"The Impact of Terrorism on US Policy Toward Egypt 1993-2000"

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Abstract

This research that is entitled (The Impact of Terrorism on US Policy Toward Egypt 1993-2000) aims to shed light on the changes that occurred in the US policy towards Egypt during the study period, as a result of terrorist activities and operations carried out by Egyptian armed organizations and groups with an Islamic fundamentalist background or Extremism against American interests, whether in Egypt or in Egypt's regional neighborhood or on American soil during the era of the administrations of US President Bill Clinton and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, and monitoring the reactions that resulted from the most prominent of these violent activities of terrorist organizations by the United States of America or the Egyptian government.

The research consists of a preface and three parts. In the introduction wedealt briefly with the origins and the causes of the formation armed Islamic organizations in the 1970s, the extremist organizations that departed from them, and the role of the United States and Egypt in their emergence. While the second part dealt with the role of the United States and Egypt in the confrontation with these organizations and the policy of the two countries towards political Islam, while the third and last partmonopolized by the statement of the impact of the exceptionalhandover of Islamist prisoners by agents of the United States to Egypt to investigate with them, in the escalation of armed attacks targeting the United States and its interests.

Introduction

Fundamentalist Islam in the Middle East has its deep roots among hundreds of thousands of Egyptians, Palestinians, Jordanians and Syrians, at a time when the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia provided jobs for applicants from neighboring countries, including engineers, university professors, doctors and teachers, and the new army of educated foreign workers spread the religious fundamentalist ideas adopted in the Kingdom. Especially among the Pakistani military in the Saudi army⁽¹⁾.

In the mid-1960s, one of the reasons for the deterioration of Egyptian-American relations was President Gamal Abdel Nasser's belief that President Lyndon Johnson encouraged King Faisal bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud (1964-1975) to form an Islamic alliance aimed at isolating Egypt from its Arab surroundings⁽²⁾. This means that the United States, in the circumstances of its hostility to the Arab nationalism led by Abdel Nasser, believes that the policies of the Islamists serve American interests⁽³⁾.

The Islamic revolution in Iran, which succeeded in February 1979 in ousting the regime of Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi, an important Washington ally in the region, followed the hostage-taking incident at the US embassy in Tehran, an increasing concern about the future of American interests in the region to the extent that Carter administration official called: "It is not surprising that the Iranian experience has adapted to a large extent the American public opinion about the nature of fundamentalist Islam which is characterized by violence and hostility to America" ⁽⁴⁾.

Many fundamentalist Islamic organizations in Egypt and Saudi Arabia observed with great interest the success of the Iranian revolution, and discontent and dissatisfaction appeared early in the Kingdom, as a Salafist group led by Juhayman bin Muhammad al-Otaibi on the twentieth of November 1979, detained some prisoners in the Sacred House of God, and it failed All attempts to end the rebellion peacefully, and after confrontations that lasted for two weeks, the rebels were arrested, and sixty-three of the participants in the events were executed⁽⁵⁾.

In the end of 1979, specifically on the 27th of December, Soviet planes transported nearly ten thousand fighters through two hundred and fifteen flights, to announce a Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan. President Carter described the operation as being counterproductive and severely damaging to Afghanistan ⁽⁶⁾.

Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter's advisor for national security affairs, offered his estimates based on letting the Muslims fight the battle in Afghanistan in the name of "Islamic jihad" against "material atheism" - of Soviet communism - and more importantly, that the Arabs sponsor it because its burdens exceed the financial potential of the CIA. Obtaining approvals from the Security Committee of Foreign Affairs may reveal the secrecy of the operation, and this is what the United States does not want

This calls for the United States to start the battle to deplete the Soviet Union in Afghanistan with the jihad weapon, to adopt an Islamic party that will counter the work on behalf of the United States, supervise and finance the work, and receive instructions from the concerned American agencies regarding plans and timings.

Brzezinski arrived in Cairo on January 3, 1980 carrying a letter to Sadat from President Jimmy Carter requesting Egypt's participation in the "Islamic Jihad" against the Soviet Union, whose military forces invaded an Islamic country. Brzezinski cited some influences, including that Sadat's participation in jihad work gives him greater influence in the region vis-à-vis the Arab parties opposed to him in peace with Israel, such as Iraq, Libya and Syria. Some of them were produced by Egyptian ammunition factoriesCounselor Brzezinski concluded his clarifications to Sadat with the generous contracts generated

by the agreement to sell quantities of Egyptian Soviet-made weapons, some of which were produced by Egyptian factories for ammunition. (8).

