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THE AMERICAN CHRISTIAN RIGHT AND GEORGE W. BUSH'S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS SUDAN

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Abstract

The paper explores the role and activities of the American Christian Right in pursuing its interest in Sudan during the George W. Bush administration (2001-2009). The campaign for global religious freedom and subsequently the introduction of the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA) in 1998 has stimulated the Christian Right movement to become more focused on broader US foreign policy especially international humanitarian issues in Sudan. Consequently, the Christian Right was seen to successfully raise the awareness of human rights abuses and the humanitarian crisis in Sudan, thus it contributed significantly to the development of US's global humanitarianism agenda. The issues, such as of the persecution of Sudanese Christians and animists in former Southern Sudan and the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, became important aspects of the Christian Right's engagement on global humanitarian issues. The paper reveals the aspects of the Christian Right international humanitarian engagement in Sudan and it capability to exert its influence in US foreign policy towards Sudan.

Keywords: Christian Right, Evangelicals, George W. Bush's administration, Humanitarian engagement, US foreign policy, Sudan.

Özet

Bu makale, Amerika Hristiyan Sağ'ının George W. Bush yönetimi (2001-2009) boyunca, Sudan'da kovaladığı çıkarların rolü ve faaliyetlerini konu almaktadır. Küresel dini reform kampanyasını takiben 1998'de tanıtılan Uluslararası Dini Özgürlük Hareketi (IRFA), Hristiyan Sağ

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hareketinin ABD'nin Sudan'da izlediği uluslararası insani konularda yürüttüğü dış politikaya daha kapsamlı odaklanmasını sağladı. Sonuç olarak, Hristiyan Sağ Hareketi Sudan'daki insan hakları ihlalleri ve insani krizler konusunda farkındalığının artmasında başarılı oldu, böylelikle ABD'nin küresel insani gündeminin geliştirilmesine önemli katkı sağladı. Sudanlı Hristiyanların gördüğü zulüm ve Eski Güney Sudan'daki animistler, Darfur'daki insani krizler gibi konular Hristiyan Sağ'ın küresel insani konulara ilişkin önemli sorumlulukları haline geldi. Bu makale, Hristiyan Sağ'ın Sudan'daki uluslararası insani sorumluluğu ve ABD'nin Sudan'a yönelik dış politikasını etkilemedeki kapasitesini ortaya koyar.

Anahtar kelimeler: Hristiyan sağ, Evanjelistler, George W. Bush yönetimi, insani sorumluluk, ABD dış politikası, Sudan.

Introduction

Historically, the traditional goal of the American Christian Right movement (hereinafter 'the Christian Right') was to transform the American public policy to become more socially and culturally conservative, based on Judeo–Christian traditional values. Thus, the movement centred its activism on social conservative issues such as pro-family, abortion, gay marriage, feminism, prayer at school and home schooling. As a result, the active role of the Christian Right, in contributing to the decision making process, especially in influencing and shaping number of social issues policies in the US, is highly recognized since the 1980s (Green et al., 2003). However, in the early 21st century we have witnessed the Christian Right widening its focus of activism from social conservative issues to foreign policy issues of the United States. Moreover, the Christian Right movement has widened its activism by articulating its religious vision for American foreign policy (Martin, 1999).

The campaign for global religious freedom and subsequently the introduction of the International Religious Freedom Act (hereinafter 'IRFA') [1] in 1998 was the main factor that stimulated the Christian Right to become more focused on broader US foreign policy especially international humanitarian issues in Sudan. Consequently, the Christian Right was seen to successfully raise the awareness of human rights abuses and the humanitarian crisis in Sudan. The issues, such as of the persecution of Sudanese Christians and animists in Southern Sudan and the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, became important aspects of the Christian Right's engagement on global humanitarian issues. The paper explores historical background of the Christian Right involvement in Sudan and examines the role and activities of the Christian Right in pursuing it interest in Sudan Finally, the paper shows the capabilities and limits of the Christian Right in influencing US foreign policy towards Sudan during the George W. Bush administration.

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[1]   Generally, the purpose of the IRFA is "[t]o condemn violations of religious freedom, and to promote, and to assist other governments in the promotion of, the fundamental right to freedom of religion". The Act which specifically mentioned its linkage with U.S. foreign policy has justified its existence as a part of U.S concern and responsibility in promoting international human rights agenda. It has created the Office of International Religious Freedom, a department under the auspices of State Department that carries American mission of promoting religious freedom globally. In addition, the office is responsible in monitoring global religious persecution and discrimination and would recommend and implement policies that are in line with the objectives of the Act.

Who is the Christian Right?

