture has no place in sacred-secular relationship-making. When engaging Muslim audiences, the attaché must put confrontation in a back seat and thus be ready to simplify complex communicative issues through discussion.

(iii) Finally, the attaché must treat such things as “beliefs, personalities, attitudes, power relationships, and social and economic structures as made, not found.”<sup>569</sup> Acknowledging Pearce, this is key to understanding that our attaché may have a hand in shaping such things through good direct communication. Mindful of the social construction model, the attaché will understand in this final suggestion that good communication leans more toward establishing or rebuilding social worlds in partnership with other agents and players than

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<sup>567</sup> W. Barnett Pearce and Kimberly A. Pearce “Taking a Communication Perspective on Dialogue”, R. Anderson and L.A. Baxter et. al., *Theorizing Difference in Communication Studies* (Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications, 2003), 39-56.

<sup>568</sup> Pearce notes, “The second step in the communication perspective is the realisation that the qualities of communication have fateful implications for the social worlds in which we live. Deborah Tannen notes that the culture in my country, the United States of America, has become dominated by a habit ‘of approaching almost any issue, problem, or public person in an adversarial way.’ While not denying the value and situational virtue of opposition, she calls into question the habit of ‘using opposition to accomplish every goal, even those that do not require fighting but might also (or better) be accomplished by other means, such as exploring, expanding, discussing, investigating, and the exchanging of ideas suggested by the word “dialogue”.’” W. Barnett Pearce, *A Brief Introduction to “The Coordinated Managed of Meaning (CMM)”* [article online] available from [http://www.russcomm.ru/eng/rca\\_biblio/p/pearce.shtml](http://www.russcomm.ru/eng/rca_biblio/p/pearce.shtml); Internet, accessed 9 April 2009. See also Deborah Tannen, *The Argument Culture: Moving from Debate to Dialogue* (New York: Random House, 1998).

<sup>569</sup> W. Barnett Pearce, *Making Social Worlds*, 40.

unilaterally defining rules and implementing them without acknowledgment from key players within Islamic society.

Taking a communication perspective in dialogues is one of the most substantial actions for the religion attaché. When engaging with Muslim audiences at a grassroots level, the religious attaché is able to change the relationship dynamic by sharing with critical decision-makers and opinion-formers the same responsibility to produce a progressive body of communication which the public may find acceptable. This means that the body of communication was initially constructed on the basis of mutual understanding directly rather than indirectly. Far from being success-driven or one-sided, it is aware of “critical moments” at which the conversation can take a negative turn.

Pearce’s second concept relates to employing coordination in the communication process. Here, we focus on coordination as a valued tool in presenting one’s core message and interacting communicatively to ensure a stable dialogue is established. The concept of coordination is simply that of paying close attention to the various turn-by-turns in dialogue (critical moments), since these indicate the players’ actions:

Using the term ‘coordination’ as a way of understanding these experiences is part of... the ‘social construction’ approach to communication. It suggests that, instead of a correspondence between mental state and action, we pose questions and look for answers in the flow of actions themselves. That is, we understand what people say and do as taking ‘turns’ in the patterns of communication, not as ‘signs pointing to something else.’<sup>570</sup>

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<sup>570</sup> Ibid., 89. Pearce makes clear that “The theory of the coordinated management of meaning (CMM) does not try to offer a set of propositions about the events and objects of the social world. Rather, it is a set of concepts and tools focusing on the process by which those events and objects are made. It functions to discipline and enable inquiry into specific moments of that process for the purpose of understanding, acting wisely, and intervening to improve the process.” Ibid., 78.

The attaché must focus on the communicative actions of the other in order to understand where the dialogue is heading. A communicative partnership between the attaché and the religious player can form only when they are both in sync with each other, and this is a sign of the depth of their engagement. In this case, the attaché is able to see the entire conversation and into its changing trajectory which inevitably (after presenting its core message) determines the general outcome and after-life of the dialogue.

The term ‘coordination’ is used in CMM to direct attention to our efforts to align our actions with those of others. Among other things, the necessity to coordinate with others shows that communication is inherently and fundamentally social. No matter what speech act – whether threat, compliment, instruction, question, insult, or anything else – its successful performance requires not only your action but the complementary actions of others.<sup>571</sup>

When applying this concept, the attaché is able to act wisely within these critical moments of conversation. She/he can, within a split second, mentally review critical episodes from the past which may become vital to the development of social construction within these audiences. It is true that, as human beings, “we have trouble recognising and acting wisely into bifurcation points because we are so caught up in the meaning of what is going on that we lose sight of the possibilities of changing the shape of the pattern.”<sup>572</sup> Coordinating action and paying attention to the flow of the dialogue emerges as conducive to constructing cohesive communication.

The religion attaché must take seriously the act of making and managing meaning in the dialogue setting. We may see this point in terms of comparing synthetic with authentic human relations. If we recall again the indirect engagement efforts employed by the State Department between 2001 and 2008 to promote a robust nation-branding campaign in the

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<sup>571</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>572</sup> Ibid., 93.

