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If Americans Truly Cared About Muslims, They Would Stop Killing Them by the Millions

By Glen Ford

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In the most dramatic expression of insider opposition to a sitting administration's policies in generations, over 1,000 U.S. State Department employees signed on to a memo protesting President Donald Trump's temporary ban on people from seven predominantly Muslim countries setting foot on U.S. soil. Another recent high point in dissent among the State Department's 18,000 worldwide employees occurred in June of last year, when 51 diplomats called for U.S. air strikes against the Syrian government of President Bashar al Assad.

Neither outburst of dissent was directed against the U.S. wars and economic sanctions that have killed and displaced millions of people in the affected countries: Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. Rather, the diplomatic "rebellion" of last summer sought to pressure the Obama administration to join with Hillary Clinton and her "Big Tent" full of war hawks to confront Russia in the skies over Syria, while the memo currently making the rounds of State Department employees claims to uphold "core American and constitutional values," preserve "good will towards Americans" and prevent "potential damage to the U.S. economy from the loss of revenue from foreign travelers and students."

In neither memo is there a word of support for world peace, nor a hint of respect for the national sovereignty of other peoples — which is probably appropriate, since these are not, and never have been, “core American and constitutional values.”

Ironically, the State Department “dissent channel” was established during one of those rare moments in U.S. history when “peace” was popular: 1971, when a defeated U.S. war machine was very reluctantly winding down support for its puppet regime in South Vietnam. Back then, lots of Americans, including denizens of the U.S. government, wanted to take credit for the “peace” that was on the verge of being won by the Vietnamese, at a cost of at least four million Southeast Asian dead. But, those days are long gone. Since 2001, war has been normalized in the U.S. — especially war against Muslims, which now ranks at the top of actual “core American values.” Indeed, so much American hatred is directed at Muslims that Democrats and establishment Republicans must struggle to keep the Russians in the “hate zone” of the American popular psyche. The two premiere, officially-sanctioned hatreds are, of course, inter-related, particularly since the Kremlin stands in the way of a U.S. blitzkrieg in Syria, wrecking Washington’s decades-long strategy to deploy Islamic jihadists as foot soldiers of U.S. empire.

The United States has always been a project of empire-building. George Washington called it a “nascent empire,” Thomas Jefferson bought the Louisiana Territory from France in pursuit of an “extensive empire,” and the real Alexander Hamilton, contrary to the Broadway version, considered the U.S. to be the “most interesting empire in the world.” The colonial outpost of two million white settlers (and half a million African slaves) severed ties with Britain in order to forge its own, limitless dominion, to rival the other white European empires of the world. Today, the U.S. is the Mother of All (Neo)Colonialists, under whose armored skirts are gathered all the aged, shriveled, junior imperialists of the previous era.

In order to reconcile the massive contradiction between America’s predatory nature and its mythical self-image, however, the mega-hyper-empire must masquerade as its opposite: a benevolent, “exceptional” and “indispensible” bulwark against global barbarism. Barbarians must, therefore, be invented and nurtured, as did the U.S. and the Saudis in 1980s Afghanistan with their creation of the world’s first international jihadist network, for subsequent deployment against the secular “barbarian” states of Libya and Syria.

In modern American bureaucratese, worrisome barbarian states are referred to as “countries or areas of concern” — the language used to designate the seven nations targeted under the Terrorist Travel Prevention Act of 2015 signed by President Obama. President Donald Trump used the existing legislation as the basis for his executive order banning travelers from those states, while specifically naming only Syria. Thus, the current abomination is a perfect example of the continuity of U.S. imperial policy in the region, and emphatically not something new under the sun (a sun that, as with old Britannia, never sets on U.S. empire).

The empire preserves itself, and strives relentlessly to expand, through force of arms and coercive economic sanctions backed up by the threat of annihilation. It kills people by the

millions, while allowing a tiny fraction of its victims to seek sanctuary within U.S. borders, based on their individual value to the empire.

Donald Trump's racist executive order directly affects about 20,000 people, according to the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees. President Obama killed an estimated 50,000 Libyans in 2011, although the U.S. officially does not admit it snuffed out the life of a single civilian. The First Black President is responsible for each of the half-million Syrians that have died since he launched his jihadist-based war against that country, the same year. Total casualties inflicted on the populations of the seven targeted nations since the U.S. backed Iraq in its 1980s war against Iran number at least four million — a bigger holocaust than the U.S. inflicted on Southeast Asia, two generations ago — when the U.S. State Department first established its “dissent channel.”

But, where is the peace movement? Instead of demanding a halt to the carnage that creates tidal waves of refugees, self-styled “progressives” join in the macabre ritual of demonizing the “countries of concern” that have been targeted for attack, a process that U.S. history has color-coded with racism and Islamophobia. These imperial citizens then congratulate themselves on being the world's one and only “exceptional” people, because they deign to accept the presence of a tiny portion of the populations the U.S. has mauled.

The rest of humanity, however, sees the real face of America — and there will be a reckoning.