

THE LINK

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The Islamic Alternative

By Yvonne Y. Haddad

To the careful observer of Muslim countries it is quite evident that a phenomenon hardly visible in the 1960's and the early half of the 70's appears to be gaining momentum and mass approval. A growing consensus among an increasing number of intellectuals as well as the common people suggests that "the time has come to try Islam."

There also is evidence that an increasing number of national governments feel it necessary to appeal to

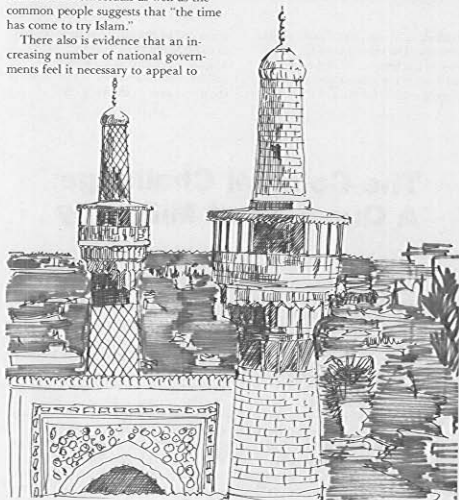
Islamic principles to maintain legitimacy. They do this either through the adoption of Islamic apologetics to justify their policies or through the implementation of various Islamic laws.

There are numerous examples of such efforts in press reports in the 1970's and 80's. In Pakistan, Zia Ul-Haqq, upon

assuming office, aligned himself with the Jamaati Islam and attempted to implement Islamic laws. Other nations, including Turkey, Egypt, Kuwait, Libya, Bangladesh, the Sudan and Indonesia, introduced various Islamic laws. Syria found it necessary to explain that Baath ideology is grounded in Islam, while Ja'far al-Numeiry of the Sudan has written a book justifying Islamic government, entitled *The Islamic System: Why?*

The Islamic revolution in Iran more than any other event in recent history has helped focus Western public opinion, through television and the press, on the troubled conditions prevailing in various Islamic countries. The revolution has generated numerous texts, articles and programs dealing with "Islamic revolutionaries," the activities of the "militants" and the ascendancy of the "fundamentalists" in various nations. The perspectives of the scholars and newsmen reporting these phenomena have varied. Despite the millions of words describing the ideological developments in the area and the socio-political conditions that inspired them, many readers as well as writers continue to perceive those who seek an Islamic identity, an Islamic state or an Islamic order as the radical backward-looking fringe who have rejected the enlightenment of modernization and Westernization. Some view their religion, Islam, as intrinsically evil or, at best, obscurantist.

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About This Issue

The Western news media calls it "radical Islam" or "Islamic fundamentalism." With Israel's invasion of Lebanon and Iran's invasion of Iraq, attention once again is focused on this transnational movement, which our feature writer, Yvonne Haddad, prefers to call "neo-normative."

According to neo-normatives, the Middle East is fractured into corrupt secular regimes, easily manipulated by outside forces. The long-held popular remedy, Pan-Arabism, never worked, because it addressed the symptom of the malaise, the divisiveness, and not the cause, the imposition of Western-styled political systems. For neo-conservatives, the alternative is Islam.

The scope of Dr. Haddad's article is not to offer a geopolitical assessment of Islamic neo-normativism: how it might effect the balance of power in the region, how it should be viewed by American foreign policy, etc. Her intent is to present an analysis of the origin and aims of the movement, as articulated by the adherents of the movement themselves.

Because the sources for her study are based on original documents, most in Arabic, and most not readily available in this country, an editorial decision was made not to list the references. A bibliography of the major research may be obtained by writing our New York office.

A political assessment of America's

foreign policy in the Middle East is found in Seth Tillman's recent book, *The United States in the Middle East*, reviewed on page 14 by John Richardson.

A special information packet on the situation in Lebanon is now available from A.M.E.U.; for details see page 14, under Notice section.

Our November/December issue of *The Link* will examine the question of biblical prophecy and the Promised Land.

John F. Mahoney,
Executive Director

The growing consensus in Islamic countries for the necessity of articulating an Islamic world view—that can define, supervise and govern all aspects of life—is part of the on-going search for dignity, identity and purpose. It is an attempt to provide authentic answers to basic human questions such as: Who am I? Where did I come from? And where am I going? These are questions that have challenged several generations of Muslims throughout this century as their countries have been conquered, divided, parcelled out and assigned to various spheres of foreign influence.

This study will attempt to portray the Islamic perception of the world based on the Muslim understanding of reality, precipitating the current attitudes that dominate intellectual centers as well as governments in various countries. It is based on eight years of research of Islamic literature, particularly that coming from the Arab world, and on numerous conversations with those who take their primary identity in this Islamic nationalism. The study attempts to show that the search for Islamic answers is not restricted to a small fringe group, but rather has become the general deliberate search of elites as well as of the masses for Islamic answers to

political, economic, social and cultural questions. The critical need for such answers has been mandated by what is perceived as the unsuitability of the Western models for Muslim countries,

evidenced by the failure of these models in those Muslim countries that have adopted or experimented with them, and by what is perceived as the failure of the model even in the West itself.

The Colonial Challenge: A Question of Militancy

It is currently popular in some circles of the Western press to refer to the rise in Islamic consciousness and identity as "Militant Islam." For those Muslims engaged in the process of Islamization, Militant Islam appears to be their response to "Militant Secularism," "Militant Christianity" and "Militant Judaism."

The Muslim encounter with "the West" in the 19th and 20th centuries was most intimately experienced through European conquests of Muslim lands which facilitated Western political, economic, social and cultural domination of the daily lives of the Muslims. By the

end of World War I, there were only four Muslim nations—Afghanistan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Yemen—which had not experienced direct or indirect European rule. (See page 10.)

European expansion, which began in the 17th century through the search for markets and natural resources, was by the 19th century enhanced through an ideological support system based on the teachings of social Darwinism: "natural selection" and the "survival of the fittest." This gave European man "scientific" proof of his being the acme of human evolution and of his civiliza-

tion being the final stage in human achievement and progress.

Colonialism was justified on "humanitarian" grounds. Its purpose was to share the enlightenment and its achievements with those of inferior development. The colonial conquests were thus cloaked in the image of the European man's "manifest destiny" which would lead the rest of humanity to become a replica of European man and to enjoy the benefits of the institutions he devised.

Meanwhile, many religious circles viewed Christianity in a similar way as the highest form of religion, affirming that all other religions were of human origin, leading people astray from the worship of the true God as He made Himself manifest in Jesus Christ in order to save the world. Armed with Bibles, printing presses and a sense of service and mission, thousands of missionaries went into the world to Christianize it — many of them convinced that all humanity would be brought into the Christian fold within this century.

The Economic Front

Muslims, as well as other people in the developing world, experienced "Militant Christianity" as a multi-pronged attack on their total existence. While Western businessmen scrambled throughout Asia and Africa to gain access to natural resources, the "natives" were informed that this was in their best interest since they were allowing these resources to go to waste.

European merchants, on the other hand, supported by the political and military power of their respective nations, gained access to local markets. This led to severe economic dislocation throughout the third world. Not only did the colonial powers dictate what crops the various nations were to raise, but, through the competition of European-made products, but also eliminated local crafts. Formerly self-sufficient countries became economically dependent on Western powers.

Meanwhile European banks and financial institutions found a ready lending market for their accumulated capital. Rulers in various Muslim countries were encouraged and in some cases cajoled by unscrupulous men to borrow money for a variety of vanity and prestige projects (such as the opera house in Cairo) to help provide their nations with the benefits of Western civilization. High-interest rates made the debts impossible

to pay since they were invested in projects that provided no return yield.

Several governments defaulted in payments, providing further colonial pretext for assumption of power. It was evident in colonial circles that only European know-how could provide proper management of the financial resources of these countries, including the collection of taxes and the imposition of other sanctions in order to pay off the debt.

The Political Front

Europeans considered Muslim political institutions as antiquarian and obsolete. Throughout the 19th century various Western powers exerted pressure on local governments to liberalize their institutions. This included at times political, economic and military pressures to adopt changes in their policies as well as to incorporate Western "democratic" principles in their government.

Western arrogance was finally sanctioned by the Versailles Treaty (1919), which implied that Arab nations were unfit to govern themselves. International agreements had promised the independence and autonomy of the Arabs in return for their rebellion against the Muslim Turks, their fellow religionists. Despite these promises, the European powers devised the mandate system which carved up the Ottoman Empire into several states to be ruled directly by Britain and France. This was justified as a "civilizing" mission. In effect, Arab countries were assured that they would become beneficiaries of the European enlightenment which would help bring them into the 20th century by developing their political, economic and social institutions after Western models. This was to prepare them to assume responsibility for themselves once they had learned how to emulate the Europeans.

