

In A Bewitched State: Islamists Are Operating Under Bin Laden's Spell.



Sh. Sharif Ahmed having an earful from Sh. Hassan Dahir Aweys:

The question is: whose war is this?

Islamist-supporting-Somalis in the Diaspora seem to have been under a lasting bewitched state, (call it clan allegiances—something they couldn't shake off), and just now waking up to the news that their children are disappearing to join Al-Shabab war. A very large number of the Somali Diaspora maintained a long standing and seemingly compelling attraction to the Islamist's activities and operations around the world, particularly in their homeland, Somalia. Islamist sympathizers organize an immeasurable financial and political support for the success of Islamists even when they are still carrying out their heinous crimes of beheadings, unjust imprisonments, rape and violation of freedom, human rights abuses and subjugation of innocent people with “unknown faces”—that have been going on for years without a challenge(1). It has been imminently visible that the consequences of the war were incalculable, but the Islamist supporters thought Jihadism only involved the killing of foreigners, something tolerable in their ethical standards; assuming that the killings would be done fast, and the enemy names, faces, and their families would be unknown; however, always forgetting that the blood of war would be dripping from the fingers of any one who helped the killings of thousands of innocent unknown faces for years to come; and that a war has a prize to pay.

Today, the news is quite different; it is about known faces of young men from the Somali Diaspora who are being recruited by Islamists and Islamist sympathizers to become Jihadists. These young men are committing the same abhorring crimes their communities have long supported and approved of to be carried out against innocent “OTHER” people.

“Young men of Somali descent have been vanishing from Minnesota and other Midwestern states and heading for Somalian terrorist training camps run by Al Shabab, which means “the Youth” in Arabic. One of them has already carried out a suicide bombing in Africa, and others are believed to be forming terrorist cells to hit targets in Europe and the United States. A union with Al Qaeda makes that scenario even likelier” (2).

For the last twenty something years, the Somali Diaspora has contributed a great deal of unwavering support, including financial, to their clan warlords, to the warlord-turned-Islamists movements and Jihadists to gain power either from each other (the war within), to over through the weak Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and to defeat the UN-authorized peacekeeping foreign troops. All the while, however, the Islamists supporters have invited, endorsed, and urged the involvement of Al-Qaeda-linked radical foreign elements to their side of the war equation (3). They tolerated the death of thousands of young men, who died in vain during these-decades-long wars. That was acceptable so long this loss of unjustifiably enormous human lives did not involve their own children in the Diaspora. Thousands of peace activists, community leaders and civil servants were targeted and shot dead by the Islamists not because they did something wrong but because they spoke the truth or decided to help their country and their people understand that war was not the answer to their problems (4,5). Supporting such outrageous actions and unexamined behaviors had the moral equivalence of a disgraceful disregard for the absolute ethical quality and a logical reasoning of the war.

Those who passionately support the Islamist war seemed to have misjudged the complexity of “Jihadism” and its mechanism; and never thought that their own children would be brainwashed by the same Islamists and taken away. They have underestimated that the things they preach and practice at home, in social gatherings, in political conferences (6) and in warship places and Mosques would, at the end, influence the way their children view the world around them, including the war in Somalia. It was allowed the Islamists to impose harsh and extreme Islamic practices on the powerless, bring deprivation of human rights, practice illegal beheadings and stone killing or cause deformity, all in the name of either clan allegiance or for religious affiliation.

The physical contours of Somali wars are constantly changing like a shifting sand and it is never easy to engage a just war; there is, nonetheless, an ocean of mass of inconsistency and absence of limits and boundaries in their support to Islamist war that obliterates human factor. Never did they express or showed remorse, earnestness, honesty and legitimacy in their disregard for the loss of human lives—an enormous ethical failure. Even now some Islamist sympathizers are still in total denial albeit evidence that there is a link between the disappearance of some of these young boys in the Diaspora, their involvement in committed suicide bombings in London and Hargeisa and elsewhere; and the reported activity of religious zealous in the community carrying out the workings of Al-Qaeda indoctrination.