There are considerable difficulties in describing and defining the term 'Christian Right', as many scholars have tried to define the terminology within their own understanding and perspectives. In other word, there were no single definition had been achieved to describe the Christian Right. Durham (2000:66) highlights that most of researchers of the Christian Right have often defined the Christian Right as a movement which is "seeking to impose its religious convictions on America and to replace a secular state with an evangelical authoritarianism." Some researchers have given the Christian Right with a negative connotation and description. In addition, there is also a claim that the Christian Right is primarily concerned to implement its zealous literal interpretation of the Bible i.e. law and policy and has an agenda to establish a theocratic government in the United States (Philips, 2005; Durham, 2000).

However, in the academic discussions, the definition of the Christian Right is mostly developed within the context of either as a social conservative or political conservative. For instance, Shields (2007) defined the Christian Right as a movement of theologically orthodox Christian especially evangelicals that has been mobilized around conservative social causes. Green et al. (1996: 1-2) suggested a similar view by describing the Christian Right as a "social movement dedicated to restoring 'traditional values' in public policy" which has focused its efforts on mobilizing religious conservatives, especially sectarian groups among evangelical Protestants. Butler (2006: 12) suggested that the term 'Christian Right' ". . . refers to the organizations and leaders that mobilize key constituencies to a social conservative social agenda motivated by religious values."

The Christian Right and George W. Bush's Foreign Policy

Many American foreign policy analysts and researchers contend that the Christian Right also had some influence in Bush's foreign policy making (Durham, 2004; Martin, 1999; Oldfield, 2004; Boyer, 2005). Lee Marsden (2008) suggests that the Christian Right was able to exert its influence on Bush's foreign policy in various aspects, such as the administration's policies towards Israel, human rights, humanitarian assistance and environmental issues. A growing number of foreign policy analysts have connected the emerging 'Bush Doctrine' in American foreign policy to the influence of Christian Right. Berlet and Nikhail (2003) argue that the US invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan was influenced by the Christian Right's apocalyptic thinking and interpretations drawn from the Book of Revelation in the Bible. A similar work by Kevin Phillips (2005) argues that the relationship between Bush and the rise of the Christian Right is very strong and believes this fundamentalist group held a paramount position in the Bush administration and policy making. In addition, Madeleine Albright (2006: 4-5) notes that George W. Bush and American foreign policy were deemed to have been influenced by the religious messianic beliefs of the Christian Right. According to her: "Within the United States, there are those who see the president [George W. Bush] as a radical presiding over a foreign policy that is, in the words of one commentator, 'more than pre-emptive, it is theologically presumptuous; not only unilateral, but dangerously messianic; not just arrogant, but rather bordering on the idolatrous and blasphemous." Another researcher, Duane Oldfield (2004: 20), believes that the administration of George W. Bush was very much in line with the Christian Right's international agenda. He states that:

> "The administration of George W. Bush is pursuing a unilateralist foreign policy on issues ranging from the Iraq War to global warming to the International Criminal Court is obvious to observers at home and abroad. Also clear is the fact that the Bush policy, at least in its broad outline, is very much in keeping with the preferences of the Christian Right … the President, himself a born-again Christian, does not hesitate to use a moralistic, implicitly religious language in defence [of] policies."

The rise of the Christian Right in American politics can be derived from the facts of two presidential elections. In the 2000 election, George W. Bush received 68 per cent of white evangelicals' votes and in 2004, it increased by 10 per cent. The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life reported (Pew Research Centre, 2008): "The 2004 exit poll showed that a whopping 78 percent of white evangelicals voted for President Bush and that they comprised 23 percent of the overall electorate, making them by far the single most potent voting bloc in the electorate." Due to the results, Russell Mead argues that the Christian Right was able to increase its presentation in both houses of Congress. In addition, he suggests that more than 25 per cent of representatives in both houses either claimed to be evangelicals or associated with the evangelicals (Marsden, 2008: 34).

As a result, Bush was seen to develop a closer relationship with the Christian Right and his administration was considered as one of the fertile grounds for the Christian Right movement. For the Christian Right, Bush was its man in the White House. According to Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW), a watchdog group based in Washington DC, some influential Christian Right leaders were amongst the most regular visitors to the White House during the Bush tenure. In a press release in September 2009, CREW reveals that James Dobson of Focus on the Family visited the White House 24 times from April 2001 to June 2006, and ten of those visits were to meet the president. The executive director of the Traditional Values Coalition, Andrea Sheldon Lafferty, visited 50 times from February 2001 to March 2008 and six of those visits were with President Bush. Meanwhile, between May 2001 and August 2006, Wendy Wright, the president of Concerned Women for America, visited the White House 43 times and four of the visits were to President Bush. Jerry Falwell, a renowned Christian Right leader visited White House eight times from May 2001 and September 2004 and, of those visits, he met Bush three times. Tony Perkins, the president of the Family Research Council, made 14 visits to the White House from February 2001 to September 2006 and met President Bush twice. Paul Weyrich, one of the founders of the Christian Right movement, visited the White House 17 times, including six visits to President Bush, between May 2001 and July 2005. Based on these records (Americans United for Separation of Church and State, 2009), CREW concludes that "leading conservative Christian leaders may have led a significant voice in President Bush's administration, and many seem to have had the ear of the president himself."