The mandate system ascribed to them a new national identity. No longer Ottoman subjects or Muslims, they would now be defined by geographic boundaries manufactured in Europe; now they were Syrians, Jordanians, Palestinians, etc. The situation was further aggravated by the British policy to plant a "Jewish entity" in Palestine, the heart of the Arab world. Emigration and colonization rights were given to Jews all over the world to form a model "European" nation that would continue to carry the light of European civilization in the area and provide guidance in "modern" and "Western" ways.

The Social and Cultural Front

As European occupation policies were based on the assumed Arab and Muslim underdevelopment in the political sphere, they also affirmed the backwardness of the prevalent Islamic social and cultural institutions. Islamic law, the *shari'a*, developed over the centuries to coordinate with the injunctions of the Koran, was deemed incompatible with the modern world. The seemingly harsh Islamic justice and penal systems failed to reflect the humanitarian and reformative influences of the European concepts. Islamic family law and regulations affecting the role and status of women were ridiculed as obscurantist. Repeatedly the "native" elites were told they were backward because they had not given women equal rights. Polygamy, condemned as repressive to women, merely reflected the lower nature of Muslim men governed by lust and an insatiable sexual desire. Veiling was attacked as a form of slavery. In other words, it was made quite clear that if the Muslim Arabs wanted to take their place among the nations, they had better adopt Western ways, liberate their women and reform their laws.

Reformism was further inculcated through the establishment of public education to prepare civil servants for the colonies. Students learned about the benefits of the Western system and were encouraged to promote them. European textbooks were adopted. Years later, the author heard an Arab, educated in Palestine, describe his first visit to London. "There was nothing strange about the place. I recognized it immediately. To my surprise I found out that I still remembered the names of all the subway stations!" With bitterness he added, "I was never taught the names of the cities and towns in Palestine."

The Religious Front

Since its initial spread, Islam has come into contact with Christianity. This coexistence, at times confrontation, led to a particular articulation of certain Islamic theological teachings honed over several generations of debate and apologies. Although the Crusades did not bring about much formal theological discussion between the two religions, they did spawn an active Catholic mission among the Eastern-rite Christians living in Muslim lands in order to bring them under papal jurisdiction. This however did not impact on the Muslim community in any significant way.

It was not until the 19th century that Muslims found it necessary to reinterpret their religion in response to the Christian challenge—this time in the form of the evangelical Protestant. Many of the missionaries from Europe and the United States sought fervently to convert Muslims to Christianity by undermining the religion of Islam, its teachings and its prophet. Several missionary texts refer to Islam as the religion of the “anti-Christ” or “Satan.” The Prophet Muhammad was pictured as either unwittingly or through calumny the deceiver, or the deceived one, the agent of Satan, fabricating the Koran to lead people astray. While this literature was mainly for the missionaries, it soon found its way into the public domain. To these missionaries, the validation of Christianity was evident through its power, its superior civilization and its humanitarian doctrines that

liberate men from bondage to anything save Christ. Islam was portrayed as an inferior religion because of its supposed notion of predestination which was leading to indolence and an affirmation of the bliss awaiting the believers in the hereafter. In this way, Islam itself was presented as the central cause for the retardation of the Muslims.

From the beginning the “civilizational” challenge as experienced by Muslims was supported and advanced by military and political power, by various economic interests and by a Christian theology that judged all values and ideals developed outside of Christianity as ungodly, or at best immoral and deficient. Thus the total encounter was seen as a struggle between a higher and a lower set of values, between the forces of light and darkness, of purity and corruption, of modernity and antiquated, obsolete systems.

only radical methods such as the separation of religion and state can provide the vitality necessary to rebuild their nations according to Western models, others strive to fuse various Western ideas into the prevalent structures, seeking Islamic precedents to justify their incorporation and validate their “Islamic” source.

The term *normativists* is used for those Muslim traditionalists who have never wavered in their rejection of the West as alien and its norms as ungodly. *Neo-normativists* refers to the subsequent Islamic response to the struggle between the acculturationists and the normativists. It is used in discussion of various Muslims who in attempting to modernize Islam refuse to relativize it, trivialize it or “patch it up.” They are the ideological engineers who are striving to develop an Islamic identity that is totally Muslim and totally relevant to the modern world. The term *neo-normative* is assigned to them because, although they may disagree with each other on details, they are consistent in affirming that Islam is the norm by which all reality is measured and by which everyone is judged.

It has become fashionable in Western circles to refer to the Islamization process evident in various parts of the world as “fundamentalism,” or Muslim “fanaticism.” The term *neo-normative* is utilized in this essay to avoid the tendency of Western readers to dismiss “fanaticism” and “fundamentalism” as passing fads that need to be ignored because of their transient nature. Neo-normativists are not a small group of malcontents who, given the proper incentive, can be re-incorporated in the general body of society. The quest for an Islamic identity is not restricted to the fringe, but is a deliberate effort on the part of thousands of leaders in all aspects of life in various Muslim countries to find an Islamic answer to the problems of their societies.

Neo-normative Muslims seek similar goals to those of the Moral Majority. In fact, their views on the family, the role of women, the type of society they strive to fashion are almost identical. Neo-normative Muslims insist on providing a modern view of the world; their teachings are aimed at redeeming society. Unlike traditional Islamic teachings of the normativists, their literature focuses on man, his duties and responsibilities in the world to himself, to God and the society. Neo-normativists have developed an anthropological dimension to Islamic theology, making Islam a comprehensive

The Islamic Response

The Western challenge elicited a variety of responses as Muslims attempted to maintain their dignity while charting a vision of the future that would guarantee authenticity and self-worth. At the outset their initial efforts focused on immediate crises. Every reform undertaken by the Ottoman Empire, for example, followed a military defeat. This led to an obsession with modernizing the armed forces in order to withstand aggression and guarantee freedom within one's borders. Thus the first efforts of Westernization centered not only on acquiring Western technology but on learning Western tactical skills as well. The concern for a modern army capable of defending the borders even led to the adoption of Western-style uniforms, and, in the case of Muhammad Ali's Egypt in the 19th century, to the building of factories to manufacture uniforms for the army. The first government-sponsored schools where Western technology was taught prepared the officer corps for the armed forces. In a similar fashion, the first school for women in Egypt trained midwives who were to serve the families of the military.

This obsession with defense is still

very much in evidence as various countries continue to feel impotent against foreign “Western” incursions now experienced as the Israeli military machine. Losses in battle and perpetual defeats are an incentive for change. Recent changes are, for example, the development of co-ed military training in high schools as well as the formation of units of female paratroopers and parachutists in several Arab countries.

The Response Under Foreign Occupation

The Islamic response to Western domination took many forms, discussed within this study under three categories: (a) *acculturationist*, (b) *normative*, and (c) *neo-normative*. The term *acculturationist* refers to those Muslims who have accepted the Western definition of reality and have struggled to reform and redefine Islam to fit the models and norms thus appropriated. These include secularists, nationalists, communists and the romantics who in different ways have sought to replicate Western civilization in their respective countries. While some of them are convinced that

ideology seeking the fulfillment of a utopia here on earth. This vision is not new; it is not based on unfulfilled dreams. Rather it is an attempt to replicate the perfect society as it existed on earth in 622-632 A.D. in Medina under the rule of the Prophet Muhammad, in which all aspects of life were supervised and regulated under the aegis of the revelation of God transmitted in the Koran through the angel Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad. This replication is not intended to be one of form or structure, i.e., a return to the seventh century, but rather it focuses on purpose (the obedience of God) and method (guidance through the Koran).

The student of Arab history will find that all three forms of response developed quite early under Western political and military domination. However, they appear to have had a checkered history of success at different times. The prevalence of any one of these as a comprehensive ideology helping to analyze existing forces and attempting to plan, supervise and implement future goals has

varied with the fortunes of these countries. When not in ascendancy, they have assumed the role of the opposition.

It should come as no surprise that two kinds of acculturationists (nationalists and secularists) flourished under European colonial rule. It is evident that they were encouraged and supported by the colonial powers who found in them ready students. In the political field, parliamentary rule was established with various segments of the population given the right to vote. Furthermore, new constitutions modeled after European precedents were written for the various countries. In the social sphere, there were several attempts to grant women full rights, not only to go to school and have access to public places, but in some places even to vote. These rights also extended into family life, previously the exclusive domain of the shari'a. Thus new interpretations were developed to restrict polygamy, easy repudiation and other rights that the shari'a granted to males.