Muslim world, we see that its efforts were not authentic and were not received by Muslim audiences as genuine (considering the failure of the USG to raise its favourability in the Muslim world). The indirect Brand America campaign employed by the Bush administration under the authority of then Undersecretary of Public Diplomacy and Public Relations Karen P. Hughes, was deeply synthetic. In this sense, its failure to directly engage Muslim audiences on the basis of mutual understanding and its preference for winning indicate that a non-authentic relationship between the USG and the Muslim world would inevitably result. In retrospect, such efforts clearly belong to the category of short-term diplomatic solution, which temporarily calmed some Muslim audiences in order that the USG could continue to exercise its might against others. This has produced grave problems which today demand a more authentic solution. Such examples indicate why the attaché must employ authentic forms of communicative action at a grassroots level to enhance the US-Muslim world communicative process.

Pearce concludes by stating that the essence of “meaning is so important to what it means to be a human being and in the making of social worlds that it has distracted us from the other half of the process of communication.”<sup>573</sup> This fierce position only indicates how important both aspects – communication and meaning – are. In a nutshell, the duty of the attaché must be to ensure that its communicative actions entail meaningful dialogue, no matter whether the communication process lasts five minutes or five hours – in order to create new and improved social worlds.

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<sup>573</sup> W. Barnett Pearce, *Making Social Worlds*, 95.

### 9.5. The value of IFD<sup>2</sup>

If President Obama's "political rhetoric of hope" does not move beyond its present state of dramaturgy, a visible gap will surface to distort US Muslim-world relations. In so many words, the world awaits one man's political actions. My *Post-Secular Communication Strategy of Interfaith Diplomacy* prescribes how the Clinton State Department may prevent a number of shortcomings if it were to recruit a new FSO that employs direct communicative action with Muslims at a grassroots-level. Herein lies the main reason why this study is not concerned with upgrading public diplomacy or examining at length Obama's proposed foreign policy, but is instead concerned with the imperative of adopting a communication strategy to restore grassroots communicative relations with Islamic society.

Since the latter part of the twentieth century, the NGO contributions linked to the contemporary interfaith movement, which set out to promote international peacemaking among religious groups, shed light on why and how the current State Department must implement its change in course when dealing with socially-constructed religious and tribal audiences in the Muslim world. Thus, extensive forms of interaction beyond Obama's direct-Oval Office engagement are required and have yet to be offered. These extensive forms of engagement should first adjust certain aspects of the USG's diplomatic infrastructure, beginning with communication training. Previous State Department efforts, which were reduced to nation-branding, were inadequate and negligent ways of connecting with Muslims. They were found to consist of:

- i) Looking for a predetermined end through indirect relations;
- ii) Inviting religious players and Muslim publics to participate in programming which sought to manipulate their presence; and

- iii) Stylised/rehearsed messages presented to Muslim audiences.

A more substantive communicative action, emphasising understanding over success (*strategic* over *instrumental* action), is more appropriate for this task. This thesis, on the whole, recommends a ground-up communication strategy which begins by deploying religious attachés to broaden Obama's direct Oval Office engagement efforts throughout the Muslim world. This will allow the religion attaché not just an opportunity to employ traditional diplomatic approaches with civil society and government, but also to practise smart communication by taking three crucial steps:

- i) Recognising the post-secular
- ii) Entering with the religious player into the mutually-inclusive pluralist arena of socio-political IFD; and
- iii) Once in this arena, practise communication by drawing on aspects of communication theory as outlined above.

The *Post-Secular Communication Strategy of Interfaith Diplomacy* might appear a complex communication strategy to train a religion attaché in building trusted relations at a grassroots level, and its complexity probably derives from having to integrate three multifaceted themes relating to politics, theology and communication theory. Though, inevitably, the integration of these themes will not be trouble-free in practise, the weaknesses identified with the communication strategy of IFD<sup>2</sup> generally relate to its application, as opposed to its character.

- The first weakness of this model may be associated with the reluctance of secularists within the USG to apply a hybrid communication strategy that draws on religious themes, which in turn is likely to improve US-Muslim world relations. Continuing on its track of failure to improve these confirms the narrow nature of the USG, which has never allocated enough space for addressing religion as a critical issue facing US foreign policy.
- Secondly, it may be argued that IFD<sup>2</sup> is not a ready-made communication strategy. To ensure IFD<sup>2</sup> is implemented sufficiently within the dialogue setting by the attaché, additional training is required after recruitment. As with any communication strategy, the key players must receive a certain amount of training in an academic setting (i.e. the Foreign Service Institute), and this is catered for with my academic course, *The Dynamics of Interfaith Diplomacy*, intended for US diplomats and specialists (designed in conjunction with the University of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service).
- Finally, it may be argued that the strengths of IFD<sup>2</sup>'s application within the Muslim world are unconfirmed. As will be asserted in the conclusion, this communication strategy deserves additional testing by future researchers. In addition, the examination by test groups which compared IFD<sup>2</sup>'s capabilities and strengths to brand management resources applied under the Bush administration may verify whether it will succeed in the diplomatic setting.

However, its strengths, in contrast, show it to be a practicable alternative:

- First, given that it requires extensive training to implement, its strength lies in this very requirement. In training the religion attaché, this communication strategy will introduce the attaché to the inter-disciplinary approach which she/he must take to understand post-secularism, by becoming familiar with procedures from the discipline of both politics and theology/comparative religious studies.



