

## American Foreign Policy in the Middle East

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### Abstract:

Emerging from the Second World War as the world's first industrial and military economic power, the U.S.A. is no longer content to contain its expansion and its aggressions only on the American continent.

The policy that the U.S.A. has pursued in the Arab world for more than 50 years, a policy whose aggressiveness and unconditional support for Israel are clear and blazing. The aggressiveness which is characteristic of any imperialist policy is due to the very nature of the USA, a great economic and military capitalist power whose political and economic system has always been based on exploitation, expansion and aggression. So, what are the main reasons and consequences of these policies of exploitation, expansions and aggressions?.

Keywords: US Foreign policy, the Middle East, Iraq, Syria, World War 2.

### ملخص:

خرجت الولايات المتحدة من الحرب العالمية الثانية كأول قوة اقتصادية وعسكرية صناعية في العالم، ولم تعد راضية عن احتواء توسعها وعدوانها على القارة الأمريكية فقط...

إن السياسة التي تنتهجها الولايات المتحدة في العالم العربي منذ أكثر من 50 عامًا، سياسة تتسم عدوانيتها ودعمها غير المشروط لإسرائيل بأنها واضحة ومشرقة. إن العدوانية التي تتميز أي سياسة إمبريالية، ترجع إلى طبيعة الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية نفسها، وهي قوة رأسمالية اقتصادية وعسكرية عظيمة كان نظامها السياسي والاقتصادي دائمًا يعتمد على الاستغلال والتوسع والعدوان. فما هي الأسباب والعواقب الرئيسية لسياسات الاستغلال والتوسعات والعدوان هذه؟

الكلمات المفتاحية: السياسة الخارجية للولايات المتحدة ، الشرق الأوسط ، العراق ، سوريا ، الحرب العالمية الثانية.

## 1- Introduction

Post Second World War Middle East witnessed direct control and influence of the U.S. The American main stream media, through a high level propaganda, was convincing the people that, to contain an expansionist Communist world movement managed from Moscow and sometimes Beijing; a huge U.S military presence was necessary to counter these threats. The dominant Western power in the Middle East was Britain till the 1960s. Knowing that the Soviet Union at the end of the cold war had a great influence in the region. The U. S foreign policy is

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dominated by two domestic lobbies, as per Michael Lind one ethnic (The Israel Lobby) and one economic the oil industry.(Michael Lind: 2002).

The majority of the U.S presidents supported regimes of the right or rightist and opposed the left or leftist ones. The terms “Right” and “Left” are defined specifically by politicians or media commentators. Moreover, the politico-economic content of leftist governments and movements is to reveal their democratic goals and egalitarian, making it very harder to demonize them. Michael Parenti argues that the “Left,” encompasses those individuals, organizations, and governments that advocate egalitarian redistributive policies benefiting the common people and infringing upon the privileged interests of the wealthy propertied classes. The Right also is involved in redistributive politics, but the distribution goes the other way, in an upward direction. (Rall, T., Boggs, C. (Ed.): 2003: pp19-36).

In every instance, rightist forces abroad are considered by U.S opinion makers to be “friendly to the West,” another word for “pro-free market” or “pro-capitalist.” Conversely, leftist ones are labeled as hostile, “anti-democratic,” “anti-American” and “anti-West.” While claiming to being motivated by a dedication to Human Rights and Democracy, the U.S has supported some of the most horrible and dangerous right-wing autocracies in history; Parenti views that, because of their dissenting political views, some governments that have tortured, killed or exiled large numbers of their citizens, for instance Turkey, Pakistan, Guatemala, Haiti, Morocco, Chad, Zaire, Honduras, Indonesia, Colombia, Argentina, El Salvador, Peru, the Philippines, Cuba (under Batista), Nicaragua (under Somoza), Iran (under the Shah), and Portugal (under Salazar). ( Rall, T., Boggs, C. (Ed.): 2003: pp19-36).

### **1.1- US Foreign Policy:**

The American administration under Carter continued to arm and finances the violent dictators of Haiti, the Philippines and Iran. In an article for the New York Times, Michael Ignatieff stresses that “The CIA was subjected to budget cuts and Congressional oversight”. Subsequent U.S military involvement in Panama, Bahrain, Somalia, Yemen, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq were wholly or in significant part marketed as attempts to liberate the oppressed people and promote Human Rights and democracy. An imperial power, however, is more than being the most powerful nation or just the most hated one. (Michael Ignatieff: 2003)

The American foreign policy Before Jimmy Carter was a straightforward and cynical realpolitik. Ted Rall thinks that “The U.S fought in South Vietnam and South Korea as if they were moving pieces on a Cold War chessboard instead of blasting children to bits; the despotic regimes they defended there were more brutal than their enemies”. Afterwards, Americans became hypocrites. They went into Somalia, which controlled a strategic port of entry for oil tankers, but not Rwanda, which had no significant natural resources. They backed Saddam Hussein when Iraq granted lucrative oil concessions to politically connect multinationals and attacked him when he didn’t. (Ted Rall: 2006).