The economy, under the direct supervision of the colonial powers, became

more intimately tied to that of the Europeans with the various countries providing the natural resources for the European factories as well as the markets for their manufactured products. In most countries resident foreign nationals also acquired control of the utilities as well as of trade by dominating all import and export activities. The local landowning class provided the rest of the capitalists who managed the local economies.

As for the Islamic religion and its values, the secularists and other acculturationists argued that Islam had always advocated Western ideals. The fusion of a religious and a temporal authority in the person of the caliph was an historical deviation. The prophetic function was unique, never to be repeated. Islam, they insisted, is in a position of retardation because it has assumed too much control of the daily lives of Muslims. Even the prophet Muhammad had said that Muslims are better judges than he of the affairs of their daily lives; hence the secularists sought to dismiss many of the customs



The World of Islam



based on the example of the prophet's life. Islam must be relegated to the personal sphere and should have no impact on the political, economic, social and cultural areas of life.

The normativists affirmed the classical arguments condemning the secularists as innovators. What they protested was the trivialization of religion. While they watched, Islam was being undermined and eliminated from having an impact in the affairs of the state. Not only had the divine laws revealed in the Koran for the governing of human affairs been undermined, but also special courts had been established to implement colonial justice in matters pertaining to relations between the indigenous people and the resident foreigners. Western legislation had also given license for the consumption of liquor and the sanctioning of prostitution.

Neo-normative Islam affirmed through its various advocates (the most notable of whom was Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood) that Islam to be Islam must impinge on public policy and must be intimately concerned with all aspects of life. Islam then is perceived not only as a religion that supervises man's relationship to God, but also as intrinsically involved in creating a Muslim society regulating all aspects of man's relationship to man.

Islamic Response in the Post-Colonial Period

While World War I precipitated direct European intervention in several Arab countries, World War II brought European domination to an end. The new independent states came into being almost simultaneously with the State of Israel in 1948. Although the Western press has incessantly created an image of a tiny Israel being attacked by formidable armies from several Arab nations, a careful study will show that the army of Jordan continued to be under British leadership while the British sat astride the Suez Canal in Egypt and were able to intercept armament shipments destined for Arab countries. Furthermore, the national government of Syria was trying to remove "the mercenaries" that supported French hegemony.

The defeat of 1948 and 1949 was seen to be the consequence of Arab lack of preparation and Israeli acquisition of a fresh arms supply from Czechoslovakia (despite the armistice stipulation against such acquisition by either party). It signaled the end of the democratic experi-

ment in Arab Muslim countries. The parliamentary systems were tested by this war and found inadequate. Imitation of the West had not brought parity with the West.

It had become evident for some time that although the Arab countries had constitutions and elected parliaments, these institutions were not effective. Some Western observers have blamed the failure of the parliamentary systems on the alien nature of consultative democracy to the Arab mind. Clearly their failure was also hastened by the attitude of the colonial rulers towards such institutions. Whenever foreign governments or their representatives disliked what the democratically elected deputies decided, they tried to countermand their wishes by a variety of means such as seeking their dismissal or applying relentless direct pressure, blackmail or bribery. When Arab governments attempted to use European law to assure freedom and the implementation of the will of the people, it was these same colonial rulers who ridiculed them and treated them as upstarts.

Furthermore, the establishment of the State of Israel was proof of the inadequacy of the parliamentary nationalist experiment for those who were pained by the humiliation of defeat. In no time, coup d'états in various Arab countries, e.g., Egypt, Syria, Iraq, removed the Westernized nationalist elites from office. Power evolved from a new breed of leadership, military officers originally recruited from the middle and lower middle classes. Their military training, it was hoped, would provide new direction to redeem the honor of the nation. They formed the most Westernized and modernized institution in these countries. Upon assumption of power they sought to speed the modernization process through the adoption of a socialist and/or Marxist model. Socialism became the dominant ideology of several Arab countries in the 1950's and 60's. It was believed that a new Arab man could be produced through intensified effort, development and planning. It was during this period that education became truly public and available to the masses.

Under the colonial regimes very few schools were established to specifically provide cadres for the civil bureaucracy. (This set the precedent for the following generations who assumed that education entitled them to a government job.) Despite all claims to their "civilizing" mission, the colonial powers prepared only a small select Western-

oriented group. Rarely was more than one small high school established in select urban centers. The availability of education to the masses in the post-colonial period has produced a new educated elite, predominantly of lower class and peasant background seeking upward mobility through education. The majority of these new graduates have had no direct experience of the Westernizing "brainwashing" undertaken under the colonial rule with the help of mission schools. For most of these students socialism has provided an alternative ideology that leads to modernity, ascendancy and acceptance in the international community.

The socialist and Marxist experiment has been dominated by a different group of acculturationists who find Marxism appealing because it is believed to have proven effective in Russia, transforming it from an agrarian economy into an industrial giant. This success can be replicated, it is hoped, if one acquires the correct ideology. Furthermore, socialism provides a speedy means of modernization and Westernization without Christianization.

It was with great enthusiasm that Egypt under Nasser embarked on the socialist experiment. Nasser's popularity was bolstered by the image of success and potency which he acquired after the 1956 Suez War when he nationalized the Suez Canal, withstood American political and economic pressure and finally brought to completion the departure of British forces from Egypt.

Nasser was able to institute socialist laws because he effectively eliminated the neo-normative opposition that insisted that Islam must govern all life. By 1965, several leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood, including Sayyid Qutb, the most popular neo-normativist ideologue, were executed. Hundreds of members were imprisoned while still others sought refuge outside Egypt. A number of them became the intellectual leadership of Saudi Arabia that sought to eliminate Nasser and his "anti-Islamic" socialist thought.

Encouraged by the United States, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia with the Shah of Iran sought to establish the Islamic pact, bringing together various Muslim nations which aimed at containing Nasser and the spread of socialism. Saudi Arabia supported the royal regime in Yemen and Nasser supported the republican system by sending Egyptian troops to aid the Yemeni revolutionaries. (Nasser was later to speak about this as his Vietnam since it

sapped the Egyptian economy, impeding the progress in industrialization which Nasser fervently supported.)

The Arab-Israeli war of 1967 brought into serious question the hegemony of socialist ideology. The Arabs stood humiliated and once again parts of Syria, Jordan and Egypt were under foreign occupation. Socialism was seen by the masses to have failed. Marxist ideologues argued that the failure was not due to the ineffectiveness of socialism, but to Nasser's compromising attempt to cover socialism with Islamic garb in order to appeal to the masses. What went wrong, they said, was the compromise on ideology.

The Arab-Israeli War in 1967 initiated a frantic search for a new ideology. Neo-normative Islam once again began to appeal to the masses. Its appeal rested on the insistence of its advocates that true Islam had never been tried. While secularists (supporters of the European as well as the socialist models) bemoaned the fact that the defeat of 1967 was due to the inability of the leaders to eradicate the vestiges of religion from public life, the neo-normativists reasoned that the defeat was God's punishment inflicted on the Muslims because they had sought salvation in alien ideologies, preferring them to God's guidance in the Koran. They argued quite eloquently with supporting evidence from scriptural pas-

sages that had the Muslims taken God seriously at His word, they would have been victorious. Their defeat was due to the fact that God had abandoned them to their enemies because they had abandoned Islam and the revelation of God.

The struggle for an Islamic alternative was supported by political considerations in various countries. With Sadat's ascendancy to power, an Islamization process was initiated in Egypt. This was an attempt to use Islamic coalitions to rid Sadat of the Nasserites and the socialists. Besides assuming the title of The Believer Muhammad Anwar al-Sadat, founder of the Believing Nation, he encouraged various Muslim groups to participate in public life, describing the program as the Rectification, instituted on the principles of Belief and Knowledge.

The religious trappings of the Sadat regime were enhanced by the 1973 victory of the Arab-Israeli War. The Islamic slogans utilized in the war, it was believed, vindicated the teachings of Islam that God will give the victory if Muslims will take Him at His word and are faithful. Neo-normative Islam was also bolstered by the image of the rising political and economic power of the Arab world initiated by the oil boycott and evident in the increased wealth of members of the OPEC nations.

who had a Christian or a Muslim mother were condemned to refugee existence, unfit for a Jewish state based on religious discrimination.