- Secondly, IFD<sup>2</sup> establishes a constructive communication protocol (providing additional padding) to some US public diplomacy efforts in the Muslim world. Far from addressing a commercial trend within this community, a structured communicative approach is used when employing direct human-to-human relations at a people-to-people and organisational level to Muslim audiences.
- Third, IFD<sup>2</sup> provides a legitimate communication approach which allows the religion attaché to reach beyond traditional zero-sum diplomatic methods when engaging religious and tribal audiences. Instead of trying to appeal to the Muslim world by marketing foreign policy through secular means, the religion attaché is able to reach across secular lines in order to meet the religious player on common ground.
- Fourth, as a form of détente diplomacy, IFD<sup>2</sup> is adept at relaxing both players in the dialogue, thus enhancing the formation of social and political relations. The attaché is able to present the US core foreign policy message to Muslim audiences and to key religious players at this introductory level once the tension has been eased by the use of IFD<sup>2</sup>.
- And finally, as a communication strategy IFD<sup>2</sup> does not stop at being a communication approach in this context; it is, for example, the springboard for improving sacred-secular relations in both the private sector and the NGO community. With religious and tribal conflicts emerging globally, not only US foreign relations, but also private sector entities (which seek to build client relations with international religious publics), need to identify best practices of engagement. Moreover, NGO interfaith groups have for some time expressed a wish for a communication strategy such as IFD<sup>2</sup> to improve political and civic relations. What we learn in these cases is that a more substantive communication approach is needed to consolidate relations, rather than players in their dialogues drawing on ad-hoc communication approaches. For this, IFD<sup>2</sup> provides a coherent model which private sector, civic and religious

players alike can employ to improve communicative relations.

Beyond the strengths and weaknesses identified, the *Post-Secular Communication Strategy of Interfaith Diplomacy* offers an honest starting point for FSO training. Given the current communication problem between the USG and the Muslim world, let us not forget how important it is for the Obama administration to establish a core foreign policy message that will enhance the attaché's use of this strategy in the field. However, we should not forget the need to invest in the art of communication. This ensures that the attaché's communicative character is far removed from teleological action and a zero-sum game theory.

## CONCLUSION

*Of course, recognising our common humanity is only the beginning of our task. Words alone cannot meet the needs of our people. These needs will be met only if we act boldly in the years ahead; and if we understand that the challenges we face are shared, and our failure to meet them will hurt us all... Now, that does not mean we should ignore sources of tension. Indeed, it suggests the opposite: we must face these tensions squarely.*

Barack Obama

*Remarks by the President on a New Beginning, 2009*

The inauguration of President Barack Hussein Obama represented not only a symbolic day in American history, but an unmatched opportunity pointing toward a new political era, untarnished by the previous administration. Two wars, an American economy in ruins, and a planet in peril, hardly describe the prospective road ahead for the Obama administration. But amidst this great backdrop, including threats presented by religious terrorism and the creation of new Jihadist fronts in Yemen, the President has shown great willingness at the executive level to carry out direct Oval Office engagement with the Muslim world. A recognition by Obama that US-Muslim world engagement must remain a national security priority adds flesh to America's willingness to "extend a hand to the Muslim world."<sup>574</sup>

However, over the last half-century, traditional political philosophies such as Morgenthau's political realism have stymied the prospects of sacred-secular engagement. This philosophy has contributed to the debate on what exactly is legitimate with regards to nation-state relations and how the nation state must refuse to integrate the moral aspirations of a particular nation into political debate. By 2001, the Bush administration would embrace this position in its secular approach to engage the Muslim world. The administration's

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<sup>574</sup> Barack Obama, *Inauguration Address* [address online]; available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/inaugural-address/>; Internet, accessed 12 January 2010.

posture included recognising elite groups, nations-states and secular systems while pushing to the fringe non-secular voices. Hence, Hady Amr and P.W. Singer were correct to advise, “there is a glaring need for the United States to undertake a proactive strategy [in the Muslim world] aimed at restoring long-term security through the presentation of American principles as a part of US foreign policy.”<sup>575</sup> But, if Amr and Singer’s position is to stand as correct, this means (at a diplomatic-level) that the USG will have to re-define its engagement process in this post-secular era to include the integration of both secular and non-secular voices into public discourse. Consequently, President Obama’s 2009 Cairo address indicates that America must open itself up to broader forms of engagement that go beyond the secular. He acknowledges, “I am convinced that in order to move forward, we must say openly to each other the things we hold in our hearts and that too often are said only behind closed doors. There must be a sustained effort to listen to each other; to learn from each other; to respect one another; and to seek common ground.”<sup>576</sup>

But it is unclear if Clinton’s strategy that focuses primarily on three uniquely secular but broad areas the administration, in the coming year, will gear its attention toward will be effective: i) An emphasis on job creation in the Muslim world, ii) Advancing science and technology, and iii) Promoting wide-spread educational opportunities.<sup>577</sup> None of these broad approaches have factored in the dynamics of communication training and the role US diplomats will need to play in restoring relations with Muslims. It is likely that Clinton has identified these broad areas because they fit into a conception of traditional ways in which the

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<sup>575</sup> Hady Amr and P. W. Singer, *Engaging the Muslim World: A Communication Strategy to Win the War of Ideas* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2007), 17.