This colossal miscalculation of the out come of the war is either due to, on the part of the Diaspora, not closely examining their ethics towards war or underestimating how radical Islamists always engaged and recruited vulnerable young people, regardless where they found them. Credible reports after reports have shown that Al-Qaeda employs mechanism where they target young people who are generally poorly educated about their tradition and culture, lack strong foundation for their faith and beliefs, and socially misplaced in their respective communities all over the world. Equally appalling, is our willful blindness to these horrendous treatments committed in the name of Islamist and the relative quilt associate with such denial. Objectively viewed, our willingness to look the other way and give the Islamists the license to kill is perverse and cruel when we allow these criminals to get away with these crimes, while attacking or ridiculing any one who dare to write or talk about these injustices in public (7).

Majority of the Somali children for the last twenty some years have had their share of displacements both locally and abroad, where millions were subjected to harsh refugee

experiences, lack of schools, cultural shock, lack of community support, language barrier and loss of social and family nucleus, which ultimately creates vulnerability and gang participation and leads one to lose one's self confidence; a perfect prey for Al-Qaeda operations (8, 9). Islamist doctrine is to kill anyone who stood their way, and if you want to save your Somali children, do not support them. It is time to stand back and reevaluate our support for this war.

How long should we succumb to the allure of watching defenseless and faceless masses being forced to cultures and pervert religions they do not know nor understand its essence, where people cannot even go to the Mosque of their choice?. How long are we willing to watch Islamists vowing to impose a "Sharia Law" designed to repress political dissent, ban all sports, behead or publicly punish those with differing views, roll back all social progresses including women's education, forbid men and women to ride together in same cars, and condemn our sisters and mothers back into the Dark Ages—Al-Qaeda Style (10)?.

We, the Somalis, have yet to come to terms with the war crisis realistically, without wrapping up our selves with irrational emotions. We should rather explore a sense of our collective failure to protect our culture and heritage and show some common national interests. Somalis have yet to grasp that our children are fighting the wrong war-Not a Somali war. We are supporting an extremely dangerous war of Wahabi doctrine (Taliban war) that is no longer content without mass execution and destruction of culture and people's historical values and relevance. We have yet to acknowledge that our own historical way of life and traditional values have been adulterated and flooded by images of a dangerous foreign culture that are methodically well organized, technologically more advanced and materially well financed than our nomadic people can cope with. This ideological war promotes a doctrine that is antithetical to our own values and to what our people cherished as their own for generations. We are in deep identity crisis and many Somalis, including Nuruddin Farah, Bashir Goth, and others have often give us warnings of the foreign invasion on our language, history, religion and cultural , albeit of little success (11, 12, 13) to wake up the Somali people to the imminent danger lurking under our own shadows in disguise of religion.

Is this a Somali war? No.

The war our children are dying in thousands is not a Somali war. Rather it is an external war in which Al-Qaeda and its supporters invested in the destruction of our people. Global mercenaries using Islam as a shield have a strong foot on our own land, indoctrinating young minds through manipulation, emotional exploitation and logical deception, as often indoctrination mechanism is described. Therefore, the Islamists are operating in a besieged state where Al-Qaeda operatives control and give direct orders to our young people to carry out crimes. One clear supporting rational of my argument is the fact that every time the Somalis seem to have something resembling a symbolic government with a President that seems to challenge the zero-sum demands of the Islamists, there shows up a threatening message from Tora Bora asking for the elimination of the elected President. In recent videotape surfaced on the Internet, allegedly released by none other Mr. Osama himself, he is asking his Islamist loyalist to over through President Sh. Shariif (14). In support of carrying out this threat, a local extremist faction of the Eritrea –based Sh. Awey's Islamist, has released a statement welcoming such a threat and legitimizing its merit (15). Now President Sh. Shariif, who has even bent backwards to the Islamist pressure of inclusiveness and the illegal imposition of Sharia law, is not safe. He is asking for more foreign peacekeeping forces to protect his

government; sounds familiar?-we are back to square one (16). This will lead to another escalation of yet fresh wars.