From its inception, Zionism, whether religious or political in ideology, has been based on a religious understanding. It affirms the right of Jews to return to Palestine because of a promise scriptures say God made 4000 years ago to the Hebrews. Despite the notion that many Israelis are atheists, and that some Zionist ideologists believe that Zionism is a nationalism, many Muslims believe that the essential core of the right that Zionism affirms is cloaked with religious legitimacy based on a religious claim.

Muslims in the last few years with great fascination have watched United States policymakers condemn the "fanaticism" of Islamic "fundamentalism" while ignoring the militancy of the Gush Emunim and the Jewish Defense League. Muslims from all walks of life have asked, "Why is it acceptable and proper for Israel to be Jewish, yet fanatical and obscurantist for Muslims to have religion impinge on public policy if that government is Muslim, while it is progressive and enlightened if practiced in Israel?"

Sayyid Qutb, who spent 1949-51 in the United States, gave what a growing number of Muslims perceive as an eloquent and convincing answer when he said that the West, which he characterized as the coalition of the capitalist, communist and Zionist forces in the world, seeks the destruction of Islam because it fears the power of Islam, the only mobilizing force that can bring about the ascendancy for which the Muslims hope.

Qutb believed that at heart all Western wars against Muslim countries are the product of what he termed the Zionist-Crusader mentality, or what can be explained as the Judeo-Christian stance. Despite Western teachings that were inspired by religion are obsolete, he wrote, they and their surrogates, the Israelis, attack and acquire land, claiming geographical or economic goals, seeking the destruction of Islam.

Qutb saw the establishment of Israel as a continuation of the anti-Islamic Crusader mentality. He and his supporters have recalled the words of Field Marshal Edmund Allenby who, on entering Jerusalem in 1919, reportedly said, "Today the Crusades have come to an end." Thus for neo-normativists the State of Israel is an extension of Christian hatred of Islam. The West itself actually sanctions the fusion of religion

The Israeli Connection

The rise of Islamic consciousness in the Muslim world is also directly related to Israeli policies in the area. The formation of the State of Israel in 1948 had a dire effect on many of the intelligentsia of the Arab world. Secularists and Westernizers felt betrayed by Europe and America, the "defenders of justice and freedom." American policies in the area made it clear that while support was given to democratic principles and the right of self-determination to various peoples throughout the world, the same was denied to the Palestinians. Not only were they not to have the right of a homeland, but they were to be displaced, expelled from the land of their birth to make room for European Jews.

It was felt that the Christians and Muslims of Palestine were chosen to atone for the sins of European Christians who at various times through pogroms, inquisitions and gas chambers had sought to annihilate European Jews.

While Westernized Arabs struggled to form nation-states based on equal citizenship for all ethnic and religious groups, they watched with disbelief as Israel, supported by American money and military might, instituted a state based on religious affiliation with citizenship open to all born of a Jewish mother. Israeli policies aimed at the ingathering of Jews from all over the world while insisting that there was no room for the indigenous people. Those

and state in Israel, and Muslims must take heed to recognize that secularism, nationalism, socialism, or any otherism that seeks to separate religion and state is part of the Western conspiracy against Islam.

It should be noted here that Iranian students involved in their country's Islamic revolution cited Israel as a model. They were seeking to establish an Islamic modern state just as Israel had built a Jewish one. It became clear that American condemnation of Muslim "fanaticism" and "fundamentalism" was not out of distrust for a religious state per se, evident through the West's support of Israel, but out of an innate dislike and distrust of Islam. This realization provided the incentive for wide-reaching support of the Islamic revolution as a perceived way of striking fear into the heart of the American giant who had for so long intimidated them.

Israel and its policies have influenced the rise of neo-normative Islam in other ways. One of these is the "Islamization" of the Palestinian issue. The Organiza-

tion of the Islamic Conference, born in the aftermath of the 1969 fire in the mosque in Jerusalem, is composed of 43 states which consider Jerusalem threatened by Israeli occupation. This feeling is strengthened by repeated threats from various Israeli sectors, including the chief rabbi of the Israeli armed forces, that the mosque should be destroyed to make room for the rebuilding of the temple.

Although different members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference vary in their respective policies, the point that instead binds them together is the fear that the third holy place of Islam is under occupation. Reinforced by President Reagan's statement of November 19, 1981 that "he preferred for Jerusalem to remain undivided under Israeli sovereignty," more than 850 million Muslims consider Jerusalem threatened by the continuing Israeli occupation. This was inflamed more recently when an American Jew shot and killed several Muslims while at prayer in the mosque.

typical insensitivity to Arab feelings, United States foreign policy responded to the "vacuum" created in the Arabian Peninsula with the departure of the British. To those who lived there, the image of a "vacuum" was offensive: not only did it affirm their insignificance, it suggested their non-existence.

To prevent Russia from filling the "vacuum," American foreign policy sought to contain Soviet influence through alliances and pacts, including the Baghdad pact. All countries were urged to choose the forces of democracy, enlightenment and freedom under the leadership of the United States. There was no middle position for those disinterested in the big power struggle. If they did not align themselves with the United States, they would be considered under the influence of communism. Those who made the right choice would be rewarded with the benefits of aid and military training.

The pressure on third world countries to choose one of the two systems gave rise to the non-aligned movement, a position neo-normative Muslims had advocated vehemently after the establishment of the State of Israel. Muslims, they had argued, will not benefit from either East or West because both camps treat them with disdain and harbor nothing but enmity for Islam. Neither capitalism nor communism helped the Palestinians and the Arabs in their confrontation with Israel. This "conspiracy" became more convincing to the masses with every Arab-Israeli clash where each loss illustrated the inadequacy of the defensive weapons the Arabs were allowed to purchase.

The Nixon policy of détente between East and West left pro-Western Arab nations in a state of limbo. In 1972, for example, Jordan, which had long been under pressure from the United States not to recognize the Republic of China, found itself on the occasion of President Nixon's state visit there now supporting an American policy apparently obsolete. The United States either forgot to inform its ally of the impending recognition so it could take the necessary measures to save face or did not trust Jordan to handle the maturity to handle a communist country.

Détente which followed the Moscow Summit of 1972 changed the image of the world. Russian-American cooperation went into such spectacular shows as the Apollo-Soyuz space docking in 1975. American allies in the Arab world felt they could have the same friendly exchanges with Russia that the United

The American Connection

Unqualified American support of Israel is an added dimension for the radicalization of neo-normative Islam. It is obvious to Arabs that America has assigned a special low status to its Arab friends. Many question America's continued diplomatic, military and economic support of Israel despite the fact that it acts against America's stated interests. After listening to a ringing defense by an American senator of Israel's destruction of a nuclear plant in Iraq, an Arab asked whether the senator thought he was running for the Knesset rather than the Congress of the United States.

Others have wondered at America's continued support despite Israeli acts detrimental to American interests. Why is America supporting Israel when Israel sells arms to such countries as Communist-supported Ethiopia (with Cuba and Russia), and to Iran and Argentina? Others have questioned the American response to the deliberate sinking of the American ship Liberty in 1967 by the

Israeli air force in which 34 American lives were lost.

Some Arabs point to the disdain with which Arab allies of the United States are treated. They mention King Hussein of Jordan who was not received at the White House by President Carter because he refused to sign the Camp David agreement. On June 13, 1982, then Secretary of State Alexander Haig, on ABC's "This Week with David Brinkley," referred to King Fahd of Saudi Arabia as our "collaborator." Despite Saudi efforts to stabilize oil prices and supplies to help the American economy against their own national interest, Fahd is perceived not as a friend, but merely a collaborator.

The influence of the United States in the Middle East became more dominant after World War II, through American intent and design rather than by default. The strategic importance of the Arabian Gulf area was heightened by increased American dependence on oil. With

States enjoyed.

For neo-normative Muslims, détente became more than "superpower equality"; it showed that Russia and the United States had decided to share the monopoly of power rather than compete for it. This left third world countries unable to barter away their allegiance. In fact, some of them began to suspect that détente was concluded at their expense. Détente also "proved" to many Arabs that the superpowers had decided to parcel out areas of interest. In the 1973 war, it is believed that the "victory" of recapturing land lost in 1967 was taken from the Syrian and Egyptian forces when the United States supplied the Israeli armed forces and the Russians made declarations of support but did not deliver. The "collusion" between East and West was seen in the

events that led to both Angola's and Ethiopia's coming under communist influence with the United States watching from the sidelines.