<sup>576</sup> Barack Obama, *A New Year, A New Beginning* [available online]; <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nowruz/>; Internet, accessed 12 January 2010.

<sup>577</sup> Hillary Clinton, *Remarks at the Forum for the Future* (3 November 2009) [address online]; available from <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/11/131236.htm>; Internet, accessed 12 January 2010.

US might advance its power in certain Muslim countries. As identified above, this is a danger in US-Muslim world engagement in that hidden forms of manipulation are at times present to allow the US to reach its national interest. Joseph S. Nye Jr. states that:

Hard and soft power are related because they are both aspects of the ability to achieve one's purpose by affecting the behaviour of others. The distinction between them is one of degree both in the nature of the behaviour and in the tangibility of the resources. Command power – the ability to change what others do – can rest on coercion or inducement. Co-optive power – the ability to shape what others want – can rest on the attractiveness of one's culture and value so the ability to manipulate the agenda of political choices in a manner that makes others fail to express some preferences because they seem too unrealistic.<sup>578</sup>

Interestingly, there is no power in restoring communication, nor are America's immediate national security interests met. This is why restoring relations with non-secular audiences has never ranked as a top priority in the American political system. But in moving forward, Clinton will need to upgrade her vague scheme of applying smart power to one that values the notion of communicative engagement (not for the purpose of advancing American power but for promoting productive relations with Islamic society).

It may in fact be the case Clinton anticipates that: *If the US adjusts its military might and employs a more programme-based approach that does not sell America in a blunt way, we are likely to restore relations and combat terror from a diplomatic posture.* Unfortunately, this play will not work. In order for Secretary Clinton, Undersecretary Judith Hale and the new Director General of the US Foreign Service to get this right, they will be required to rethink these three broad secular approaches to include a post-secular framework which begins with restoring communication. Hence, the question remains as to how Secretary

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<sup>578</sup> Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs Press, 2004), 7.

Clinton & Co. are to address the many voices in the Muslim world that do not wish to engage on secular grounds. In addressing this, the following points must again be considered:

**Table 8**

**Meeting the Muslim World on Post-Secular Grounds**

1) The USG should readily identify that it has embarked upon a post-secular era which warns against its apprehensive political posture toward religious issues (both domestic and foreign);
2) In maintaining its liberal-secular traditions, the USG must become more accustomed to incorporating forms of post-secular political engagement to address religious and other traditional issues when linked to Muslim publics;
3) The establishment of a special post-secular political forum that encourages public deliberation that integrates religious and political players in order to balance the political realm's decision-making process when developing policies related to broad religious affairs;
4) In this forum, the USG should consider partnerships with local networks (moderate and hostile) of political, religious and private infrastructures in Muslim publics to reshape failed US foreign policies which over the last decade have failed to invest in understanding the shared objectives and values of Islamic society, and;
5) Ensure that there is creative post-secular communicative language that the USG is able to employ in its effort to rebuild equitable sacred-secular relations with international religious publics in order that it might cease to rely on outdated secular measures.

Deeply imbedded within the *umma*, the fact remains that a perceived American foreign policy of exceptionalism coupled with commercial marketing approaches will neither have a positive bearing on Muslim audiences or help to restore America's longstanding image problem. Not even the world's sole superpower – *on a good day* – is capable of “selling” its way out of a history of substandard foreign policy in the Near East which, over the last decade, has neglected to listen to or directly engage with moderate Islamic voices. For this reason, Secretary Clinton has no other alternative but to take into account the following setbacks under the Bush administration that distorted the engagement process:

- 1) A history of an American foreign policy rooted in political arrogance and exceptionalism throughout the Near East;
- 2) The State Department's willingness to reintroduce a pre-existing public diplomacy campaign that would "sell" America to the Muslim world;
- 3) The USG's reputation as a liberal-secular nation that often devalues non-secular perspectives and aspirations in international relations; and
- 4) The impact of American domestic propaganda spread by neo-conservatives that influenced America's public diplomacy campaign between 2001 and 2008.

Though Secretary Clinton's recommendation does not fall into the category of "selling" America to the Muslim world, it does stop at incorporating broad approaches that go beyond the secular. Nicholas J. Cull of the USC's Centre on Public Diplomacy reminds us here that (in the case of public diplomacy) presenting a random approach is unlikely to appease a foreign audience.<sup>579</sup> Recalling the limitations of American public diplomacy under the Bush administration, and its random presentation of approaches, would be parallel to Russia's Cold War public diplomacy machine of the Khrushchev-era as influenced by Leonid Brezhnev. Cull regards this robust disposition steered by domestic propaganda as the Brezhnev syndrome. He affirms that,

...one important goal of Soviet engagement with foreign publics was the production of positive images for domestic consumption; the Kremlin knew the value of telling their own population that the Soviet society remained the admiration of the world. Apparently genuine attempts to engage with foreign audiences in the Khrushchev-era had given way to a new kind of activity, not public diplomacy as a form of foreign policy but foreign engagement of the crudest kind as a blunt instrument of domestic propaganda.<sup>580</sup>

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<sup>579</sup> Nicholas J. Cull, "Karen Hughes and the Brezhnev Syndrome: The Trial of Public Diplomacy as Domestic Performance", *The Trials of Engagement: The Future of Public Diplomacy*, Scott Lucas and Ali Fisher (Forthcoming, 2011).