After Egypt, Brzezinski went to Riyadh to find himself conveying a message also from Sadat, along with his original message from President Carter, as President Sadat authorized him to convey a message to the Saudi King and his defense minister, "that he is ready and prepared to work with them in a jihad action against atheism." Account opened in Geneva amounts to one billion dollars to support the Afghan jihad, and both the CIA and the Saudi General Intelligence Authority took over the process of overseeing the implementation ⁽⁹⁾, and the Arab mujahideen came from Egypt, Jordan and the Gulf to Pakistan, the rear base in preparation for pushing them into the confrontation to put pressure on the Soviets ⁽¹⁰⁾.

The spirit of rebellion and anger against the ruling regimes seemed to expand during the eighties to include large areas of the Middle East, as Sadat was assassinated on October 6, 1981 by a group of the Egyptian Jihad Organization, in addition to the guerrilla attacks against American positions in Lebanon in (1982 and 1983). Which deepened the concern of US officials about the expansion of "Islamic fundamentalism" towards the outside (11).

The battle of Afghanistan was an experiment that produced a new type of fundamentalist Muslim fighters who were trained, armed and entrenched in their beliefs to confront Soviet communism, and money was flowing without account, either from the United States or from its giant companies in the Middle East and its partners in the Gulf, as it was expected that Afghanistan is the first stage of the rush. The Soviet Union towards the Arabian Gulf as a prelude to controlling oil sources (12).

After the end of the Afghan war and the withdrawal of the Soviet Union in 1989, the Arab Afghans ⁽¹³⁾ returned to their homelands, including Egypt, and some of them resorted to participating in political violence against the ruling regimes, which caused some of these regimes to accuse the CIA of being appearing to these Islamists and leaving them threatening the ruling regimes. In their countries ⁽¹⁴⁾.

American politicians throughout the eighties did not feel that they needed to disclose a political position towards the forces of political Islam, mainly because of their preoccupation with containing Soviet communism, and this was paralleled with the existence of the only Iranian model, as although the United States did not view the Islamists until the end of the eighties around as representing A threat to the stability of the international system, but the matter changed after the collapse of the Soviet Union and global communism and the increasing emergence of Islamic movements in the Arab world at the same time that the United States began to present the issue of democratization as a global issue (15).

However, the Algerian crisis in January 1992 required a clear American response, as the Islamic party achieved a sweeping victory in the Algerian elections in December 1991, which sowed fear in the hearts of American officials, as the elections were held according to the French pattern that takes place over two rounds and allows for the winner in any constituency. Electoral votes for the entire electoral district ⁽¹⁶⁾. On the twelfth of January 1992, the military ruling overturned the election results and arrested members of the Inqatheparty, which plunged the country into a horrific civil war that extended throughout the 1990s and claimed the lives of thousands of Algerians ⁽¹⁷⁾.

The United States gave the green light to the army leaders, as the US State Department expressed its regret for suspending the electoral process, but did not criticize the coup process, but rather said that the military's seizure of power took place in accordance with Algerian law ⁽¹⁸⁾. This strengthened the conviction among the public opinion that the United States is not sincere in its claims regarding the establishment and strengthening of democracy in the Arab and Islamic world, as the United States considers achieving its interests in the region at the top of its priorities.

The United States bet on the army leaders because they are more in line with the Western secular value model than the Islamists, and this was confirmed by the speech of the US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Edward Djerejian regarding the Islamic phenomenon, which he delivered at the Meridian International Center in Washington on the fourth of June 1992, entitled "The United States and the Middle East is in a changing world", in which Gerejian emphasized that "the two main pillars of American foreign policy decades ago, namely the Arab-Israeli conflict and Gulf oil, added the end of the Cold War to these two pillars, a third pillar, which is the core values of American policy such as democracy, pluralism, popular participation and human rights." We reject extremism and terrorism "(19).

Jirjian sought to clarify in his speech that the states do not target the Islamic religion, and distinguish between moderate Islamic groups and extremist groups, and indicated that Iran and Sudan support extremist groups, and it seems that Jirjian's speech does not have any clear ability to distinguish between moderate Islamists and extremists (20).

Jirjian assumed that terrorism and Islamic extremism were caused by a lack of political, social and economic opportunities, and he underestimated the importance of other causes such as hatred of the West and others ⁽²¹⁾. The truth is that Muslims have no small number of US policy trends that incite hatred, not the first of which is the complete bias towards Israel, and the last of which will not be the brutal aggression against Iraq and the threat of Muslim countries that do not follow the American orbit.

