



# Storming Fortresses

For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh,  
but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

2 CORINTHIANS 10:4

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## **Thought Provoker:**

“Islam was formulated by Mohammed and his successors from the seventh century onward. It is a fusion of: portions of the Old Testament; fragments from the Apocrypha; scraps from the New Testament; parts of Post-Christian pseudepigraphical books generally authored by later sectarians; Arabic culture; the personal utterances of Mohammed as inscripturated especially by his favourite wife Khadiya; and traditions later attributed to him and to his close successors.”

CALVIN ON ISLAM  
by  
Rev. Prof. Dr. Francis Nigel

## Islam: Is It A Friendly Religion?

### Part 1: The Current Scene

By

Murray McLeod-Boyle

#### Introduction

In the aftermath of September 11, it seemed that an article on Islam was in order. All the blather about chasing Islamic terrorists, but not Islam, wore a little thin. However, time went by and things seemed to settle, so the idea was passed over. With hindsight this was an error. The settling was the calm before the storm. The war on Iraq has rekindled the pacifist acquiescence to the tortuous and crushing teachings of Islam.

Since these world events have been revealed we have heard a constant

monologue about the virtues of Islam. “Islam is peaceful” say the politicians, clerics and all the other “head-in-the-sand” do-gooders.

President Bush, Prime Ministers Blair and Howard and some others of note have all presented Islam as fun loving and care-free. When you hear them talk you are tempted to think of a tranquil, deserted island with gentle breeze and still, calm waters which, when smooth, look like a sheet of glass. Not to mention the towering palms that provide a filtered sunlight to the white sandy beach where you lay

drinking fresh coconut milk, fetched and served by the consummate vestal virgin. I mean, we are talking a real Mills and Boon moment.

Yet in all these speeches very little evidence has been put forward and little has been presented from the body of Islamic teaching. Few, if any, eminent scholars have professed a public opinion. We have not even seen a schoolboy with the ‘Junior edition of the Koran in modern English’! Oh, we did hear one Islamic scholar say ‘Islam is against suicide.’ Like the others, there was no real reference or attempt to

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prove this teaching. It was simply stated.

All these speeches had two things in common. First, those with prominent aides had them scurrying about to find a napkin with which to wipe the drivel from their chin. Second, just like Mills and Boon, it was all fiction. Each speech should have had the Hollywood prologue added: "These words bear no resemblance to anyone living or dead!"

The following is an example of the hackneyed tune that has been played even by those who do not necessarily support Islam, but who feel that the tune is either harmless or a vote winner:

Suicide missions are by no means peculiar to the Middle East. The medieval Cathars of southern France and northern Italy "looked favorably on suicide, an attitude which made the more fervent of them impervious to persecution." What British and French soldiers did in World War I—

leave their trenches to climb over dead comrades and march into machine gun fire—was a form of mass self-sacrifice that exceeds by far anything witnessed recently in the Middle East. Nor was it just the front-line troops who marched off to their death. Vincent Kraft, a German spy in World War I committed a serious offense while serving on the Western front for which the penalty was death. Instead, Peter Hopkirk relates, he was offered the alternative of undertaking what he described as "a very dangerous mission" in the East.

Similarly, when ten Irish Republican Army members starved themselves in 1981, taking 50 to 60 wrenching days, they endured a much more agonizing death than that involved in the brief, almost painless acts of the suicide bombers in Lebanon. Contrary to what many believe, Europeans are willing to give up their lives for a cause on occasion. Suicidal acts are not unknown in the West.

Nor are they common among Muslims. Quite the reverse: suicide is as strictly forbidden in Islam as in Judaism and Christianity. A Qur'anic verse, "Do not kill yourselves" (4:29), is commonly understood to condemn suicide. The Prophet Muhammad said that a suicide cannot go to paradise, and Islamic laws firmly oppose the practice. Religious leaders today continue to reject suicide. Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, leader of the radical fundamentalist Shi'is in Lebanon, remarked about the recent spate of bombings, "suicide in such a way is forbidden in our religion."

Religious prohibitions have had effect; according to modern scholarship, "suicide was of comparatively rare occurrence" in traditional society. Notwithstanding the famous expectation that a Muslim who dies in the service of God goes to paradise, Muslims were not more likely to end

their lives than other people. The only significant exception were the fida'is (soldiers prepared to sacrifice themselves) sent out by the Assassin sect in the 12th century.