<sup>580</sup> Ibid.

Both “domestic propaganda” and “conservative ideals” were unfortunately introduced into America’s blunt instrument, as opposed to the tool of listening. However, in likeness to the Kremlin’s arrogance, American public diplomacy would follow.

Like a car driver who sticks a piece of tape over a dashboard warning light, they masked the warning signs of their declining world role until it was too late. While the Brezhnev-era case is an extreme example, it shows that engagement with foreign publics is not always conducted with international objectives in mind; sometimes public diplomacy has a short-term domestic motive.<sup>581</sup>

In addition, Clinton must recognise that in order to defeat Jihadist propaganda, restore relations with Muslims and improve America’s standing in the world, a long-sustained, organised effort to engage the Muslim world, beginning at a grassroots level, is required. Phillip M. Taylor proposes, “You can’t fight a war against an idea, at least not with tanks and bombs and missiles. That is why the West is losing the propaganda war and why it will continue to lose it, and indeed make it harder to win. The struggle needs to be defined in informational and educational terms. It needs to recognise that if it continues to be waged with hard power it will not be the ‘Long War’ but the ‘Forever War.’”<sup>582</sup> Hence, a new post-secular framework is required, that includes policy-makers recognising the importance of integrating non-secular voices into the larger political discourse and the relevance of going beyond the secular when engaging both religious and other traditional communities.

In proposing a newer, sharper way forward, this study modifies previous recommendations to establish a distinctive strategy that contributes to reconciling the US-Muslim world communication problem. By adding both an interfaith and communication dimension to Edward Luttwak and Douglas Johnston’s existing project, this study broadens

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<sup>581</sup> Ibid.

<sup>582</sup> Phillip M. Taylor, “Public Diplomacy on Trial?”, *The Trials of Engagement: The Future of Public Diplomacy*, Scott Lucas and Ali Fisher (Forthcoming, 2011).



the State Department's communicative opportunities with the Muslim world by making clear the prospects of post-secularism. In contrast, many proposals and recommendations by leading think-tanks in the last few years have attempted to address the US's ongoing communication problem, but, as with Secretary Clinton's approach, they have omitted going beyond proposing secular approaches to engage Islamic society.

- The Brookings Institute, *The Need to Communicate: How to Improve US Public Diplomacy with the Islamic World*
- Council on Foreign Relations, *Finding America's Voice: A Strategy for Reinvigorating US Public Diplomacy*
- Center for the Study of the Presidency, *Strengthening US-Muslim Communications*
- Government Accountability Office, *US Public Diplomacy: State Department Expands Efforts but Faces Significant Challenges*
- Heritage Foundation, *How to Reinvigorate US Public Diplomacy*

Expanding American public diplomacy is the often-made but limiting recommendation made by leading theorists and researchers. But many fail to comprehend that attention given to public diplomacy expansion in the Muslim world is liken to bandaging a gaping wound. To treat this problem will mean returning to its problematised source, *communication*. This is the fundamental reason why this dissertation is not concerned with upgrading public diplomacy. Instead, its priority has focused on how a new political discourse supporting communication training offers new prospects for improving relations. This has included illustrating how the establishment of a Religion Attaché Officers corps within the US Foreign Service will yield more practicable results. Therefore, an attaché armed with a background in

broad religious affairs and training in *Interfaith Diplomacy* is likely to make significant headway in counteracting tension caused by the US-Muslim world communication problem.

Unfortunately, reapplying Karen P. Hughes's single-player commercial marketing crusade in the Muslim world is unlikely to work at any rate. In fact, this dramaturgical approach is likely to fuel more tension than yield positive results. Cull reminds us that,

Hughes made one critical error at the outset, and reflective of the early onset of the Brezhnev Syndrome. She travelled with a sizeable American press corps. With Bush's foreign policy on trial, she then allowed herself to be drawn into counter-productive bouts of defending the administration rather than focusing on her declared objective of listening. Possibly Hughes had become a victim of her double-hated office which compelled attention to both international and domestic audiences. Possibly her reaction was just the reflex of a seasoned campaigner who could not help but come out swinging. Whatever the reason, the tour generated an almost wholly negative press at home and overseas.<sup>583</sup>

Secretary Clinton, in this case, must be forewarned of drawing plays steeped in the Brezhnev Syndrome from the Bush administration's playbook by deploying US Special Representative to Muslim Communities Farah Anwar Pandith as a single-player to improve relations. Strong decisive leadership is needed, but the motivation to restore relations and gather the perspectives and aspirations of Muslim audiences must originate at a grassroots level by not one but multiple players. This is the reason why a shift in construct and communication dynamic are together required to assure diplomatic renewal.