Mapping the Involvement of the Christian Right in Sudan

The involvement of American evangelical and conservative Christian organizations in Sudan is not a recent phenomenon. In the early stages, their involvement in Sudan was largely because of humanitarian issues and proselytizing activities. The Sudanese civil war and famine attracted many Christian organizations and humanitarian organizations to go to Sudan. They provided support such as the construction of clinics and schools, medicine and food

to Sudanese people, especially in Former Southern Sudan. For instance, Samaritan's Purse, a conservative evangelical relief organization led by Franklin Graham, established its relief networks including running its own hospital in Former Southern Sudan many years ago and its hospital has in fact experienced several aerial attacks by the Sudanese army (In addition to the practical aid given, the evangelicals also showed tremendous interest in proselytizing to the Sudanese people especially in Former Southern Sudan. Due to these activities, the churches in Sudan have grown drastically and it has been reported Sudan was the fastest-growing church in the world (Huliaras, 2006). There is also an argument that suggests that in the early 1990s, the focus of conservative Christians changed from humanitarian relief to the issues of religious freedom under the banners such as the "suffering church" and the "persecution of Christians".

Gradually, conservative Christian and evangelical organizations, became major players in placing Sudan as one of the priorities for US foreign policy in Africa and continuously put pressure on the American government to intervene in Sudan (Muindi, 2001). John Danforth, a former US special envoy for Sudan's peace process in 2001 agrees that Sudan is *"a very, very high priority"* for US foreign policy. He argues that, besides factors such as the news coverage on Sudan and the crisis in Sudan, the interests of the conservative Christians on the issue of religious freedom in Sudan was also part of the reason why the US has given special attention to Sudan (Huliaras, 2006: 717). Similarly, Asteris Huliaras (2006: 723) contends that the Christian Right's contribution to Bush's foreign policy toward Sudan was "real, deeper and consistent". He suggests that "never before so many religious activists campaigned so consistently on a single issue, and probably never before were religious activists so successful in persuading a president to pursue such a policy of "constructive engagement". Evangelicals played a significant role in placing Sudan on the U.S. foreign policy agenda".

In addition, Christian Right leaders wrote and spoke frequently on the crisis in Sudan in its media network – magazines, newspapers and websites covered the Sudanese stories in more detail and more often compared to the conventional media. As early as 1997, Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcast Network (CBN), for example, continuously reported on the anti-Christian situation in Former Southern Sudan and called it a "plight", urging the audience to give special attention to their fellow persecuted Christians in that area (Phares, 1998). In addition, some of the Christian Right leaders were invited to testify before Congress; for instance, in 2000, Franklin Graham was called to testify before the Senate Foreign Relation Committee regarding the human rights and humanitarian crisis in Sudan. In the hearing, Graham said the killing events in the former Southern Sudan were a present day "holocaust" and suggested the US government to impose appropriate sanctions and intervene into the crisis militarily (Gerhardt, 2008).

From IRFA to the Sudan Peace Act

Since 1999, the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) has consistently listed Sudan under the category of "Countries of Particular Concern" (CPC). Sudan's human rights abuses became more obvious in the early 21st century. The USCIRF 2001 report, for instance, declared Sudan to be "the world's most violent abused of the right to freedom of religion and belief". And in its 2002 report, USCIRF stated the religious persecution in Sudan was "intertwined with ... deliberate denial of humanitarian assistance, abduction of women

and children into conditions of slavery, and the forcible displacement of populations from oil-producing areas" (USCIRF, 2002: 4–5) Both reports then urged the US government to become involved in Former Southern Sudan under the banner of humanitarian intervention. There is a suggestion that the implementation of IRFA by the State Department, particularly in Sudan, had "a slightly Christian bias". It claims that the crisis garnered attention from USCIRF and the State Department largely because the victims being killed in the crisis were mainly Christians. It thus gained attention from the conservative Christian organizations who suggested the US administration should intervene in Sudan (Fore, 2001). As Steve Hirsch argues, "The war in Sudan is, in part, a religious one. That helps explain why conservative Christian groups were among the first to call for stronger U.S. action" (Hirsch, 2001: 1642).

