National Security as a Pretext for Securing US Hegemony after 9/11

R. M. Sachithra Sajeevi Rathnayake

In today's world, national security is on top of every country's agenda. Governments adopt various policies to protect the physical integrity of State and its people from multi-dimensional threats. The national security of the United States (US) was greatly threatened by the September 11, 2001 al-Qaeda terrorist attacks (referred to in the study as 9/11) on the US. In response to the attack, the US government launched the national security strategy of War on Terror to mitigate terrorist acts, demolish terrorist organizations and block financing of terrorism by overthrowing the regimes that support terrorism. Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union in early 1990s, the US is regarded as the undisputed superpower in the international system. Previous scholarly efforts elaborate how the US has been able to influence international politics, asserting its hegemonic position in the world in the post-Cold War era. However, less attention is paid to research whether national security strategies are employed to maintain US hegemony in the international arena. Hence, the objective of the study is to examine whether the US utilized national security as a pretext to secure its hegemony in the world order after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The study adopts a qualitative methodology and is mainly based on secondary data. Hegemonic stability theory, realism, offensive realism and offence-defence theory are incorporated to analyze post-9/11 national security strategies of the US and its hegemonic ambitions. As per the study, the US manipulated the tragedy of 9/11 to implement a national security strategy which promoted violence and repression rather than abolishing terrorism, to be used as a pretext for securing US hegemony in the world through its military might.

Key words: US Hegemony, National Security, War on Terror