Neo-normative Muslims kept asking: How does friendship with the East or West benefit us? We need an alternative. Islam was proposed as the alternative, a total system that encompasses all aspects of life, social, political and economic. Thus it is out of the experience of Israel and unlimited American support for its expansionist policies that the Islamic alternative began to make sense for a growing number of Arab Muslims. The Islamic alternative proceeds from an Islamic world view that insists on the rejection of "followership" of either East or West and instead emphasizes self-worth, dignity and authenticity.

sorb all Arab Jews. (It is estimated that more than half of its citizens are Arab Jews, i.e., they speak Arabic, have "Arab" traditions, enjoy Arabic music and laugh at Arabic humor.)

In the endeavor to set up a non-secularist Palestinian state, Lebanon was the model to be emulated. It is for this reason, many believe, that Israel instigated, supported and armed the Maronites of Lebanon to goad the Palestinians into being embroiled in a military confrontation. It was to demonstrate that the Lebanese experiment is impractical. (If Christian and Muslim who have co-existed for 14 centuries cannot live in harmony, how could Israel be expected to opt for a truly democratic state where Palestinian Christians and Muslims could live and exercise equal rights with Jews?)

The Lebanese civil war did become a free-for-all. In retrospect, it spawned some of the strangest alliances in history which saw Syria and Saudi Arabia at times supporting the Maronites, "the Israeli puppets," against the Palestinians and Shiite Muslims. The Western press tended to report it as a Christian-Muslim confrontation ignoring the fact that Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic and Protestant Christians were not sympathetic to the Maronites. The Greek Catholic Bishop in Lebanon at one time appealed to the Pope to pressure the Maronites to cease their hostilities, threatening to secede from the Catholic Church if Maronites persisted in what was seen as treasonous activity.

Regardless of the divisions among Lebanese Christians, the civil war raised serious questions about the adequacy of Arab nationalism. The Maronite "treachery" was "evidence" that Muslims could not trust their fellow countrymen to act in the interest of the Arab nation. It became the "proof" that Christians and Jews conspire against the interest of the nation at all times seeking to destroy Islam. These were themes advocated in the early 1950's by Sayyid Qutb, who corroborated this world view by quotations from the Koran which warn of such a conspiracy, thus enhancing the idea of heeding the revelation of God. Lebanese "ignominy" can now be cited as the proof that despite God's warning, nationalists have led Muslims astray by seeking man-made systems and imposing them on society. The only salvation lies in returning to the roots, rejecting alien systems and heeding God's warning which has promised victory to the believers.

The Lebanese Connection

Various nationalisms in the Muslim world advocated an identity based on linguistic, geographical, and cultural as well as historical considerations. While the literature of Arab nationalism talked about the 400 years of Ottoman occupation as being responsible for the decline of the Arabs, the Iranian and Turkish nationalists emphasized their distinctive ethnicity and cultural heritage and achievements, blaming their underdeveloped state on Arab conquests that destroyed their culture.

For neo-normative Muslims, nationalism is a disintegrationist factor supported by Western powers in order to suppress Muslim countries. It serves colonial policies of "divide and rule." Nationalism, they argue, places primary allegiance on a geographical boundary created in foreign capitals, providing equal status to all nationals regardless of religious or ethnic identity. Islam, they insist, is God's only acceptable way for constituting a nation, an Umma, as the Koran has made clear. The Brotherhood of all Believers must supersede allegiance to fellow residents in a state boundary. Arab nationalism had insisted that Muslims, Christians and Jews are equal citizens. They are bonded together in a common destiny thus relegating fellow religionists such as Pakistanis,

Indonesians, etc., to a secondary status.

Neo-normative Muslims point to the impotence of Arab nationalism. It has failed to provide the dignity the Arab sought and the parity they coveted. In this context, it must be pointed out that the civil war that broke out in Lebanon in 1975 has dealt Arab nationalism its greatest setback. The civil war started after Yasser Arafat, head of the Palestine Liberation Organization, returned from his "triumphant" appearance at the United Nations where it was felt that the Palestinian people received international recognition. In New York, Arafat set before the world the principles on which the Palestinian people sought to build a nation in Palestine. It was to be based on a nationalist rather than religious ideology practiced by Israel. The future Palestine was to be based on a geographical and regional identity. It was to be a democratic state with equal status for Jews, Christians and Muslims regardless of their religious identification. This was a rejection of the Israeli stipulation for citizenship which is exclusively religious. Israeli laws, it is felt, discriminated against Palestinians not because they are Arabs, but because they are Christian and Muslim. Israel has absorbed and actively seeks to ab-

Member Nations of the Organization of the Islamic Conference

Nation	Foreign Occupation	Population	Independence
Afghanistan	—	22,037,700	May 27, 1919
Algeria	French	19,130,000	July 3, 1962
Bahrain	British Protectorate—1861	373,000	Dec. 16, 1971
Bangladesh	British	89,284,000	Dec. 16, 1971
Cameroon	German, French, British (20% Muslim; 45% Animist)	8,250,000	Jan. 1, 1960
Chad	French—1900	4,574,000	Aug. 11, 1960
Comoros	16th century—Portuguese, French 1841—French	327,000	July 6, 1975
Djibouti	French—1859	318,000	June 27, 1977
Egypt	British—1882	41,502,000	Feb. 28, 1922
Gabon	French—1890	585,000	Aug. 17, 1960
Gambia	British—1816	593,000	Feb. 18, 1965
Guinea	French—1898	5,351,000	Oct. 2, 1958
Guinea-Bissau	Portuguese—1879	777,214	Sept. 24, 1973
Indonesia	17th century—Portuguese; 1800-1949 -Dutch [1942-45—Japanese]	149,626,000	Aug. 17, 1945
Iran	—	38,146,000	1775
Iraq	British Protectorate—1920	13,134,000	1932
Jordan	British Mandate—1921	2,984,000	May 25, 1946
Kuwait	British Protectorate—1899	1,318,000	June 19, 1961
Lebanon	French Mandate—1920	3,012,000	1944
Libya	Italian—1912-47	2,933,000	Dec. 24, 1951
Malaysia	1511-1641—Portuguese; 1651-1795—Dutch; 1795-1957—British	13,841,000	Aug. 31, 1957
Maldives	British Protectorate—1887	152,000	July 26, 1965
Mali	French—1881	6,553,000	Sept. 22, 1960
Mauritania	French—1904	1,574,000	Nov. 28, 1960
Morocco	French—1912	20,667,000	March 2, 1956
Niger	French—1901	5,425,000	Aug. 3, 1960
Oman	British hegemony—1798	864,000	1650 (1950's)
Pakistan	British—1857	76,770,000	Aug. 14, 1947
Palestine	British—1919 (Israel 1948, 1967)	—	—
Qatar	British Protectorate—1868	200,000	Sept. 3, 1971
Saudi Arabia	—	8,224,000	Sept. 23, 1932
Senegal	15th century—Portuguese; 17th century—French	5,591,000	Apr. 4, 1960
Sierra Leone	British—1791	3,470,000	Apr. 27, 1961
Somalia	British—1884	3,510,000	Oct. 21, 1969
Sudan	British—1899	18,378,000	Jan. 1, 1956
Syria	French Mandate—1920	8,534,000	Apr. 17, 1946
Tunisia	French—1881	6,392,000	March 20, 1956
Turkey	—	45,182,000	Oct. 29, 1923
United Arab Emirates*	British	862,000	Dec. 2, 1971
Uganda	British—1888 (5% Muslim; 60% Christian)	13,457,000	Oct. 9, 1962
Upper Volta	French—1890	6,738,000	Aug. 8, 1960
Yemen Arab Republic	—	7,000,000	1918
Yemen PDR	British—1839	1,797,000	Nov. 30, 1967

* Formerly Trucial States: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Ras al-Khaimah, Fujairah, Umm al-Qaywayn, Sharjah, Ajman

The Western Model Reassessed

Thus to neo-normative Muslims, the efforts of the acculturationists had not only proved wasteful; they had led generations astray from the path guaranteed to provide potency and ascendancy. The proof lay in the fact that their imported solutions were not only incompatible with the nature of the indigenous people, but were intrinsically faulty. Their model—the West—guaranteed confusion, division and inevitable disintegration of society.

The Economic Factor

There is a growing consensus in Arabic literature that the West is in a state of collapse. This lends credence to the neo-normative contention that Western society (in both its capitalist and communist alternatives) is destined to failure because its perceptions of reality are grounded in materialistic ideology. For these Muslims, all ideologies to be valid must be based on God's revelation in the Koran.