Thus, it is fair to argue that Secretary of State Madeline Albright, Edward Luttwak, and Douglas Johnston have provided practicable recommendations to enhance America's diplomatic relationship with predominantly religious communities. However, their work is

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<sup>583</sup> Nicholas J. Cull, "Karen Hughes and the Brezhnev Syndrome: The Trial of Public Diplomacy as Domestic Performance", *The Trials of Engagement: The Future of Public Diplomacy*, Scott Lucas and Ali Fisher (Forthcoming, 2011).

limited to structural recommendations that include a well-dressed proposal for a religion attaché, the attaché's diplomatic responsibilities, cost assessment, embassy deployment and even a functioning recruitment plan. As important as structure will be to enlisting a new diplomatic officer, making sense of its communication dynamic in the diplomatic setting is of equal concern. If Johnston's religion attaché model were employed today (at the directive of Secretary Clinton and the Director General of the US Foreign Service) State would have a high-calibre officer trained in broad religious affairs but ill-informed of how to restore communicative relations. Thus, I have taken a broad approach in my proposal to suggest that the State Department:

- a) Comprehend better vital aspects within Islamic society by depending more on its diplomatic infrastructures;
- b) Build direct relations with Muslim audiences, in doing so, which pay due heed to the traditional voice of Islam, and;
- c) Restore relations at a grassroots level which build on mutual understanding and mutual interests, incorporating the voices of key religious players within Islamic society.

In essence, this requires Clinton to comprehend how to reshape the current communicative context, which will inevitably require (in addition to recruiting a religion attaché) attention to be given to communication training. The *Post-Secular Communication Strategy of Interfaith Diplomacy* accomplishes this task. It provides a structural communication approach that is both applicable and teachable in the Foreign Service setting. This study has taken a scholarly approach to outline the contribution of post-secularism and its role in integrating both religious and political players to extinguish tension often established at the grassroots level. As post-9/11 forces become more cataclysmic and State's reliance on direct Oval Office engagement wanes, key State Department officials may have

no other alternative but to take seriously communication training and the relevance of a post-secular framework. Consequently, my post-secular communication strategy of *Interfaith Diplomacy* comes to their aid by making sure the religion attaché: 1) Makes a post-secular recognition; 2) Enters an arena of socio-political interfaith dialogue, and; 3) Practices post-secular communication. In employing this communication strategy that goes beyond secular resources, this study recommends that the Obama administration take seriously the following broad steps to implement IFD<sup>2</sup>. In introducing *Interfaith Diplomacy* to the USG system, I recommend the following plan of action be considered:

1. ***Organising a Presidential Summit on the Future of US-Muslim World Engagement*** –

Clearly, there is no singular way to restore relations with the Muslim world. This presidential summit shall focus on integrating the many perspectives of academics, researchers, think-tanks, and USG officials into a high-level summit. In addition to the Annapolis Conference (November 27, 2007), this summit shall convene both secular and non-secular recommendations on ways to improve US-Muslim world relations. Perspectives beyond public diplomacy should be evaluated at this summit, leading to the State Department implementing a comprehensive multi-track recommendation for engaging the Muslim world (through political communication, commerce, religion, and education).

2. ***Creating a US Department of State Religion Attaché Fellowship Program*** –

Young graduate students with a broad academic background in the fields of Politics and Religious studies are first-rate candidates for religion attaché recruitment. Similar to the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship (that provides funding and assistance to become an FSO to American graduate students), a comparable programme must be established. This programme should seek to carry out two specific goals: 1) recruiting graduate students versed in broad religious and political affairs; and 2) preparing new recruits for early communication training in *Interfaith Diplomacy* alongside critical foreign language training. In the coming year, the

State Department should consider long-term partnerships with American universities dedicated to cross-disciplinary research (e.g. Georgetown Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs; Harvard's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs; Notre Dame Kroc Institute for International Peace; Columbia University-Union Theological Seminary).

3. ***Teaching “The Dynamics of Interfaith Diplomacy” course*** – While religion attaché recruitment is critical, communication training is of equal concern. While leading think-tanks and researchers (since 2004) have recommended structural upgrades to US public diplomacy, attention within this academic setting (at the Foreign Service Institute) should focus on training future attachés in the practicable communication approach of *Interfaith Diplomacy*. In making aware the critical nature of direct communication between religious and political players at a grassroots level, the course shall provide a unique opportunity for the attaché to engage interdisciplinary theories relating to diplomacy, communication theory and interfaith relations.
  
4. ***Establishing ACE Communication Centres at Key US Embassies*** – ACE (A Century of Engagement) institutes shall serve as premier hubs that will allow for additional religion attaché training at key embassies. By establishing ACE centres, the State Department will be able to broaden its communicative base to relay the message to the Muslim world that the USG is committed to enhancing US communicative relations for a period of one century. Its aims will be to: 1) provide a space that will allow religion attachés and local religious/tribal officials a space to meet for productive engagement; 2) serve as a satellite-hub where religion attachés may continue communicative training while in the field; and 3) serve as a post-secular forum where US Ambassadors, religion attachés, and religio-tribal players may hold public deliberations to resolve pressing public concerns.