The possibility of the Christian Right lobbying on the US administration on Sudanese issues was also increased due to their collaborations and alliances with non-evangelical organizations, particularly Jewish organizations, humanitarian groups and African- American activists. In 1995, Michael Horowitz, Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute, published an article called *New Intolerance between the Crescent and the Cross* in the Wall Street Journal. He claimed that "Christians are the Jews of the 21st century" and the "victims of choice of thug regimes" and alleged that Christians have been persecuted in Africa and the Middle East. He also mentioned specifically "the victims of imprisonment, beating, torture and saddling into slavery of thousands of Christians in Sudan by the radical Islamic regime." He then suggested the US administration should intervene politically (Huliaras, 2006: 713). This initiative triggered Jewish organizations such the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Anti-Defamation League to join the Christian Right campaign for religious freedom in Sudan. African-American activists also showed an interest in Sudan and saw the alliances with other lobbies were an opportunity for them to inject their influence in the US administration. Consequently, groups like the National Black Leadership Committee and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) collaborated with other lobbies to establish a strong coalition political force against human rights and humanitarian rights abuses in Sudan.

As a result, from 1999 to 2002, conservative Christian groups such as the Family Research Council (FRC), human rights activists such as Michael Horowitz[2] and the Congressional Black Caucus formed an informal coalition to lobby Congress to give more attention to the crisis in the former Southern Sudan. FRC was one the main Christian Right organizations that worked together with other international religious freedom advocacy groups. In 1998, FRC's senior fellow, William Saunders, headed an FRC-sponsored trip to Sudan to document the human rights abuses in Sudan, particularly on the issue of the persecution of Christians in the former Southern Sudan. In 2000, Saunders reportedly went to Sudan once again as an official for FRC to extend his investigation into religious persecution (Chrismar, 2001).

One of the coalition's demands was to impose US capital market sanctions on any American oil companies investing in Sudan under the justification that it contributes to the human rights abuses in the former Southern Sudan. This grassroots divestment campaign was drawn mainly on the issues of religious persecution and slavery in Sudan. In fact, from 1998, USCIRF appealed to the Clinton administration to include capital markets in the sanctions to ensure

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[2]   Michael Horowitz is a former advisor to President Reagan. In April 2001, he and other human rights activists chained themselves to the Sudanese Embassy in Washington DC.

the money raised in US markets was not diverted to Sudan, fearing it would be used to fund the human rights abuses. In June 2001, the House of Representatives voted in favour of the Commission's suggestion to support the Sudan Peace Act bill, with 422 for and 22 opposed (Sudan Peace Act H.R. 2052, 2001). The aim of the Act was to force the Sudanese government to engage in a peace agreement with Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) of the former Southern Sudan. According to Ed Royce (R-CA), chairman for the Africa Subcommittee, the bill requires companies that intend to raise capital in the US for their operations in Sudan to disclose the nature of those operations. The objective of the disclosure is to ensure the operations will not have any relationship with human rights abuses and religious freedom violation taking place in Sudan (Chrismar, 2001).

In addition, the bill allows the president to use the International Emergency Economic Powers Act to "prohibit any entity engaged in development of the oil and gas sector in Sudan from raising capital in the United States or from trading its securities (or depository receipts with respect to its securities) in any capital market in the United States" (Sudan Peace Act H.R. 2052, 2001). As with the 1997 Executive Order that barred US companies from doing business in Sudan, the Act actually targeted foreign companies, specifically Talisman Energy Inc., a Canadian oil company, Lundin AB, a Swedish oil company, and China National Petroleum Company that were doing oil and gas exploration in Sudan, but at the same time were also investing in business in the US (Rome, 2003). The proposed bill arguably signified a victory for conservative Christian groups involved in lobbying for that kind of sanction since the introduction of IRFA. In the case of FRC, immediately after the bill was passed in the House, William Saunders of FRC made a statement that FRC and Christians could assist to move the bill along. He was reported as saying: "For more than 10 years, the government of Sudan has waged a cruel war against its own citizens, a war that resulted in the greatest humanitarian and human rights catastrophe in the world ... Now is the time to take action and contact Congress to pass the Sudan Peace Act" (Chrismar, 2001).

However, the Senate amended the Sudan Peace Act and introduced a new section (S. 180) that excluded both the capital market sanctions and the disclosure requirements. Arguably, the amendment was made due to some pressure from business lobbies and the White House itself disfavouring the contents of the Act over concerns that the capital market sanction would create a "boomerang effect" for the US economy (*Financial Times*, 2001). The International Trade Reporter in its comment stated that "A broad coalition, ranging from the Christian Right to the Congressional Black Caucus, back the capital market sanctions ... But business groups believe the sanctions provisions will set a new precedent for using access to US capital market to enforce a variety of political objectives" (*International Trade Reporter*, 2002). In addition, some traditional human rights organizations such as the Human Rights Watch and the Amnesty International did not support the campaign. The State Department spokesman, Richard Boucher, argued that consideration of the imposed economic sanctions in the Sudan Peace Act "would undermine our financial market competitiveness and end up impeding the free flow of capital worldwide" (Tamm, 2004: 699). Hufbauer and Oegg (2002), two senior fellows at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, argue that if the sanction was implemented, it would pose long-term harm to the US economy.

