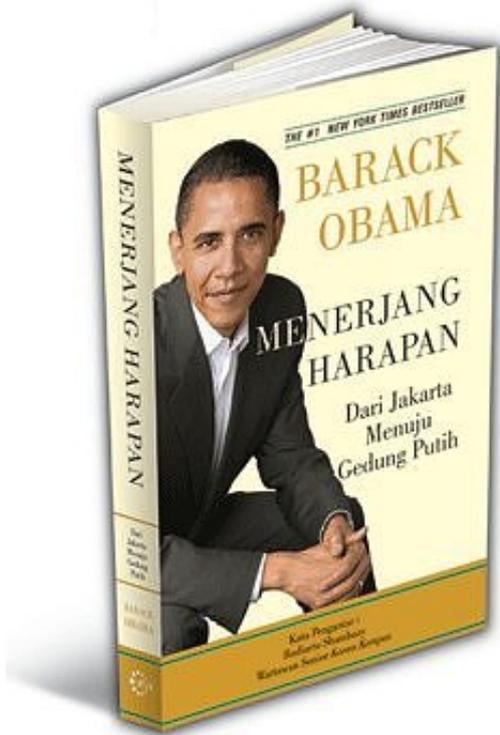


Jihad: From Jakarta To The Whitehouse

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When I first saw the recently released Indonesian translation of Barack Obama's book "The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming The American Dream", over here in Southeast Asia I was completely taken aback not only by the violent imagery in new title of the book, "Menerjang Harapan: Dari Jakarta Menuju Gedung Putih", but by the fact that it was not really a translation at all, but rather a completely different title than the original book.

A correct translation of the title of Obama's book would have been "Keberanian Harapan: Pemikiran Untuk Meraih Kembali Impian America" which translates into "Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming The American Dream". However, the title for the Indonesian translation of Barack Obama's book is "Menerjang Harapan: Dari Jakarta Menuju Gedung Putih" which translates into "Assault Hope: From Jakarta to the White House".

The problem with direct translations is that often times they never make sense. The words "menerjang" (assault or attack) and "harapan" (hope or expectation) make sense when used separately, but used together, the term "menerjang harapan" makes no sense in Indonesian. But while the term makes no sense, it does however present a mental picture to the native Indonesian speaker, the imagery of a "hopeful assault" a "struggle for victory" or to put it more bluntly, a "jihad", or as the Indonesians see it, Obama's "jihad" for the Whitehouse. For the native Indonesian speaker, this figurative language creates a mental image whereas the translation of the book's title can actually come to mean "Jihad: From Jakarta To The

Whitehouse".

Why would the publishers drastically change the title of the book for the Indonesian translation and make use of such figurative language? Your guess is as good as mine, but it would seem that Barack Obama is quite interested with promoting himself in Southeast Asia as a crusader for the cause of Indonesia's Muslims.

I've only just picked up the book, but judging from the changed title I'm sure we're in for a lot more surprises inside.

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