The collapse of the West, they argue, is evident in the fact that Russia resorts to an iron curtain to keep its people from escaping its rule. Had communism been a great system, the citizens of Russia would have been happy to live there, making it unnecessary to force them to stay. Revolutions in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland are cited as proof of rampant unhappiness under Communist hegemony.

Capitalism on the other hand is suffering from the drain of capital undermining the economy of the United States. It is obvious that the primary value for the capitalist is maximizing profit. This he will do at the expense of his own nation and society. Capitalists are perceived as men who have no loyalty. Their investment of money in foreign countries such as Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea is faulted not as the exploitation of cheap labor but rather as traitorous to the American cause because it leads to unemployment in the United States. Capitalism is

unethical because it places profit and exploitation above human concerns. America's decline, neo-normative Muslims argue, is due in a large part to the unpatriotic nature of the capitalist system.

The unethical nature of capitalism is evident also in its senseless exploitation of natural resources. Its ideology places man against nature; in his attempt to conquer it, he destroys it. For the neo-normative Muslim, God placed man on earth as His agent to care for the world. Capitalism, built on usury and exploitation, has led to pollution and horrendous ecological problems. Both capitalism and communism have made a mess of creation. The world is in need of the balanced approach of Islam.

The Political Factor

Neo-normative literature has focused since the 1970's on the political aspects of Islam. Numerous treaties have been penned on the nature, scope and function of Islamic government. The Islamization process that appears to have captured the imagination and commitment of a growing number of Muslim youth has recently been described by a leader of the Muslim Brotherhood as the "politicization" of Islam. While this may reflect the frustration experienced in various countries with the failure of Western forms of government to fulfill the goals of the Arab people, it does question in a very serious manner the adequacy of the Western system of government.

American democracy is described in some of the literature as the tyranny of the majority. What makes it unacceptable is the possibility of gathering a consensus of opinion to act in such a manner as to deprive people of their just rights. Democracy is being manipulated to sanction the whims of men. It brings about coalitions of various interest groups to impinge on law in order to benefit the powerful. This leads to the exploitation and oppression of the weak. It is to reform such a system,

neo-normative Muslims believe, that the Koran was revealed. Thus a truly Islamic government will strive to bring about a just order that guarantees the rights of the weak and the oppressed.

The Social and Cultural Factor

The abuse of freedom in the United States has led to the disintegration of its society. This is quite clear in the young generation's rejecting of their parents' values. Many have opted to join other religions such as the Unification Church, the Sikhs, the Hare Krishnas, the Buddhists, etc., or to choose "alternative lifestyles" such as communes or drugs. The hippie generation, about which Muslims continue to inveigh, is perceived as an eloquent testimony to the bankruptcy of the capitalist alternative. If the Americans themselves admit to the failure of their "gods," ask the neo-normative Muslims, why do the acculturationists strive to have us emulate them?

The collapse of the Western model can also be seen in the "pornographic" American society. Not only are homosexual relationships tolerated, but there are also religious leaders who seek to sanction them through the teachings of Christianity. Furthermore, the feminist movement is depicted as a sexual revolution with women seeking the social acceptability of promiscuity. In a society such as that of the Arab world, where pre-marital and extra-marital sex is a crime often punishable by death, Muslims recoil with horror at the possibility that emulation of the West as advocated by the acculturationists is going to lead to the same "abomination" in their society.

The feminist movement is also perceived as anti-male, thus a threat to the existent social system as well as a rejection of the teachings of the Koran which assign men a leadership position in the family. Neo-normative Muslims argue that this is necessary to insure harmony in the family which is a social unit. Every group must have a leader or an administrator, and to have more than one would lead to discord and contention.

The phenomenal rise in the number of illegitimate children in the United States (several Arab newspapers headlining that in Washington, D.C. the number of illegitimate children exceed those born within wedlock), the spread of venereal disease, of rape, of incest and of wife abuse is cited as the in-

evitable consequence of a social system devised by the whims of men sanctioning their desires and aberrations.

It is worth noting that the areas of social life questioned by neo-normative Muslims correspond to those condemned by the colonialists and missionaries as the cause of the disintegration of Muslim society at the turn of the century. Among the practices found deplorable, and definitely not to be emulated, is the high rate of divorce undermining the sanctity of marriage in the United States. Muslims point to rampant American polygamy practiced "consecutively" as less humane than the Islamic permission of concurrent polygamous marriage. It is evident that there are reasons why polygamy takes place in both societies, they argue. The Muslim system provides equal treatment for both wives. The divorced wife in the American system is seen as relegated to poverty, the children left in her care. The Islamic system assures the father's care and maintenance of his progeny. Which, they ask, is the better system? The American statistics on poor women as heads of households are quoted to urge Muslims not to emulate Western society with its delinquent and criminal elements.

This is a very poignant commentary on American society, given the fact that the Arab feminist movement in the second decade of the 20th century set up the American woman as a model. She was depicted in this literature as "the woman who stood side by side with her husband, working to raise the standard of living, sacrificing for the nation, at all times maintaining her modesty and virtue," unlike her European counterpart. That, however, is in the past. Current Muslim literature calls on Muslims to seek Islam and reject the American model which can only lead to disintegration. Who in their right mind, the literature asks, would seek to follow such a faulty example?

The image of the West described in the literature of neo-normative Muslims is daily reinforced with the image of "true" America as depicted by exported B-rated movies as well as television programs such as "Kojak," "I Dream of Jeannie," "Dallas" and "Love Boat." Thus daily Muslims are reminded that America is a place where violence predominates, where women are treated as sex objects for the pleasure of men and then discarded, where freedom leads to anarchy and selfishness. Only when God and the teachings of Islam prevail will there be a truly free and virtuous society.

The Religious Factor

Neo-normative Muslims affirm that Christianity as the Koran teaches has come under the influence of priests and theologians who strive to "sacralize" the existing order, thus compromising the message of God. The Christian clergy are depicted as having abandoned their prophetic role to call the people to the truth; rather they have indulged in making people feel good about themselves without insisting on their living an ethical and righteous life.

Furthermore, most neo-normative literature insists that the present form of Christianity (which is believed to be a distortion of the truth) is leading Christians astray because it provides a palliative by emphasizing the hereafter. By separating God's world from that of Caesar, neo-normative Muslims believe

that Christianity has abandoned morality and values. It has failed to bring about an ethical and just society.

The bankruptcy of Christianity is evident in its inability to impact and transform lives. Thus Christian countries are deemed to be in need of the message of Islam to restore justice and freedom to society. Only when Islam is realized in the lives of the believers can Muslims assume their role for which they were summoned by God as revealed in the Koran: "You are the best community brought forth to humanity prescribing what is good and proscribing what is evil." It is a duty for Muslims to make God's message known to the world, to save the world from its errant ways. Muslims must use the Koran to prescribe what is normative for all human life.

Neo-Normative Islam: Basic Teachings

While all neo-normative Muslims continue to believe that the economic, political, social and cultural aspects of life must be judged by God's truth, they do not agree on the specifics of the Islamic order, system or government that they seek. In recent years, a great deal of literature has been published advocating various positions as the Islamic one. However, concepts of Islamic justice, banking, economics, etc., appear to vary. There are those who have been called the Islamic Right and those who call themselves the Islamic Left, as well as those with an abundance of Islamic centrist positions. While they all utilize Koranic verses and precedents from the life of the Prophet to justify their ideas, they do not seem to agree on any specific definition of that position. Some ideologues see room for a variety of Islamic systems or interpretations, and others restrict it to one, their own.

Despite the lack of consensus about the details of the Islamic system, there is agreement that the time for Islam has come. It is time to assume confidence in its teachings, to take it at its word and cease from all attempts to mimic the West. This does not mean a retreat to

medieval times. Rather it is the summons to all Muslims to chart the future, utilizing modern technology and scientific knowledge while upholding the ethical teachings of Islam. The redemption of society is the final goal. The ardent supporters of neo-normative Islam come from the ranks of the best-educated, modernized Muslim professionals, technicians and scientists. While striving to master Western technology to modernize and develop their society, they are anxious to avoid what is perceived as Western pitfalls that have led to the collapse of Western society.

Although the quest for an Islamic alternative continues to be the primary goal of some committed groups in the various Muslim countries, it is difficult at present to assess the scope of its appeal or the number of adherents it has. This is due mainly to the absence of political parties and organizations in most Arab countries.