Not surprising, Al-Qaeda has kept its eye on the Somalia war because they have immensely invested in it, both materials and manpower, and they are fighting their war on our soil. According to many reports, Osama Bin Laden has invested millions of dollars in this war where he employed many foreign Islamists and local radical Jihadists to carry on this war, his war, his Al-Qaeda doctrine (17, 18).

Let us see who else has benefited from this war or has a stake in it. Other groups who have benefited from this war, besides Al-Qaeda, include mostly the underclass and uneducated young men, who have no reason to welcome peace. Mostly misfits in all social relationships and with limited skills, they are often insecure and become easy targets for indoctrination-in search of identity. You find them physically wrapping an armor of untraditional dresses around their bodies claiming the attainment of new enlightenment, a new true faith overnight; mistakenly perceiving that this new identity would grant them recognition-a transform of identity, commandship and power. That is what they are fighting for even when they are committing mass murder, rape, and harsh punishment of their own people. Few in this category are true believers of the Jihad and their new form of religion. The rest are just followers. There are also those who could have been productive citizens but their education and employment have been interrupted by these wars. Therefore, joining the Islamist war is a way of survival if not coerced to join the Jihad, lest he/she lost their families if one refused to join. They are not fighting a Somali war either. Yet others are opportunistic entrepreneurs, sometimes with criminal background or yesterday warlords, who are very clever in their ways of cashing in on the situation by sensing that there is a power vacuum and they exploit a lucrative market there and see no reason to welcome peace. They are not fighting a Somali war.

Generally speaking, those are the choices all Somalis have to decide whom to support or which group one wants their child to join in this war. Clutching AK-47, rocket-propelled hand grenades or deadly armor of automatic rifles today, are young Somali children that we thought were far removed from the horror of war. They are being recruited and lured back into a war zone that their families thought they have fortunately escaped years ago (19, 20). There is no one compelling reason, in my judgment, as to why our young people should die defending this imported Islamist jihad, especially when these young men and women live outside of Somalia and away from the immediate danger of the war, given opportunity in different countries of the world, where they are free to pursue a productive life.

As young people in my generation, goals were different and we were asked to commit to our obligations in national duties. We responded to a national call for National Services after high school and took part of the campaign of eradicating illiteracy where we taught the Somali language every village we could possible reach. We taught school children in remote villages and towns, who otherwise could not have teachers. We took part in the resettlement initiatives of draught victims to be relocated to Dujuma and Sablaale, where we literally held in our own hands thousands of malnourished children, women and men, and fed them everyday until they were able to stand up and walk again. These were noble ways to help build a strong nation who cares about her people and we volunteered to all of them. We were rewarded with free education to go to universities, join the army or other government agencies to build a national

wealth. Yes, we had a nation to protect and these were our wars to fight, which I am confident that we did it with dignity and honor. That was the yesterday many young people of today will never know.

That was Our Somalia of Yesteryears.



Somali nomad girls: [Somali](#):From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
Barack in Somali dress



Somali Beauty in peace times



Somalia soccer Team



Mogadishu Yesteryears

This is Today's Somalia



Today's Somali women in Mogadishu



[Photo of Mogadishu today: Click here-
Portrait of a Failed State](#)

Today's Somali Soccer Players

Today, playing soccer in Mogadishu is a crime.

We never had to choose between defending our country, our people and heritage and fighting an Islamist war that rewards one to rape their sisters and mothers, destroy their heritage and to behead his own people for no reason. They are not fighting my war.

Our unwillingness today to transcend our differences, perhaps, is our incapacity to accept the reality of the war, unyielding compromise on our respective positions and/or maybe due to our intoxication to the war; where we failed to transform our individual views into a national interest. The questions for the Somalis are simple nonetheless: should we remain content with whatever the all-or-nothing-doctrine of the Islamists decided for us? Should we continue the demagogue of transferring the responsibility of ending this war to the International community and foreign agents and keep blaming them for the war? Or should we save our children by going back to our roots and regaining back the dignity that our people deserve? These are the questions for debate. This is the issue and this should be our defined moments to change the course of this war. That is our war.

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