**These points need emphasis to correct a mistaken tendency to ascribe suicide bombings in the Middle East to Islam, fanaticism, or some other cultural trait.** In fact, suicidal warfare in the Middle East, as in the West or Japan, takes place only in specific historical circumstances. British and French soldiers sacrificed their lives in World War I not because of the British character or the French religion but because of the nature of trench combat; IRA starvations reflected the politics of Ireland in 1981, not the nature of Celtic culture. Similarly, suicide bombings in the Middle East result from specific historical developments, not the permanent verities of Islam.<sup>1</sup>

So there you have it! Islam is no different from any other culture on earth. It is a simple matter of environment and geo-political concerns. Just as petrol in the right quantity will extinguish a match and in another will create a large explosion, so we need the right mix to produce suicide bombers. What piffle!

There are several points raised with which we take exception. First, to place soldiers in the trenches in World War One in the same boat as suicide bombers is a very ugly thing. During a war soldiers wear uniforms and can be distinguished from civilians. Although civilians are caught in war they are as a general rule not specifically targeted. Suicide bombers on the other hand do not wear uniforms and they usually target civilians as a deliberate act.

Second, we have the issue of someone who commits a capital of-

1. <http://www.danielpipes.org/article/175> accessed 22/04/2003. Bold added. You will find more references to Daniel Pipes in the Supplement circulated with this article

fence being given the option of redemption through a dangerous act. To this, all I can say is, "I saw the 'Dirty Dozen.'" In short, we are once again treated to a facile argument. Suicide bombers are not between "a rock and a hard place", generally speaking. They see themselves as crusaders, not as people with only one choice.

Third, it is noteworthy that in the examples given, the so-called suicide was a sacrifice of the individual by the individual. Walking into gunfire or starving oneself was an act of sacrifice in the name of a cause. Put slightly differently, it was the **giving of a life** for a cause—whether or not that cause was rightly or wrongly perceived. Modern, particularly Islamic, suicide bombers are attempting to *take life* in the name of a cause. This is a fundamental difference—a difference the author notes when he says: "Europeans are willing to give up their lives for a cause on occasion." The distinction here is precisely in the "giving" or "taking" of life. Jesus Himself commended the giving of a life as noble—no greater love has any man than he should lay down his life for his friends! However, the current issue of suicide bombings is not simply "suicide bombings." In other words, people are not strapping themselves with explosives, walking into the vast expanses of the desert and blowing themselves into unidentifiable pieces in the name of a cause. No! They walk into restaurants, on to crowded buses, and into crowded night clubs and then detonate their explosives with devastating consequences. This is not simply suicide in the name of a cause. It is the taking of life in the name of a cause. It is cold blooded murder!

Fourth, it is necessary to note the contradiction. 'Muslims can't kill

themselves,' says Surah 4:29 of the Koran.<sup>2</sup> Well, I stand corrected and will now have to finish this article early and go and write a retraction. Not so quickly. Note the words in the essay that start with "Notwithstanding ...". They introduce us to the fact that Muslim martyrs get an express ticket to heaven and a barrow load of goodies with which to keep themselves occupied for eternity.

To the present writer this is one monumental use of "Notwithstanding ...!" How can a person who wants to be taken seriously simply dismiss such a body of evidence as though it has no impact on the discussion at hand?

There are other inconsistencies in this work, however to look at them now will only serve to lead us off the track. The main issue is that this piece is the epitome of the pro-Islamic apologetics that are being given today. Quote one verse from the Koran, give a quotation from a Cleric, unreferenced, one might add, and top it off with a humungous "Notwithstanding ...", and there you have it. In one fell swoop, Islam smells prettier than a flower shop on Valentines Day.

It is my belief that the aroma of the flowers is there only to hide the stench of death buried beneath. It is my intention to try to shed some light on this issue. It is important that we see Islam for what it is. To that end I will attempt to put source material before you.

Please forgive me if some of this becomes tedious. It is not my intention to bore, but to equip. We live in a day when thinking has become a slighted term and a mental dysfunction. We must be ruled by feeling and emotion instead - at least that is the modern principle. This is evident in

our churches. Emotionalism and feeling take centre stage in our worship services and the pure doctrine is pushed to the side. Most churches are installing coat-hooks in their entries. This is so the parishioners can hang their intellectual capacity on them before entering. We seek to counter this. 'Everything captive to Christ', means that we must capably weigh all things in light of God's Word. So to this end we write.

