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السلامة في وقت الكفر ولا في وقت الظلمة

An un-Islamic government may last awhile, but tyranny cannot endure. - Hazret Ali

THE MUSLIM

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ATTENTION READERS

The Muslim's editorial page carries two articles in this issue examining the serious Gulf situation. Dr. Mubasher Hussain in his article discusses Pakistan's response. Mark A. Bruzonsky, a political consultant and journalist in Washington, D.C., USA who has been visiting Pakistan in the last two weeks, takes a critical look at "American military bullying" in the Gulf and urges an effective Third World response to it. - Editor.

Ronald Reagan's America may be preparing for something in the Middle East—and it's not the comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace the U.S. has been promising and promising gullible Arab regimes ever since 1967 and U.N. Security Council Resolution 242.

Though away from my usual haunts in the U.S. capital where one can often 'feel' the pulse of the ponderous American democracy as major foreign policy decisions are contemplated, in this case the advance signals of impending American intervention in this region reach out even to the sojourner.

There's Ronald Reagan's badgering of the Iranian government; there is Mrs. Thatcher consulting with Saudi royalty and announcing British back-up for the lonely Americans if RR's gunboats wreak vengeance on the Ayatollah under guise of keeping the unclosed Hormuz open; there's the still unexplained and most hastily arranged visit of Hosni Mubarak to Washington plus the unprecedented three-way lunch, adding King Hussein hosted by RR. And of course one can't but notice the American fleet movements in and near the Arabian Sea. Nor should one overlook this week's rather cryptic warning by Pakistani President Zia (fresh from a meeting with U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Kenneth Dam) about the likelihood of "outside intervention" in the region if the Iran-Iraq war heats up further.

Rather ominously, it seems a coalition of pro-American anti-Iranian Arab regimes are encouraging the U.S. to 'deter' Tehran from pushing further in its bid to topple Iraq's Saddam Hussein and extend the influence of the Iranian Revolution. And if the initial deterrence by threat is unsuccessful, the American public seems to be prepared through misleading references to rather remote threats to the Straits of Hormuz for a new assertion of American military bullying. The New Jersey's big guns seem to have wetted Ronald Reagan's lust for vain demonstrations of American macho.

'REDEPLOYMENT'

Still smarting from the Beirut 'redeployment' (read defeat) and the alleged Iranian involvement in deadly attacks on both the American Embassy and the American marines last year, the gun-slinging administration of RR has been awaiting its chance at revenge. Clearly, now being calculated back in Washington are the various potential political ramifications of various demonstrations of American military might on next November's grant elections.

Just as the Israelis invaded Lebanon some 20 months ago (with American blessings to be sure) on the transparently false assertion that Israel's ambassador in London had been gunned down by the PLO (when he had in fact been hit by Anti-PLO fanatics), so the U.S. seems preparing to flout world opinion (not to mention its own professed values) by direct military intervention in the Gulf region. Already we are being pre-

pared for the assertion that such a show of firepower is "Necessitated" by some vague references to even vaguer threats to world shipping through a crucial waterway Iran has the fortune (or misfortune) of bordering.

Such a world with "leaders" like Ronald Reagan in command is in need of new forms of international dialogue. In the past, the powerful have sought to deter the weak. Now the time has come for deterrence to become a two-way street. And those of us Americans unwilling to defer any longer to our trigger happy President's view of world affairs can best serve our country under today's conditions by suggesting to those in the countries of this region that they adopt for themselves a Third World form of the theory of deterrence.

In capsule form, deterrence for the Super Powers takes two basic forms.

First each of the Super Powers deters the other from direct attack against itself with the threat of "Massive retaliation." Moreover, each Super Power deters the other from using too much military force in areas where the forces of the two might clash. In the second sense,

popular aspirations rising daily among the peoples of this area, and the consequences for American interests — and potentially for world peace — if the U.S. should continue to allow itself to be militarily drawn into the region as the champion of one faction or another — The U.S. always, it seems chooses the unpopular minority causes.

It is Israel which has drawn the U.S. into Lebanon in an attempt to use American power to accomplish Israeli hegemony — resulting in the first use of massive American force against the Arab nationalists in recent times. Now, it seems, a coalition of weakly supported Arab kings and potentates are fearfully attempting to use American power to block the further rise of popular movements within their own peoples. Both Palestinian and Iranian nationalisms are the current victims not to mention the oppression of the Press and intellectuals in most Arab countries today coupled to the blatant use of money to create a generation of bureaucratic prostitutes willing to cater to the whims of those who hold the purse strings.