The nexus in US-Muslim world engagement will not arrive by applying conventional wisdom or in a quick redeployment of secular approaches in US diplomacy toward predominantly Muslim audiences. It will arrive when USG officials become audacious enough to employ approaches that go beyond the secular to introduce the non-conventional in US foreign policymaking. Comprehending the value of this appeal came at a late hour under the Bush administration in the latter part of November 2008 in its scramble to reintroduce the marginalised (religious and tribal) voice into the popular policymaking discourse in Afghanistan. Rethinking its diplomatic and military failures within the Afghan region, the outgoing Bush Administration was left with no alternative but to examine its hard power posture against the Taliban which, for seven years, marginalised the religio-tribal voice. Thus, its eagerness to embrace the “conventional-way” evidently culminated in massive failure to defeat the Taliban, halt insurgency within the South Asian region and curb the massive opium/heroin trade involving two million Afghan farmers.<sup>584</sup>

In 2008, Greg Bruno of the Council on Foreign Relations raised the question as to whether a new and less conventional strategy for Afghanistan would yield different results. Contributing to this non-conventional strategy, former US Central Commander General David Petraeus proposed a “ground-up” approach to encourage the USG to support “local

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<sup>584</sup> In a more formidable CNN commentary recommendation to then President-Elect Barack Obama (2008), New America Foundation National Security Analyst Peter Bergen noted eight major points of consideration for the new administration on handling Afghanistan, which included: 1) Building the size of the Afghan army and police; 2) Solving the security shortfall in the short-term; 3) Reduce the size of the insurgency; 4) Embarking on effective reconstruction; 5) Holding a free, fair and secure election in 2009; 6) Decoupling the Taliban from the drug trade; 7) Fixing the problems in the NATO mission; and 8) Ending coalition air strikes that have a high probability of killing civilians. Peter Bergen, *Commentary: Letter to Obama – How to rescue war in Afghanistan* [article online]; available from <http://www.cnn.com/2008/POLITICS/11/11/bergen.afghanistan/index.html>; Internet, accessed 29 January 2009; see also, Peter Bergen, *How Not to Lose Afghanistan (and Pakistan)*, New America Foundation (19 October 2008) [article online]; available from [http://www.newamerica.net/publications/policy/how\\_not\\_lose\\_afghanistan\\_and\\_pakistan](http://www.newamerica.net/publications/policy/how_not_lose_afghanistan_and_pakistan); Internet, accessed 29 January 2009. (See CNN.com and New America Foundation piece.)

reconciliation initiatives” between Afghan tribes in such regions as Helmand and Kandahar and the citizens of Kabul.<sup>585</sup> Taking seriously the marginalised voice during the late phase of his lame-duck term pointed toward Bush’s willingness (after seven years of failed policies) to try and bring about cooperative peace between the many different values, tribes and customs within the region. Since the transition of US presidential power, Petraeus’s “ground-up” proposal has taken shape, with a one-hundred person think-tank providing a formal overview “that focuses specifically on two agendas: possible government reconciliation with the Taliban and cooperation with neighbouring countries, including Pakistan and Iran.”<sup>586</sup> Acknowledging the impact of this non-conventional approach, Secretary of Defence Robert Gates agreed publicly with Petraeus’s tribal reconciliation plan in October 2008 at a NATO summit in Budapest, and then in the following month at the United States Institute of Peace, stating, “At the end of the day the only solution in Afghanistan is to work with the tribes and provincial leaders in terms of trying to create a backlash... against the Taliban.”<sup>587</sup> Since this time, the Obama administration has acknowledged that this non-conventional approach is beneficial and has expanded it to a degree. Hence, the application of non-conventional wisdom and post-secular approaches to engage Islamic society are becoming somewhat appealing to the Department of Defense.

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<sup>585</sup> Greg Bruno, *A Tribal Strategy for Afghanistan*, Council on Foreign Relations (7 November 2008) [article online]; available from <http://www.cfr.org/publication/17686/>; Internet, accessed 29 January 2009.

<sup>586</sup> See Bruno, *A Tribal Strategy for Afghanistan*, 1.

<sup>587</sup> See Jim Garamone, *NATO Ministers Discuss Afghan Problems, Challenges* (9 October 2008) [article online]; available from <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=51463>; html; Internet, accessed 29 January 2009; Ann Scott Tyson, *Petraeus Mounts Strategy Review*, Washington Post (16 October 2008) [article online]; available from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/story/2008/10/15/ST2008101503820.html>; Internet, accessed 29 January 2009.