First: The Impact of the Terrorist Attacks against US during Clinton Epoch

- The attack on world Trade center 1993

Terrorist attacks and violence against civilians spread to the American interior, as the World Trade Center in Manhattan in New York was exposed on the twenty-sixth of February 1993 to a car bomb explosion, killing six people and wounding more than a thousand people, and investigations revealed the involvement of Islamists from the Middle East , As the Federal Court in New York charged six people who were arrested on the fourth of March and convicted of imprisonment for (240) years ⁽²²⁾. President Clinton expressed his concern about the operation by saying, "I am pleased with the effectiveness of the law enforcement work, but I am concerned about the proof that our open society is vulnerable to terrorist attacks. The National Security Team has begun to devote more attention to terrorist networks and what we can do to protect ourselves and liberate the world's societies from them ⁽²³⁾.

The main suspect and mastermind of the World Trade Center bombing was the cleric Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman. Omar had fled Egypt after the assassination of Sadat to New York, and Khaled Muhammad al-Islambouli had carried out his attack on President Sadat after Sheikh Omar issued his fatwa in which Sadat's blood had been permissible ⁽²⁴⁾.

The background of Omar Abdel-Rahman, who was sentenced to life in prison for his role in the bombing of the World Trade Center, indicated that the success of President Mubarak's war against terrorism will result in more security for Americans.

Second: The Egyptian and American stance towards terrorism and political Islam

The World Trade Center bombing gave Egyptian intelligence services an opportunity to play a key role in the US campaign against Islamic extremism. Omar Suleiman was the head of Military Intelligence, was responsible for this file, and President Mubarak appointed him in 1993 as head of the General Intelligence Service ⁽²⁵⁾.

The work of the Egyptian General Intelligence Agency was similar to that of the CIA as a means of spying outside the country, except that under the administration of Omar Suleiman, it combined spying abroad and overseeing internal security, and by the end of 1993 the number of arrests and seizures during the Mubarak era exceeded their counterparts during the Sadat era. In this atmosphere of tension, Mubarak achieved a third electoral cycle by obtaining more than (96) percent of the votes (26).

In front of such increasing American concerns about armed Islamic organizations, the Clinton administration supported President Mubarak's regime in its suppression of these organizations, although this support contradicts its stated commitments to promoting democracy, after his previous warnings about the existence of an extremist Islamic fundamentalist network in the United States were confirmed (27). Martin Indyc, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs in the first Clinton administration, made it clear that the administration would focus on ensuring the flow of oil from the Middle East and achieving Israel's security and working to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict, while working to weaken Islamist militants (28).

Mubarak dealt with the extremist and moderate Islamic organizations as one case, as he was similar to his confrontation with the extremist fundamentalist organizations such as the jihad organizations and Islamic groups who have formed the main forces in acts of violence and terrorism since the 1980s, so he dealt with the moderate Islamic trend represented by the Muslim Brotherhood (29) which dealt with the regime according to the frameworks of the law. It has participated in the parliamentary elections since 1984 and has sought to support its presence by controlling some civil society organizations, and since the early 1990s in the manner of confrontation rather than the policy of tolerance that it has pursued with regard to it since the beginning of the eighties. This confrontation has taken multiple legal, security, and media forms, And political, and aimed at besieging the group's political role and ending its presence at the level of civil society organizations (30).

President Mubarak's relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood had deteriorated after the movement's refusal to ratify the extension of Mubarak's presidency for a fourth term in 1995, as well as the movement's unwillingness to condemn the increasing numbers of terrorist attacks against foreigners by terrorist groups ⁽³¹⁾.

During the African Summit in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa on the 25th of June 1995, President Hosni Mubarak was subjected to an attempt to assassinate him ⁽³²⁾, and three Sudanese belonging to the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood were accused, which made President Mubarak invoke

this to attack the Egyptian Brotherhood and bid farewell to dozens of Its leaders in prisons after the group's members were brought before military courts (33).

The leaders of the Islamic Group announced a unconditioned ceasefire from one side with the Egyptian authorities in July 1997, after a fierce campaign launched by Omar Suleiman against the group's strongholds and dens and the destiny of its members was either death or surrender. But one of the groups did not stick to the decisions of group leaders⁽³⁴⁾ and made a terrorist attack in In Luxor temple, more than sixty people were killed, including fifty-eight European tourists, including (31) Swiss, (8) Japanese, (4) Britons, (5) Germans, and other nationalities ⁽³⁵⁾.

Third: The processes of Extraordinary Handing Over and its Impact in Supporting Terrorism.