The popularity of the movement has been evident since the early 1970's, particularly among students in the science, engineering, law and medical departments of various Arab universities, where it became fashionable for male students to grow beards and for

female students to don Islamic garb (covering their hair, wearing long sleeves and ankle-length skirts). This phenomenon has been suppressed in Egypt (where, after Sadat's death, members of an estimated 30 different groups were arrested) and in Syria, where the government reportedly forced young men to shave their beards and used female paratroopers "to unveil" women in the streets of Damascus. In each of these states, as well as on the West Bank and Gaza, the Islamic alternative acts as a rallying point, a demonstration of opposition to the existent political order.

Meanwhile Saudi Arabia, Morocco and Libya, though manifesting different forms of government, have what is considered to be states based on Islamic principles. Others, such as Tunisia (since 1972) utilized Islamic justification to explain government policies as authentic, while the Sudan has coopted the Islamic ideologues by including them in the government to help shape and mold the expected Islamic future. It is also reported that there is a great deal of popular support for the Islamic Liberation Front in Kuwait and other states in the Gulf area.

The rise in Islamic consciousness and the growing consensus on an Islamic worldview as an alternative to that of capitalism and Marxism has not eradicated the acculturationists. In fact, some of them continue to rule in places like Syria, Iraq and South Yemen. However, they find it increasingly necessary to provide an Islamic interpretation for their activities and the ideologies they advocate.

The nationalists, socialists and secularists appear to be fighting a rearguard battle at present; unless Islam fails and in a devastating manner, there will be ample room for it to revitalize itself. It is a sign of the times that a prominent secularist of the 1950's, Khaled Muhammad Khaled, whose book *From Here We Start* was translated into English, has written a new book defending the position that religion and government cannot be separated in Islam. He now believes that Islam must supervise and control the government in order to insure an ethical order.

The discussion thus far has centered on the growing general consensus for the imperative of finding an authentic ideology, one that is a total system equal in every way to those of capitalism and Marxism. The Islamic alternative frees Muslims from the necessity of being satellite dependencies of either the

Eastern or Western orbit. It provides meaning, status, authenticity and a sense of adequacy and assurance. Muslims no longer will have to strive to find out what is current in the West in order to be "with it." They themselves can determine what they want to do and think.

A significant number of Muslims, usually dismissed as radicals, insist that Islam is not an alternative, it is *the* alternative. They perceive the world as divided between the righteous: those who take the Koran seriously and try to

live an Islamic life, and those who reject God's revelation and live under the influence of man-made systems and sanctions. They continue to maintain that their definition of Islam has an exclusive claim to veracity. Not only capitalists, communists, secularists, positivists, etc...but also all Muslims who do not agree with them are outside the pale of Islam and need to be summoned back to the truth. It is from their ranks that the assassins of Sadat have emerged.

The Islamic Alternative: Future Prospects

United States foreign policy has been known to support the growth of Islamic identity as a buffer against communism in such places as Iran under the Shah, Egypt under Sadat, in addition to the Saudi form of Islam and the Mujahideen in Afghanistan fighting against the Russian presence in their country. These policies have not necessarily won friends among Muslims for the United States. In fact, neo-normative Muslims see the American role as one that encourages the traditional, ritualistic and personalistic aspects of Islam, while condemning activist, political Islam. This kind of apolitical religion, neo-normative Muslims believe, is a palliative to make Muslims accept their condition of subservience to American policies as well as oppressive rulers. Several have found it necessary to alert other Muslims to American hypocrisy. They ask: "Why is America protesting the Russian occupation of Afghanistan while sanctioning through vocal and material support the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem?"

Others have pointed to the United States policy of support for the Polish movement under the Catholic Church in Poland while condemning the Muslim revolution against the Shah's oppression. They ask: "Why is it good when the religious group supporting the revolution is Christian and evil when it is Muslim? Is it because America hates Islam? Is it true that there is a separation between church and state in the West or is this something created for

Muslims to separate them from their only source of dignity and power?"

For many Muslims the potentials of Islam have not been realized. Its promise is yet to come. The joy they experienced at the fall of the Shah, the great oppressor, has been temporarily tainted by what some are calling the "misdirection" of the Khomeini experiment. The problems in Iran, however, do not detract from Islam or the Islamic system. The Iranian people proved what the Koran had promised: if a people are committed to God and united against oppression in the world, God will give them the victory over the greatest enemy. This can be replicated in other parts of the Muslim world, if people can be mobilized to heed this summons from God.

It is unfortunate that the United States, whose ideals of justice, freedom and equality many Muslims have made their own, has been identified with the forces of oppression and exploitation. America's unconditional support of Israeli expansionism and the rejection of the rights of the Palestinian people has placed the United States for many in the role of enemy of the Arab people. At present, for an Arab leader to be cast as a friend of the United States, much less a "collaborator," may bring about his downfall. This is not because of a rejection of the ideals of America, but the experience of the double standard in American policy. The death of an Israeli soldier is a loss of human life; the death of thousands of Christians

and Muslims is "mopping up."

At present a growing number of Muslims believe that they have three alternatives to choose from in formulating their political institutions aimed at gaining parity with the West and the respect of the world. American support of Israel which appears determined to bomb all their technological achievements out of existence and restore them to underdevelopment may rule out the capitalist option. The Russian appeal has always been a reaction to defeat, a potential source of support and a source of arms. At present, Islam offers the best option and in the views of many the only option. Experiments with national states and socialist governments have not been able to deliver on promises and goals. While the Lebanese

civil war heralded the death of Arab nationalism as an option for the young, the liquidation of the present Palestinian movement in 1982 may seal its fate forever.

There is no consensus on what the Islamic alternative is or is supposed to be. On the one hand, there is Saudi Islam, supported by oil money, trying to contain the Islamic movement through the Muslim World League. For many neo-normative Muslims that is unacceptable. It is referred to as American Islam because of its American connection. They believe that the wealth is being used to maintain pro-American policies that are not necessarily in the interest of the Arabs.

The Organization of Islamic Conference offers another alternative, but it

has proved ineffectual because many of these nations do not have a truly Islamic system, but rather pay lip service to Islam in order to maintain themselves in power.

What neo-normative Muslims hope for is a truly democratic system which is not subservient to either East or West, but working for the propagation of Islam, and the elevation of Muslims, bringing about a just order in the world, one nation under God, with liberty and justice for all.

[Additional information on the Islamic movement in the Arab world may be found in the author's recently published Contemporary Islam and the Challenge of History, State University of New York Press.]

Book Views

The United States in the Middle East: Interests and Obstacles

By Seth P. Tillman
Indiana University Press, Bloomington,
1982, 384 pp., \$22.50

By John P. Richardson

Seth P. Tillman's *The United States in the Middle East* begins to fill a void that has existed too long—a focused examination in print of American interests in the region and how best to support as well as to differentiate among them. The Tillman book is not the last word on the subject, but it sets a standard that subsequent treatises will have to corroborate or contest.

The book addresses in detail a number of important topics—Saudi Arabia, Israel, the Palestinians, and the Soviet Union—but the most compelling sections define American interests in the Middle East, consider the way they are articulated in the American political system, and determine what needs to be done to serve them and the broader cause of peace in the Middle East.

Seth Tillman, a student of Wilsonian diplomacy who served for more than 15 years as a principal staff aide to Senator J. William Fulbright, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, and to Senator George McGovern,

chairman of the Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Near East and South Asia, knows whereof he speaks. He defines the four "fundamental" American interests in the Middle East as "access to oil, the security of Israel, détente with the Soviet Union, and adherence to such principles as the peaceful settlement of disputes and the right of peoples to self-determination." Tillman argues that while "the larger global question" of détente may be challenged, the other defined American interests in the Middle East are generally accepted although there is debate about their priority.

Having defined the major American interests in the Middle East, Tillman sets out a compelling argument to the effect that "the issue is essentially domestic—what it comes down to, in concrete terms, is that, owing to the unmatched influence of the Israel lobby in American politics, Israeli security (or, more exactly, the conceptions of Israeli security held by incumbent Israeli governments) has been permitted to preempt (Tillman's italics) other vital interests in American policy." Tillman concludes that this "unmatched influence" has been the root cause of a "chronically unbalanced" policy that "despite certain tactical successes, remains a strategic failure."