Finally, in October 2002, with a 359-8 vote in the House of Representatives and by unanimous consent in the Senate, the Congress passed a new "Sudan Peace Act" that content of which had with no provision for capital market sanctions. Among the main Congressional sponsors of the Sudan Peace Act were Senator Sam Brownback (R-KS), Congressmen Frank Wolf (R-VA), Donald Payne (R-NJ), Tom Tancredo (R-CO) and Eleanor Holmes-Norton (D-DC). In the same month, President Bush signed H.R. 5531, the "Sudan Peace Act" into law, which authorized the president discretion to give non-lethal aid up to $300 million over three years "for assistance to areas outside [Sudanese] government control" (Sudan Peace Act, 2001). Though the campaign and lobby for divestment in Sudan did not succeed, the role of the Christian Right was important in ending the decades of war in the former Southern Sudan. The movement was considered to have played a significant role in pushing the Bush administration to take a strong initiative to bring both parties, the SPLA and the Sudanese government, together to sign the peace pact (Gerhadt, 2008). Allen D. Hertzke, for example, claims that it was because of the Christian Right and IRFA that the Bush administration passed the Sudan Peace Act in 2002 (Hertzke, 2006). The passage of the Sudan Peace Act 2002 evoked an angry response from the Khartoum administration who called the legislation "a breach of Sudan's sovereignty" and the Sudanese Charge d'Affaires in Washington DC, Harun Khidir, blamed mainly the Christian Right for pushing the Act through Congress (http://www.csi-int.org, 2010). Despite that, the introduction of the 2002 Sudan Peace Act was a key turning point that led both parties to sign "The Comprehensive Peace Agreement" in 2005, consequently ending the decades of wars between the SPLA and the Sudanese government. The next section discusses the involvement of the Christian Right in globalizing the humanitarian crisis in Darfur.

The Christian Right Humanitarian Engagement in Darfur

Generally, there is no visible connection between the conflicts in the former Southern Sudan and the Darfur crisis, except for the fact that both crises were brought to the attention of Bush administration by the Christian Right movement who framed both issues in the light of human rights and humanitarian abuses. Since 2002, the Darfur humanitarian crisis has increasingly gained international attention. As a matter of fact, Darfur hosts the largest USAID humanitarian relief operation in Africa and one of the largest USAID humanitarian assistance programmes in the world. In 2008, nearly 13,000 Americans were working as humanitarian workers in Sudan and the majority of them were serving in Darfur (Williamson, 2008).

The Christian Right's interest in Darfur became obvious when it allied itself with some Jewish organizations to initiate the Save Darfur movement, focusing on the humanitarian abuses in Darfur in 2004. The Save Darfur movement marked a new development in the Christian Right's international engagement as the majority of victims in Darfur are Muslims. Interestingly, within a few months Save Darfur became a well publicised movement and an influential organization in Washington DC. This begs the question, why did the Save Darfur movement successfully gain substantial attention from the US administration and why has Darfur, a strategically unimportant region in Africa, become a focal point for American foreign policy? Describing the Christian Right activists as "the true vanguard", Arlene Getz gave strong credit to the Christian Right in lead the Save Darfur movement in the United States (Getz, 2007). Similarly, according to Hamilton and Hazlett, the Christian Right was the true

leader in elevating the Darfur crisis to the US administration as well as creating awareness within the American public.

The 2004 US presidential election is part of the reasons why the Darfur issue cannot be ignored by the US administration. David Lanz (2009) argues that the timing of the Darfur advocacy campaign that took place near the 2004 presidential election was one of the main factors that could explain why the issue in Darfur gained considerable attention from the Bush administration. As generally known that the Christian Right grass roots votes significantly contributed to the victory of George W. Bush in his first presidential election and the Save Darfur movement was led by the Christian Right; thus to totally ignore the advocacy would have a disastrous impact on Bush's second term campaign. La Franchi (2006) in his writing in the Christian Science Monitor magazine suggests that the special attention the Bush administration paid to the Darfur crisis was "certainly cheered not just by a coterie of evangelical advisers, but also the sizable Christian Right constituency".