The existing world order, the U.S had to “defend”? Chomsky argues that U.S planners intended to construct what they called a Grand Area, a global order subordinated to the needs of the U.S. economy and subject to U.S. political control. (Noam Chomsky: 1989: p250). Regional systems, particularly the British, were to be eliminated, while those under U.S. control were to be extended, on the principle, these steps were ,he adds, “part of our obligation to the security of the world ... what was good for us was good for the world.” (Wm. Roger Louis: 1978:p481).

In his book *Rogue States*, Noam Chomsky mentions that, the Minister of State at the British Foreign Office, Richard Law, commented to his Cabinet colleagues that Americans believe “that the United States stands for something in the world—something of which the world has need, something which the world is going to like, something, in the final analysis, which the world is going to take, whether it likes it or not.” (Noam Chomsky: 1989: p251). This altruistic concern was unappreciated by the British. Their

perception was that “the economic imperialism of American business interests will destroy them.

The Soviet Union refused to be incorporated within the Grand Area so it is a threat to its existence. But the Soviet threat is regarded as far more profound, justifying stern measures in defense. John Lewis Gaddis observes approvingly that Woodrow Wilson “and his allies saw their actions in a defensive rather than in an offensive context” when they invaded the Soviet Union after the Bolshevik revolution. By the same logic, the United States has been devoted to self-determination for Vietnam, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and other beneficiaries, and the U.S.S.R. is dedicated to self-determination in Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan. (Noam Chomsky: 1989: p251).

That lead to hidden clashes between the US and USSR under the cold war, it sometimes reaches the nuclear war for instance, as Marion Lloyd, The Boston Globe correspondent explains on Oct. 27, 1962, explained when a Soviet submarine armed with a nuclear warhead found itself trapped and being bombarded by a US warship patrolling off Cuba. (Marion Lloyd: 2002: p20). He asserts that, the Americans began firing depth charges to force the submarines to the surface. US destroyers did not know that the submarines the Soviets had sent to protect their ships were carrying nuclear weapons. A move the Soviets interpreted as the start of World War III.

“The cultural preparations for a “just war” and for the U.S. as global “policeman” did not occur overnight; John C Rowe argues that:

*They are our cultural legacy from the Vietnam War and integral parts of our emergence as a neo-imperial nation since 1945. Central to this legacy is the conception of the United States as a discrete nation that nonetheless has a global identity and mission. (John Carlos Rowe: 2012: p107).*

One understands the American foreign policy in the Middle East is justified by the overwhelming majority of countries fed up with American policies in which aggression and double standards are its locomotive. Chalmers notes that the notion “free-trade imperialism” still explains a good deal about how traditional imperial military power should emerge with such prominence and frequency as a “foreign policy” at the very moment when globalization seems the nearly inevitable consequence of U.S. economic triumphalism. Contemporary critics of U.S. foreign policy like Chalmers Johnson have also recognized that “free trade” is often used as a rationalization for the conduct of multinational corporations and for the U.S. government’s development of “client states”, like Israel and, until recently, South Korea. (Chalmers Johnson: 2005: p31).

Furthermore, according to Professor Boukhari Hammana, in an article published in El Moudjahed newspaper, Aggression is the policy of Imperialism, the different wars the Arab countries fought against the American Imperialism and its agents underline a very big mistake for the American foreign policy that is illusion, claiming that the enemy of the Arab Nations is the USSR and not Israel. (Boukhari Hammana: 1980). Consequences to this illusion we see the revolutionary Arab regimes (Egypt 1952, Syria 1957, Iraq 1958, Algeria 1962,

Palestinian Resistance 1965, South Yemen 1968 and Libya 1969); regimes more and more hostile to the U.S and its agents in the region.

As stipulated by the White House in the National Security Strategy of the U.S.A,(2002), before invading Iraq: we acquired irrefutable proof that Iraq's designs were not limited to the chemical weapons it had used against Iran and its own people, but also extended to the acquisition of nuclear weapons and biological agents ..... and has tested increasingly capable missiles while developing its own WMD arsenal....such weapons has become a looming threat to all nations.(Executive Office of The President of the United States: 2002). Convincing the international community to be aside with them, or give them an excuse to attack Iraq and carry on with its Middle East plan.