Tillman's charge, informed by close observation of the American political scene from the vantage point of the United States Senate, cannot be ignored. He points out that "virtually every effort to defend and advance American interests in the Middle East—has been immediately converted from a foreign to a domestic problem." In recent years America's diplomatic isolation, with Israel, on the international scene has led observers here and abroad to maintain that the only way out of the Middle East imbroglio lies with a settlement imposed by the United States, since no Middle East nation has the power to contest successfully against an Israel

(Continued on page 16)

Notice

□ A special information packet on the situation in Lebanon is available from A.M.E.U. Packet includes: report on casualties; information on medical assistance; background paper on Lebanon; profile of P.L.O.; and reports on war prisoners, opponents to war in Israel, U.S. weapons (with special focus on use of cluster bombs). Also included are graphic displays, list of resources, and suggestions for local action. Our price: \$3.00.

Books To Order

New Selection

Seth Tillman, *The United States in the Middle East: Interests and Obstacles*.

Indiana State University Press, Bloomington, 1982, 333 pp., \$22.50. Presents a succinct, lucid account of the history of the area, providing the reader with a factual perspective for the evaluation of current developments. Full chapters are devoted to American and Soviet interests in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia, Israel and the Palestinians. Our price, \$17.50. See review on page 14.

Uri Avneri, *Israel Without Zionism: A Plea for Peace in the Middle East*, Macmillan Publishing, 278 pp., \$1.95 (paperback). A remarkable description of Israeli politics, as presented by a member of Israel's Knesset and the sole representative of a party that believes in the transformation of the Jewish state into a pluralistic and secular one that is able to achieve reconciliation with the Arabs. Our price, \$1.70.

Dewey Beegle, *Prophecy and Prediction*, Pryor Pettengill, 274 pp., \$5.95 (paperback). Refutes the biblical claim of Zionists to the Promised Land by discussing what the Bible teaches about prophecy, especially concerning the predictions of events which already have occurred and those which are to come. Our price, \$5.25.

Kenneth Cragg, *The House of Islam*, Kieckhefer Publishing Co., Inc., 145 pp., \$8.95. Outlines basic elements of Islam; particularly geared to a Christian audience. Supportive yet not unafraid to face major questions between Christianity and Islam. Excellent group study guide with a section, "Questions For Further Study and Discussion." Our price, \$7.75.

Jonathan Dimbleby, *The Palestinians*, Quartet Books, 1979, 256 pp., \$25.00. Explores the crisis of a people without a land, demonstrating that the "Palestinian problem" is not an abstract issue but an urgent human tragedy. Fully illustrated with moving, dramatic, often harrowing photographs by Donald McCullin. Our price, \$17.50.

Saad El Shazly, *The Crossing of the Suez*, American Mideast Research, 333 pp., \$14.00. Egypt's former military commander-in-chief tells how the Egyptian army executed its brilliant 1973 crossing of the Suez and how Egypt's political leaders turned that success into disaster. Our price, \$10.95.

James Ennes, Jr., *Assault on the Liberty*, Random House, 301 pp., \$15.95. The author served as lieutenant among the officers of the U.S.S. Liberty on her fatal voyage. He was on watch at the bridge dur-

ing the day of the Israeli attack. Our price, \$9.95.

Grace Halsell, *Journey to Jerusalem*, Macmillan, 1981, 256 pp., \$10.95. A distinguished journalist visits the Holy Land and meets people as diverse as Mayor Bassam Shaka of Nablus and Bobby Brown of the Bronx, NY, now a Gush Emunim settler near Bethlehem. Our price, \$7.95.

Hatem Hussaini, *The Palestine Problem: An Annotated Bibliography 1967-1980*, Palestine Information Office, Washington, D.C., 1980, 106 pp. Included in this bibliography are publications from Palestinian Arabs, Israelis, Western scholars and journalists. Covers four categories: history; Israeli occupation and Palestinian resistance; critics of Zionism; and legal, religious and peace perspectives. Our price, \$1.50.

Stephen D. Isaacs, *Jews and American Politics*, Doubleday & Co., 302 pp. An investigation into the role Jews play in American politics. It explodes many myths on this subject and shows how Jews have exercised the power they have. Our price, \$3.85.

Sabri Jiryis, *The Arabs in Israel*, Monthly Review Press, 314 pp., \$12.50. Expanded version of Jiryis' original authoritative account of the deprivation of Arabs living in Israel. Our price, \$7.85.

Alfred Lilienthal, *The Zionist Connection: What Price Peace?*, Dodd, Mead & Co., 800 pp., \$20.00. Covers the Arab-Israeli conflict from the time of Herzl to Camp David. Research involved is monumental. Contains much information of which most Americans are unaware. Our price, \$12.75.

Ian Lustick, *Arabs In the Jewish State*, University of Texas Press, 1980, 400 pp., \$22.50. A systematic, scholarly analysis of the strikingly low level of Arab political activity in Israel. Author examines success with which Israeli authorities have coopted Arab elites, maintained the backwardness of the Arab economy, and promoted parochial rivalries within the Arab sector. Our price, \$17.50.

Donald Neff, *Warriors at Suez: Eisenhower Takes America into the Middle East*, Linden Press/Simon & Schuster, 1981, 480 pp., \$17.95. Reveals for the first time the bizarre nature of the Suez Crisis of 1956. This episode saw France, Britain and Israel in collusion to overthrow the Nasser regime without the knowledge of the United States until 24 hours before the attack. The author, an award-winning *Time* correspondent, reveals how Eisenhower's showdown against Britain, France and Israel ultimately marked the end of Britain and France as

colonial giants and the beginning of Israel's repeated aggression against the Arabs. Our price, \$12.75.

William Quandt, *Saudi Arabia in the 1980's: Foreign Policy, Security, and Oil*, Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., 1981, 190 pp., \$8.95 (paperback).

Dr. Quandt, who has twice served on the staff of the National Security Council, argues that the foreign policy of Saudi Arabia in the 1980's will depend to a marked degree on actions taken by the United States regarding the Palestinian cause. Our price, \$7.50.

Livia Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, Association of Arab-American University Graduates, 1980, 68 pp., \$2.50 (paperback). Examines the 1953-57 diary of Moshe Sharett, founding member of Israel's Labor Party, his country's first foreign minister and its second prime minister. Our price, \$1.95.

Raymonda H. Tawil, *My Home, My Prison*, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 265 pp., \$12.95. Autobiography of a Palestinian woman whose description of life under Israeli occupation mirrors the changing moods on the West Bank. Our price, \$6.50.

Evan M. Wilson, *Decision on Palestine*, Hoover Press, 244 pp., \$14.95. Well-documented analysis of the six years leading up to the creation of Israel. Based on author's personal experience and on information only recently made available by the United Nations and governments involved. Our price, \$10.00.

Marion Woolfson, *Prophets In Babylon: Jews In The Arab World*, Faber & Faber, London, 1980, 292 pp., 14 pounds (\$38.00). Traces the story of the Jews through Babylon, Yemen, Spain, the Maghreb, and in the Ottoman era, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and Palestine. Author points out that while the Jews were sometimes misused or persecuted, more often they enjoyed a privileged status, respected by Moslem and Christian alike as "people of the book." In the concluding chapters Woolfson traces the growth of Zionism and its sometimes subversive consequences on Jews both inside and outside Israel. Our price, \$17.50.

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armed and supported *carte blanche* by the United States.

The author goes to the heart of criticism of "imposed" settlements by pointing out that "almost any conceivable settlement will be, in one way or another, and to one degree or another, imposed. The real issue is not whether the settlement will be imposed or not, but in what degree it will be imposed and by whom." Yet on the basis of American Middle East policy since President Eisenhower's roll-back of

Israeli forces from occupied Sinai in 1957, one is hard-pressed to make a case that there is *any* circumstance in which the American national interest, defined not only as separate from but even at times in opposition to the Israeli national interest, will be asserted by an American President or the Congress. *New York Times* columnist Anthony Lewis, commenting on initial American responses to Israel's dismembering of Lebanon, described Israeli attitudes toward American Middle East policy as

"indifference bordering on contempt." Indeed, what stands out sharply in the late June phase of Israel's invasion of Lebanon is what *New York Times* correspondent Thomas Friedman characterized as United States envoy Philip Habib's role to serve as a messenger for Israeli conditions.

There is no way to predict the outcome of the radically altered Middle East political map following recent events. Nor should one necessarily assume that American interests in the Arab, Muslim and Third Worlds will be victimized as a result. Recent history shows that the United States has been able to provide Israel strong economic and military support and still maintain ties with the Arabs. Nonetheless, as Dr. Tillman noted, the impression of American Middle East policy shared by most of the rest of the world is that Israeli claims on the United States have "preempted" all other American interests in the Middle East, leaving them dangerously and irresponsibly at risk.

John P. Richardson is President of the Center for U.S.-European Middle East Cooperation in Washington, D.C.

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