The second factor is that the Christian Right's experiences in highlighting human rights issues in the former Southern Sudan and its strong leadership quality were able to attract diverse organizations to join the cause. The movement successfully gathered many different organizations, including Christian organizations, Jewish organizations, human rights advocacy groups, university students and celebrities. The coalition of activists in the Save Darfur movement, which presented itself as "an alliance of over 130 diverse faith-based, humanitarian, and human rights organizations" later on probably became one of the largest international social movements since anti-apartheid (Lanz, 2009) or the anti-Vietnam War movement in the United States (Mamdani, 2009). David Lanz (2009: 669) asserts that the Save Darfur movement was "the largest international social movement ... that had an important impact in shaping the international response to the Darfur conflict". Consequently, this coalition for a single focus issue – Darfur – was able to maximize its impact not only to increase American public awareness but also to influence the US administration. Chester A. Crocker, former Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs in the Reagan administration states that: "The base [Christian Right] is speaking up on the question of Sudan ... this will add to existing pressures for the [Bush] administration to do what it can to, if necessary, use a two-by-four to gain the attention of Khartoum's authorities" (Cooperman, 2004).

The Christian Right, as a key force in the Save Darfur coalition, was the first to characterize the crisis in Darfur as "genocide" as early as 2003 (Stone, 2006). By projecting the crisis as "genocide", the Christian Right and its allies successfully placed the Darfur crisis as an important issue that needed urgent attention from the US administration. According to Alex de Waal (2007: 32-33), the Save Darfur movement "represents an important moral awakening in North America with respect to human suffering on the other side of the world. Without the label "genocide", it is unlikely that the Darfur movement would have gained such vigour and mass support".

In April 2004, Frank Wolf (R-VA), the same congressman that introduced the Wolf-Specter Bill on international religious freedom in 1997, was the first American politician that labelled the humanitarian crisis in Darfur as "genocide". Within a few months, the term "genocide" was used to describe the level of atrocities in Darfur. It thus attracted legislators from both parties, Republicans and Democrats, to show their support for the Save Darfur movement. On 25 June 2004, 52 Senators from both the Republican and Democrat parties sent a letter to Colin Powell, the Secretary of State, and urged him to increase American humanitarian

assistance to Darfur. In the letter, they also propose that the US administration should impose economic sanctions, a travel ban and freezing of assets, and should call for a UN resolution for a peacekeeping mission to Darfur (Kessler, 2004). President Bush immediately responded to that letter and, on 30 June, sent Colin Powell to investigate the nature of the crisis. Powell (2004) presented his report to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in September 2004 and he concluded that "genocide" was real and taking place in Darfur. He stated "that genocide has been committed in Darfur, and that the government of Sudan and the Janjawid bear responsibility, and that genocide may still be occurring".

However, before Powell's investigation into the conflict in Sudan, Congress officially passed a non-binding resolution condemning the atrocities in Darfur on 22 July 2004. The resolution called the crisis "genocide", blaming the Sudanese government and urging the president to intervene together with the international community (House Concurrent Resolution 467 and Senate Concurrent Resolution 133, 2004). The resolution was the first ever that called an ongoing war "genocide" and, to date, never in the history of the US has an ongoing conflict been declared "genocide" other than the Darfur crisis. However, in 2005, John Danforth, the US ambassador to Sudan, clarified in the BBC's Panorama programme that the Bush administration's declaration of the Darfur atrocities as "genocide" was made because of an "internal consumption" factor in the domestic political scenario; that it was to please the Christian Right constituents (Penketh, 2005).

Despite the "labelling" of the conflict in Darfur as "genocide" by the US administration that signified the victory of Save Darfur, the movement did not feel it was sufficient to pressure the Sudanese government. In August 2004, Ted Haggard, one of the most popular Christian Right leaders at that time, with 34 other conservative evangelical leaders, sent a letter urging President Bush to provide considerable humanitarian aid to Darfur, and to take serious and appropriate action against the Sudanese government allegedly responsible for the "genocide" and humanitarian crisis in Darfur. The letter stated: "Now is … the time for the United States government to take a more decisive role to prevent further slaughter and death." The letter also called for the Bush administration to pursue "active exploration of all available intervention options, including sending troops to Darfur … in order to stop the killing" (Cooperman, 2004). In other words, the movement suggested that the only way to solve the humanitarian crisis in Darfur was by military intervention. The movement also started using mass media advertising campaigns targeting American people to make them aware of the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Darfur. Mahmood Mamdani (2009: 48-49) notes that a Christian Right sponsored advertisement calling for the US government to intervene militarily in Sudan appeared several times in the *New York Times*. Likewise, the *International Herald Tribune* reported that Save Darfur used "full page newspaper ads, television spots and billboards calling for more aggressive action in Darfur, including the imposition of a no-flight zone over the region". In May 2006, Save Darfur organized a rally in Washington DC and successfully collected more than 750,000 signatures, mostly from Christian Right grassroots organizations who urged President Bush to engage more deliberately in the Darfur crisis (Neubauer, 2006).

