

John Duke Anthony to President Obama: “Open a dialogue with Hamas immediately”

Calls American Foreign Policy in the Middle East: “The Olympic Champion of Hypocrisy”

By Edward Campbell

Missoula, March 4 (Al-Masakin)--John Duke Anthony who delivered the keynote address to the “New Avenues for U.S. Middle East Policy” symposium at the University of Montana told a University of Montana audience if he had 10 minutes with President Obama he would tell the President to open a dialogue with the Palestinian Hamas organization.

On a question from the audience: “If you had ten minutes with President Obama, what would you tell him?” John Duke Anthony, founding President and CEO of the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations who has spent 46 years studying the Middle East, said that the preconditions for negotiations of the Quartet (the USA, the EU, the UN, and Russia), that Hamas must renounce violence and recognize Israel as precondition to any negotiations with the resistance movement, is not corroborated by America’s history, citing America’s negotiations with the Viet Cong, and was philosophically unsound.

He said that “no donors conferences can paper over the root cause of the conflict,” and referred to three principles of the UN Charter which make recognition by the body: (1) national sovereignty, (2) political independence, and (3) territorial integrity; the lack of which he holds to be the root causes of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.



According to Mr. Anthony there are six interests vital to the national security of the United States: Industry, Economics, Politics, Commerce, Defense, and Culture.

According to him, in the final days of the G.H.W. Bush presidency he was asked to answer a question called Vision 20/20. The gist of this question presented by the President was how would he define America’s vital interests if America wish to remain “the *sole* superpower by the year 2020. Mr. Anthony at the time defined America’s vital interests in those six categories.

With respect to Industry, Mr. Anthony referred to the National Defense University Industrial College of the Armed Forces at Ft. Lesley J. McNair in Washington, DC

With respect to Economics he said that basically means energy which means “access to the regions resources.

To him Politics meant the three principle aspects of the UN Charter: Sovereignty, Independence, and Territory.

With respect to Commerce, he said that it would be necessary to lower the import bill and increase the export bill.

He divided Defense into two categories: the power to provide domestic safety and external defense which to him meant a base on Saudi Arabian soil abroad and civil peaceful and effective justice at home.

Culture he referred to a people-to-people vital interest which included Americans understanding and feeling comfortable in foreign cultures, language, NGOs, ESL, democracy, women rights, freedom of the press, et al.

He said that polls by the Pew Charitable Trust and others that showed that the Arab world does not hate America for its democracy or even American lifestyles, but underscored that American foreign policy was the main cause of America's conflicts in the region, calling America on this front "the Olympic champions of hypocrisy." And he pointed directly to Article VI of the U.S. Constitution and said that we should follow it.

He defined the Arab world as 22 nations, the Middle East as 28 nations (26 Muslim + Israel and Lebanon), and the Islamic world as 57 nations, or one quarter of the United Nations. Mr. Anthony is an expert primarily on the Arab world, particularly the Gulf States of the GCC. He is a founder and a board member of the U.S.-GCC Corporate Cooperation Committee; founding President of the Middle East Educational Trust; co-founder of the Commission on Israeli-Palestinian Peace; co-founder and board member of the National Commission to Commemorate the 14th Centennial of Islam. He has worked at the U.S. State Department and the Department of Defense, among other things.

Mr. Anthony is participating in a National Security Education Program (NESP) symposium at the University of Montana March 4-5 entitled "New Avenues for U.S. Middle East Policy." The symposium is being by the Defense Critical Language and Culture Program of the University of Montana's Maureen & Mike Mansfield Center. The Defense Critical Language and

Culture Program launched in 2007 at the University of Montana is being spear-headed by Senator Max Baucus "to provide intensive language and culture training to U.S. military and civilian personnel in Arabic, Dari, Chinese, Russian, and 'strategic cultures.' The program has recently hired nine faculty and staff members whom University of Montana President George Dennison called "a stellar array of experts" who are also training students in issues related to Homeland Security and counter-terrorism.

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