Carl Kaysen argues that the corresponding policy in the National Security Strategy is what the document calls "preemption" – using force in anticipation of a danger to prevent rogue and hostile states from acquiring WMD or harboring terrorists. The United States has been preparing in recent months to implement this policy against Iraq. (Carl Kaysen,

John D. Steinbruner, and Martin B. Malin: 2002: p3). In this particular case, "preemption," as it is commonly understood, is a mischaracterization that term usually means striking the first blow when war appears to be imminent and unavoidable.

In his article, Reflections on American injustice, Edward Said explains, how to understand the continued punishment of Iraq over the years , also to understand why Mrs. Madeleine Albright was so "understanding" of Israel's totally unwarranted and gangster-like bombing of civilian targets in Lebanon (Edward Said: 2000). -- One must pay close attention to an aspect of America's history mostly ignored by and sometimes unknown to Arab elites, who continue to speak of (and probably believe in) America's even-handedness.

Humanitarian Officials explained that due to Western sanction on Iraq the number of fatalities in human life is so high millions of Iraqis (mostly women and children died); but also trying to imagine what the unbelievable sanctions are doing to distort the country for years and years to come simply exceed one's means of expression.

So in light of this contemporary savagery against even its own citizens, for Edward Said, one should not be surprised that the poor Iraqis who undergo long-distance starvation, absence of schools and hospitals, the devastation of agriculture and the civil infrastructure are put through so much.

## **1.2- The influence of the Israel Lobby within the US:**

Moreover, certain failure of the imperial alliance with Israel it is noticed in the American contradictions when dealing with the Arab Nation: Winning the sympathy of Arabs in the other hand developing their enemy (Israel). The U.S continues with its policy to protect the Arab countries from the Russians. However, that policy leads Arabs to make treaties with the Russians.

The Middle East became the center of U.S. foreign policy after the Second World War—a fact illustrated in the most shocking way by the al-Qaeda attacks on New York and Washington. A debate is necessary within the U.S. over the goals and methods of American policy in the Middle East. Unfortunately, an uninhibited debate is not taking place, because of the disproportionate influence of the Israel lobby.

The Arab-Israeli conflict is presented in the absence of any historical or political context. Michael Lind argues that most Americans do not know that the Palestinian state offered by Ehud Barak consisted of several Bantustans, crisscrossed by Israeli roads with military checkpoints. Instead, most Americans have learned only that the Israelis made a generous offer which Yasser Arafat inexplicably rejected. To make matters worse, he asserts, “the conventions of reporting the Arab-Israeli conflict in the mainstream press typically all the time portray the Palestinians as aggressors-” In response to Palestinian violence, Israel fired missiles into Gaza.” Moreover, reporters don’t say, “In response to Israel’s three-decade occupation, for instance, of the West Bank and Gaza, Palestinian gunmen fought back against Israeli forces.” (Michael Lind: 2002).

Some members of Congress from all regions of the U.S are still reluctant to offend a single-issue lobby that can and will subsidize their opponents; many reporters, journalists and policy experts say in private that they are afraid of being blacklisted by editors and publishers who are zealous Israel supporters; for instance managerial jobs in the U.S. national security apparatus routinely go to individuals related to AIPAC and with personal and professional ties to Israel and its American lobby. How could U.S. policy not be biased in favor of Israel in these circumstances?

Many Members of Congress strongly support U.S. commitments to Israel’s security, as per a Christopher M. Blanchard, including the provision of large amounts of military assistance to Israel. Ongoing political change in the Middle East could have a lasting impact on Israeli perceptions of security and prospects for preserving regional peace. (Christopher M. Blanchard: 2012). Near-complete successes in stopping Palestinian terrorist attacks inside Israel after

2006 coincided with a greater Israeli focus on perceived threats from Iran—including a nuclear threat perceived as potentially existential—and non-state actors allied to Iran in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip.

## 2- Conclusion:

I hope to open new frontiers for the readers-mainly the elite- about the US in particular and the West in general on how they see the rest of the world and how they deal with it. We still wait for the US to deliver us from our difficulties, why the third world remains the third world despite the human potential, raw materials tank and a cheap labor supplier. Edward Said proposes that across the Arab world every university require its students to take at least two courses not in American history, but in American non-white history.

After that we will understand the US society and its foreign policy in terms of its profound, as opposed to its rhetorical, realities. Then we will address the US and its people critically and selectively, instead of as supplicants and humble petitioners. What is needed to be done in order to achieve what other nations already achieved? On my understanding; the west is not giving that chance and opportunity through their puppet regimes. Nevertheless, against the background of so vicious a system of persecution, then, it is no wonder that as non-Europeans the Arabs, Muslims, Africans, and other nations receive a poor treatment in terms of US foreign policy.

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