In response to all those activities, Edozie (2009: 667) claims the Save Darfur movement manipulated a moral justification to impart a new international humanitarian interventionism in Africa and contends that the Save Darfur rhetoric of saving Darfurians is merely "a slogan that masks a big power agenda to re-colonize Africa". Likewise, Mamdani (2009: 70) sees the approach taken by the Save Darfur movement as counterproductive for a peace solution in

Sudan. He argues that the "evangelical movement does not seek to end the civil war in Darfur; rather, it calls for a military intervention in the civil war without bothering to address the likely consequences of that intervention". However, the Save Darfur advocates received a response that was not expected from the Bush administration. Instead of military intervention, Bush's foreign policy towards Sudan was more lenient as his administration committed to a peaceful solution to the crisis in Sudan with the Khartoum government. The next section highlights briefly some historical background of the US foreign policy towards Sudan.

US Foreign Policy towards Sudan

Historically, US foreign policy towards Sudan has been overwhelmingly concerned with direct American national security and geopolitical strategy. In 1967, following the Arab–Israeli war, Sudan broke off diplomatic relations with the US to show its solidarity with the Arab states. In the 1970s, the Sudanese leader, General Nimeiri, resumed diplomatic relations with the US and the ties became stronger in the 1980s when Sudan endorsed the Camp David Accord between Palestine and Israel. However, throughout the 1990s their relationship worsened. In 1993, the Clinton administration placed Sudan as "a state sponsor of terrorism" as it was seen as a safe haven for terrorists; the US accused it of providing a "refuge, nexus, and training hub" for international terrorists. In addition, Sudan was accused of attempting to destabilize neighbouring countries' governments and was continuously involved in human rights violations. All these factors were considered as constituting threats to the national security and foreign policy of the United States.

As a result, the US tried to destabilize Sudan by isolating it economically, diplomatically and militarily by providing a $15 million non-lethal military fund for Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea in 1996 (Moose, 1997). In 1996, the US closed its embassy in Khartoum and, in November 1997, President Clinton signed the Executive Order (EO) 13067 that imposed comprehensive unilateral financial and economic sanctions on Sudan (Steele, 2005). The sanctions blocked all Sudanese assets in the US, banned exports and imports, prohibited any financial transactions, and barred US companies from investing in Sudan ("What You Need To Know About U.S. Sanctions", 2008).[3]Commenting on those sanctions, Madeleine Albright stated (*New York Times*, 1997) that "[t]he United States has imposed sweeping new economic sanctions against the Government of Sudan because of its continued sponsorship of international terrorism, its effort to destabilize neighbouring countries and its abysmal record on human rights, including religious persecution".

In 1998, following attacks on US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the US took military action against Sudan by striking Khartoum with cruise missiles. Finally, in February 2000, the US Treasury Department imposed economic sanctions against Sudan's state-owned oil enterprises, Sudapest Ltd and Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company Ltd, and three oil foreign oil companies: Canada's Talisman Energy Corp, Malaysia's state owned Petronas and China's national oil company, PetroChina. The sanction prohibited US citizens or companies from engaging in trade or conducting financial transactions with those companies. However,

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3   The Executive Order 13067 states that "All property and interests in property of the Government of Sudan located in the U.S. or within the control of a US person are blocked. This blocking includes individual and entities that are owned or controlled by, or act on behalf of, the Government of Sudan anywhere in the world, as well as individuals and entities determined by the U.S. Treasury Department to be included in the term 'Government of Sudan'.

it excluded the capital market as part of the sanction, thus allowing any companies to raise money on US stock markets that would benefit Sudan or to use US capital markets to finance projects in Sudan (Briscoe, 2008).

In March 2001, after just two months in the White House, President Bush directed the US administration to review the US–Sudan policy. The review, conducted by a group of American counter-terrorism specialists, suggested the US government focus on three aspects: counterterrorism cooperation, an end to regional destabilization in the Horn of Africa, and the achievement of a just peace in Sudan. Moreover, one important fact stated in the review was that the Khartoum government was moving its policy on international terrorism in line with the direction of US policy ("Strike Hard, But Strike Sure", 2001).The recognition that Sudan was moving in the right direction on counter-terrorism was mainly derived from the fact that the Khartoum administration had taken some measures to improve its record on counter-terrorism. For example, in 1995, Sudan cancelled its immigration policy that waived visa applications for Arab nationals and at the same time enforced stricter visa applications for any nationals entering Sudan. In 1996, amid the diplomatic pressure from the US, Sudan expelled Osama bin Laden and his groups from Sudan. Likewise, in 1997, Sudan signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and two years later it signed the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. In addition, between 2000 and 2001, the Sudanese government allowed an American anti-terrorist team to visit and investigate the situation in its country. The report from the investigation was later used by the UN Security Council to release Sudan from the international diplomatic sanctions that had been imposed since 1996 ("Strike Hard, But Strike Sure", 2001).These appropriate actions taken by the Sudanese government were acknowledged by the US State Department. In 2002 the State Department's Patterns of Global Terrorism report stated that Sudan "has stepped up its counter terrorism cooperation with various U.S. agencies, and Sudanese authorities have investigated and apprehended extremists suspected of involvement in terrorist activities" (Dagne, 2003).