Since this time, the Obama administration has acknowledged this non-conventional approach by recalculating its reliance on hard power, thereby recognising the potential in reconciling with low-level Taliban operatives. Applying non-conventional wisdom to engage and reintegrate the cooperative Taliban back into Afghan society is an attractive strategy supported by the State Department and Department of Defense. Gen. Stanley McChrystal (NATO Commander in Afghanistan) has recently supported the establishment of a Peace and Reintegration programme led by the Government of Afghanistan to sustain regional security and deter Taliban fighters. Defending future peace talks with the Taliban, McChrystal claims:

It's impossible to paint the Taliban all with one brush. If you try to say the Taliban organisation has this relationship with al-Qaeda, it varies through the organisation... I think there's a huge rank and file in the Taliban that sees al-Qaeda as essentially something from which they get no value and a tremendous amount of pain. In fact the presence of al-Qaeda is one of the reasons why the Taliban was driven from Afghanistan. They don't want to pay the price for al-Qaeda's extremism for ever.<sup>588</sup>

In establishing a new reintegration scheme, at the January 2010 London Conference on Afghanistan, Afghan President Hamid Karazi introduced a six-point plan to accompany this effort, which includes supporting: 1) *Peace, reconciliation and reintegration*; 2) *Security*; 3) *Good governance*; 4) *The fight against corruption*; 5) *Economic development*; and 6) *Regional cooperation*.<sup>589</sup> To assure the first aim, Karazi maintained:

[Over] 70 percent of the people fighting with the Taliban are not ideologically committed to al-Qaeda... They're fighting for local grievance, or they've been misled about the purposes of... the alliance presence in Afghanistan... If they're given an opportunity for jobs and security and if they understand the purposes of the presence there, we think a lot of them will

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<sup>588</sup> Financial Times, *FT Interview Transcript: Gen. Stanley McChrystal* (25 January 2010) [article online] available from <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/1036aae6-074a-11df-a9b7-00144feabdc0.html>; Internet, accessed 27 January 2010; BBC News, *US Commander Signals Peacetalks with Taliban* [article online]; available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/8478076.stm>; Internet, accessed 2 February 2010.

<sup>589</sup> Hamid Karazi, *London Conference on Afghanistan: Hamid Karazi's Opening Remarks* (28 January 2010) [article online]; available from <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=Speech&id=21645138>; Internet, accessed 1 February 2010.



come back... Isn't it a lot better to invite them off the battlefield through a programme of jobs, land, integration than it is to have to try to kill every one of them?<sup>590</sup>

In step with the Karazi proposal, Secretary Clinton would acknowledge America's support of this new strategy by announcing the creation of a Peace and Reintegration Trust Fund at the London Conference. The \$500 million initiative will seek to court "those Taliban who are not a part of al-Qaeda, or their terrorist networks, who accept the Afghan constitution, who have no ideological enmity with [Afghanistan or its allies]."<sup>591</sup> In assuring that this would be an Afghan-led endeavour, Clinton gained further support by stating, "The United States military has been authorised to use substantial funds to support the effort, enabling our commanders on the ground to support Afghan Government-led initiatives to take insurgents off the battlefield."<sup>592</sup>

In moving forward with this broad proposal, the challenge lies in ensuring that this reintegration scheme does not become entrenched in doubt as to whether "talks will work". When placing such a productive opportunity in this context, we often limit its probability from the outset. Hamid Karazi's Peace and Reintegration scheme (in a real sense) opens up a constructive pathway to re-invite the failed US-Islamic engagement process to restart at the grassroots level. Hence, it appears that the USG, under the Obama administration, has become accustomed to implementing non-conventional approaches to sustain US national

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<sup>590</sup> Stephen Kauffman, *London Conference to Discuss Rehabilitation of Taliban Fighters* [article online]; available from <http://www.america.gov/st/peacesec-english/2010/January/20100125141811esnamfuak0.1798822.html>; Internet, accessed 2 February 2010.

<sup>591</sup> Gordon Brown and Hamid Karazi, *Gordon Brown and Hamid Karazi's Interview with Radio 4* (28 January 2010) [transcript online]; available from <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=Speech&id=21644120>; Internet, accessed 2 February 2010.

<sup>592</sup> Secretary Clinton, *Secretary Clinton at London Conference on Afghanistan* [speech online]; available from [http://blogs.state.gov/index.php/site/entry/london\\_conference\\_afghanistan](http://blogs.state.gov/index.php/site/entry/london_conference_afghanistan); Internet, accessed 2 February 2010.

security, thereby suggesting that similar approaches may be welcomed to enrich USG communication.

Currently, the State Department has no alternative but to press forward and embrace non-conventional wisdom in the present era. Improving US-Muslim world relations requires a communication strategy which goes beyond a reliance on secular approaches to meet the demands presented by post-9/11 religious forces. During the Bush administration, US foreign policy was marketed through campaigns such as “Brand-America” and the “Shared Values Initiative”, which simply presented robust ambitions without recognising the aspirations and perspectives of Muslims. The *Post-secular Communication Strategy of Interfaith Diplomacy*, set out in this dissertation, seeks a deeper connection between US diplomats and religious actors focusing on an engagement with an enriched communicative activity within the Muslim world. This much-needed communication strategy advances multilateral cooperation to assure that the aspirations and perspectives of the Muslim audience are incorporated into the larger policymaking discourse. If the State Department were to incorporate both the structural recommendations that call for a Religion Attaché Officer and the communication strategy of *Interfaith Diplomacy*, we are likely to see the State Department issue a more engaged approach in restoring relations within the Muslim world.

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*Approaches were also made to interview a number of US intelligence officers at the Defense Intelligence Agency, military officials at the Department of Defense and Ambassadors and diplomats at the Department of State. Due to matters of confidentiality and security numerous interviews were not conducted nor included in this study.*

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