Clinton issued a presidential directive days before the attempt to assassinate Mubarak, identifying terrorism as a threat to US national security that warrants resisting it by all means. This presidential directive authorized the "extraordinary rendition" program, and the program includes the arrest and transfer of suspected terrorists to a third country without directing any formal accusations or respecting the rules of extradition of the accused, The program began with the delivery of leased aircraft to the United States and intelligence agentsIn order to arrest Islamic militants abroad. The aim was to arrest the Islamic elements from the street and transport them by air to the Arab despotic regimes that were pursuing them, such as Egypt, Syria, Algeria, and Jordan ..., so that Cairo would become a center for (extraordinary rendition) operations for the period from (1995-2000) ⁽³⁶⁾.

Ayman Al-Zawahiri, a prominent member of the Egyptian Jihad Organization and Osama bin Laden's deputy in the leadership of al-Qaeda ⁽³⁷⁾ later threatened the United States after the CIA handed over two Egyptians who were transferred from Albania to Egypt, and the Egyptian government secretly executed them in the summer of 1998, while three Islamists from the same cell were exposed. They were also transferred from Albania to torture, but they were not executed. Al-Zawahiri said in a statement published by the London-based Al-Hayat newspaper on August 6, 1998, "We are interested in informing the Americans briefly that their message has arrived and the numbers of the response that we hope they will read carefully, because we will write it, with God's help, in the language they understand." ⁽³⁸⁾

After the threat, and in the early hours of the morning of August 7, 1998, the US embassies in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, and the Tanzanian capital, Dar es Salaam, were subjected to bomb attacks within five minutes between the two explosions, killing (257) people, including (12) Americans, and wounding (500) Others, and preliminary evidence indicated the involvement of Osama bin Laden's network, which was called Al-Qaeda, in carrying out the two attacks ⁽³⁹⁾.

Despite the extreme secrecy imposed by the American and Kenyan investigators on the results of their efforts to uncover the circumstances of the bombings in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, the Daily Nation newspaper revealed that four people participated in the manufacture of a bomb weighing 800 kg in the "Hilltop" hotel, according to the confessions of the engineer. The Palestinian arrested in Nairobi, "Muhammad SiddiqOdeh" (40) are two Palestinians, an Egyptian and another Arab, and the three were killed in the accident. The Palestinian engineer left Nairobi for Pakistan on August 6, after completing the arrangements for the operation. The Washington Post also revealed that the perpetrators belonged to Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda network.

According to what was reported by the Pakistani intelligence, Odeh also revealed that Osama bin Laden is currently in control of five thousand hard-line Islamists from a number of Islamic countries (41).

And US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, after her return from Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, offered a deal to the Taliban under the provision of Washington's recognition of the movement in exchange for handing over bin Laden to the United States, but the movement refused and confirmed bin Laden's innocence of involvement in the two attacks against the United States embassies (42).

Clinton responded to the attacks by giving orders to his National Security Adviser Sandy Berger to carry out a retaliatory operation, as cruise missiles were fired at targets in Afghanistan suspected of being bin Laden bases, and a suspected secret chemical weapons complex in Sudan was fired upon by missiles from Ships in the Red Sea ⁽⁴³⁾. Without resorting to the United Nations or a Security Council authorization, in clear violation of the international organization and underestimating it ⁽⁴⁴⁾.

In August 1999, US intelligence agents, as part of the "extraordinary rendition" program, handed over to Egypt two brothers of Ayman al-Zawahiri, one of whom had nothing to do with the Jihad organization or any of its affiliated movements. Clinton's war with terrorism reached its bloody end on October 12, 2000, when A boat led by two militants attacked the destroyer USS Cole, which was anchored off the Yemeni coast, killed seventeen American sailors, and made a forty-foot gap in the destroyer's hull ⁽⁴⁵⁾.

American strategic planning officials have assessed that the Egyptian regime that repressed its president, Hosni Mubarak, in the same way as his predecessor, President Sadat, and with the help of its intelligence director Omar Suleiman, throughout the 1990s, had transformed the peaceful and armed opposition in his country for two decades into a tyrannical regime in essence liberal in its appearance by securing stability in the country this allows Egypt's geostrategic role to remain constant and important in the Pentagon's operations in the region through facilities at ports, air transit operations, and others (46).

With the expansion of the terrorist threat to the United States, President Mubarak's regime became a key partner in the war against terrorism and militant Islamic organizations, and the importance of the Egyptian side was identified in achieving close security cooperation with the US administration and defending basic American interests in the Middle East.

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