It should be noted that after 9/11 the US relationship with Sudan changed dramatically as Sudan government officials declared their support for America's "war on terror" policy. Sudan now became a strategic American partner in curtailing the international terrorism movement (Huliaras, 2006). Geo-politically speaking, Sudan is probably the most important country in the African region for the US counter terrorism agenda. In addition, American economic interests in Sudan, especially oil, enhanced the need for Bush's administration to engage with the country more closely. In contrast with his predecessor's policies, George W. Bush made drastic changes to American policy towards Sudan. He initiated a high profile "constructive engagement" with Sudan that overhauled almost all the existing policies. The new policy resulted in the US administration became more compromising and accommodating about the situation in Sudan, especially on the issue of religious persecution. As argued by Pastor (2005), "Scholars drew interesting preliminary conclusions after the release of the first three [USCIRF] annual reports [1999, 2000, 2001], the primary, and most scathing, conclusion being that the actions taken [by the State Department] under IRFA depend primarily on the United States' strategic or economic interests rather than on the severe violations of religious freedom".

During the two terms of the Bush presidency, Sudan continued to play a pivotal role in the US war on terror and global freedom agenda. In April 2005, it was reported that the Bush administration had "forged a close intelligence partnership" with the Sudanese government.

The government promised to provide necessary assistance such as sharing intelligence and allowing access to terrorism suspects. The Bush administration's view was that Sudan's assistance was crucial and important in America's foreign policy and war on terror. As Kathleen Roberts (2003) argues, Bush's administration compromised on its foreign policy commitment to international human rights because priority was given to the war on terror agenda. The US administration noted that Sudan's assistance was "important, functional and current" and its intelligence service is considered a "top tier" partner of the CIA (*The Los Angeles Times*, April 2005). As a result, in May 2004, the State Department removed Sudan from a list of "non-cooperative" countries in the war against terrorism. Richard Boucher, the spokesman for the State Department stated that "Sudan has taken a number of steps in cooperation against terrorism over the past few years" (Dagne, 2004). In September 2005, the State Department removed Sudan from a list of "worst offenders of Trafficking in Persons (TIP)" on a for the reason that the Secretary of State was satisfied with the development that showed Sudan was "making significant efforts to bring itself into compliance" Furthermore, Christian Right lobbying against the Sudanese government were seen as anti-Islam. As Watanabe (2006: 6) suggests: "Many Muslims ... suspect that the egregious plight of Sudan, one of Africa's poorest countries pummelled by nearly four decades of civil war, is being exploited by some Christians to vilify Islam".

The Bush administration, in this respect, opposed the Christian Right's recommendations for military intervention in Sudan as it would have exacerbated the unsettled relationship between the US and Muslim countries. Richard Cizik of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) comments: "In the midst of the fight against terror, the US administration may be reluctant to upset a Muslim capital, who will then call in other extremists to fight against Crusader West" (Zoll, 2006). At the time of writing, Sudan is the largest recipient of US humanitarian aid in the world. Between 2005 and 2008, the US spent more than $4 billion on humanitarian aid, relief activities, peacekeeping and development assistance in Sudan ("Testimony of Richard S. Williamson", 2008). In 2009 alone, the US funded nearly $1 billion worth of humanitarian assistance to Sudan (Dagne, 2009).

Conclusion

The study illustrates the contribution of the Christian Right to the development of US's global humanitarianism agenda. It reveals two aspects of the Christian Right international humanitarian engagement in Sudan. Firstly, its contribution to the peace process in Sudan to end the decades of war between the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in the former Southern Sudan and the Sudanese government in the north. Secondly, the involvement of the Christian Right in the Save Darfur movement that argues the Sudanese government was committing "genocide" in dealing with the Darfur crisis. Both aspects of engagement showed a contradiction in Christian Right motives. While the former shows the Christian Right's role in the conflict in the former Southern Sudan more as a movement towards peace, the later involved for military intervention. Finally, in the Sudan case study, it also illustrates that, though the Christian Right and its allies strongly lobbied for US military intervention in Sudan, the Bush administration preferred a "constructive engagement" more. Therefore, Bush's foreign policy towards Sudan was more committed to a peaceful solution to the crisis in Sudan with the Khartoum government. This shows the limits and capabilities of the Christian Right and its allies in pursuing their agenda in shaping the post-9/11 US foreign policy.

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