Third World deterrence should

By MARK A. BRUZONSKY

each Super Power deters the rest of the World's nations from taking actions which might cause either Super Power to lash out in opposition. Grenada and Afghanistan are two recent victims. Poland and Chile are other examples from the recent past.

Now, it seems, the U.S. having embarrassingly failed in Lebanon and at the urgings of weak, confused and scared Arab regimes, may be getting ready to try to teach revolutionary Iran one of these Super Power lessons that give the old theory of deterrence credibility.

Faced with these realities, the peoples of this region need assert a new form of deterrence of their own. And if done with calm determination, as well as with an appreciation for the positive, peaceful contributions that should continue to be made by the U.S. in this region (rather than by blind, unthinking, anti-Americanism), a Third World form of deterrence will ultimately benefit all.

THIRD WORLD

The Third World deterrence I have in mind would stem from the premise that isolated America is something of a plodding dinosaur (large head, small brain), when it comes to world affairs rather than an evil empire. It would take off from the premise that a combination of reasoned analysis and friendly persuasion (mixed with subtle yet clear warning when called for) will indeed cause the multiple institutions that comprise the American foreign policy process to reassess the historical results of allowing the Reagan Administration to pursue ever new forms of military adventurism and coercion.

What is urgently required is a reasoning process by which the Americans are 'educated' about the

in the first instance aim to explain to the Americans that political change is not necessarily bad, that the status quo need not always have an American imprimatur, that popularly supported movements need not be anti-American, and that constantly looking at complex regional issues through cold war lenses is terribly distorting of realities that need be appreciated.

This new Third World deterrence should make the U.S. aware that opposition to the nationalistic and progressive aspirations of the peoples of this region is a losing proposition for all concerned; that backing for weak and discredited authoritarian regimes can only lead to further self-perceptions of loss for the U.S. in this part of the world, and that attempts to assert American military coercion may achieve very short-lived success but will inevitably boomerange creating hatred for the U.S. and reluctant coeying up to the Soviet Union.

The power and influence of the United States can best be asserted — this new form of Third World deterrence would assert — if the U.S. will start supporting those very same values in this part of the world that it cherishes back home; Tolerance for diversity of opinion and political perspective; respect for the popular democratic process; belief in the progressive evolution of society; the goal of a fairer distribution of national income leaving room for entrepreneurial rewards but opposing exploitation.

Most importantly of all, the Americans should be repeatedly encouraged to appreciate that self-determination is not only inherent in their own political heritage, it is the organizing concept of contemporary international life. Opposition to self-determination — whether in the form of support for Israel's subjugation of the Palestinians,

attempts to undermine the Iranian Revolution, or support for unrepresentative governments — not only flies in the face of the American experiment itself but can only lead to lessening of American influence in this region. The Ottomans found this out in the last century, the British earlier this century, the Russians are experiencing this in Afghanistan and now it is the American turn.

NAIVETE

Some will smirk that it takes quite a naive to suggest that American institutions will respond to this kind of reasoned dialogue. They might even be proved correct, though I personally believe not. Whatever, before the decisions are irrevocably taken to escalate Third World deterrence into further terrorist and militarist confrontations, surely we all owe it to ourselves to attempt such a major effort.

To date, the press, research institutions, universities and strategic think-tanks in this part of the world have all only hesitantly attempted what I am terming "deterrence" "Third World Style". From my own recent visits to both Egypt and Pakistan, the current political/intellectual interaction with the U.S. is marginal, insubstantial, and conducted with little passion.

All this said, Third World deterrence needs to go beyond dialogue. It would be better to warn the U.S. of the likely results of its pursuit of a militarist course before the fact rather than watch the consequences unfold after the fact. Deterrence when properly carried out is a strategy to avoid undesired results — not to counter them.

And avoidance in this case necessitates making the U.S. aware that there are limits to the tolerance that can be shown if the U.S. continues on the course of confronting with arms and clandestine techniques necessary changes taking place in this region. Already there have been significant, unprecedented attacks on American institutions, military forces and individuals. The best way to avoid more tragedy is for those in this part of the world who are determined to bring about necessary changes to develop a reasoned and thoughtful strategy of their own for deterring the involvement of the U.S. against them. Until it is proved that such forms of deterrence are not workable, other more bloody and more dangerous forms of deteence are not justified.