### The Current State

When we examine our world we are presented with many opportunities to evaluate the claim that Islam is a peaceful and non-violent religion. Before moving further we need to unpack this term a little. People have been quick to speak about 'peace', but what do they mean? Peace, in its finest sense, means that there is absolutely no threat overtly or covertly. It means no outward aggression and no subterfuge. In short, there are no tanks on the street or wolves disguised as sheep.

The second aspect that comes to the fore is that peace is inextricably linked with prosperity. When true peace abounds, trade abounds. People can conduct their business without tyranny and conflict. Look at how our stock markets react to the threat of war and you have a snapshot of this principle. Similarly, we can see that as our countries become less peaceful we become less prosperous. Now we must remember that peace is not the absence of war. One does not have to have armed conflict with another nation to lose peace. This loss can come via internal struggles. We see this in our nation. With the lack of discipline in society we are not at peace. Our homes are broken into. Our wives and daughters are raped. Our cities are ravaged by vandals. People turn to alcohol and drugs in an

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<sup>2</sup> The Koran is divided into Surahs just as the Christian Bible is divided into Chapters and Verses.

attempt to escape, yet they only find misery. Drugs lead to theft, burglary, old ladies being bashed for a few dollars, gang warfare, drive-by shootings, and the list could go on. This chaos extends to the very core of society, the family. Discipline is frowned upon. Parents are dissuaded from correcting errant traits within children. The father's authority as head of the home is actively undermined. Children are encouraged to rebel.

In this situation wealth diminishes. We pay higher taxes for Police Force numbers to increase; we pay for security patrols; we pay for the removal of graffiti; we pay for drug and alcohol programmes. Lose peace and we lose prosperity.

If we take these two aspects as a very rough measuring stick we are able to see that Islam is not peaceful. Islam is involved with tanks and wolves and it is evident that they have no wealth.

These assertions need some substance so let us look at them in turn.

### War and Wolves

If we look throughout the world at terrorist type activities it is evident that Islam is involved as an organising principal at some level.

Yashiko Sagamori, opens his short essay "Hadith 101, or Islam for the Infidel"<sup>3</sup> with these words:

In recent years, Moslems have succeeded in making their religion a focal point of interest bordering on anxiety for many non-Moslems, of

whom most, until recently, hadn't even been curious about Islam. Such explosion of interest is well deserved since every single armed conflict that's going on today involves Moslems at least on one side of it, and every single act of terrorism that takes place anywhere in the world is inevitably perpetrated by Moslems.

Well, you thought that it was only I who was given to hyperbole. Think on what is said. Now take on board the remarks that immediately follow the above.

At the same time, export of Islam continues on an unprecedented scale. According to some statistics, Moslems today constitute 12% of all Europe's population, and it appears that



the United States is following closely behind. In the face of this Islamic invasion, Westerners remain blissfully ignorant about Islam. Really, what do we know about it besides the fact that it has sponsored most mass murders of the last two decades? Not much. Following September 11, 2001, we've been reminded multiple times that Islam is a religion of love and peace, although the few excerpts from the Koran that have become widely known to the Western public suggest that the love of the Moslem is directed exclusively toward the faithful, while we, the infidels, are dealt with by ways of jihad — a "holy" war

whose goal is to free the world from our vile presence.

What this short piece highlights is the conundrum into which Islam has seemingly placed the world. It is advancing, make no mistake about that. Yet, what is said is equally true. Islam is the most destructive influence in the world today. Some may balk at the assertion that Islam is represented in all current wars and all acts of terrorism, however, if we think about it we will see that these statements are closer to the truth than we have hitherto been willing to admit.

In order to verify this seemingly outrageous assertion we will cast our eyes around the world briefly:

### Somalia

Movie buffs will remember the release of the movie, *Blackhawk Down*. It is a depiction of events during the civil war in Somalia. What do we know of Somalia? 1. "Islam is the state religion in Somalia, and most of the people are Muslims."<sup>4</sup> 2. "Somalia is one of the world's poorest countries. Since the early 1990s its economy has been in a state of collapse because of civil war and its aftermath."<sup>5</sup>

### Bosnia

There was a war in Bosnia—"After the 1995 peace accord, however, the country was formally split into a Muslim-Croat federation controlling 51 per cent of its territory, and a Bosnian-Serb statelet with 49 per cent."<sup>6</sup>

### Chechnya

The news reports of a siege at a Moscow theatre. Chechen Rebels are

3. <http://yashiko.middleeastfacts.com/hadith101.html> accessed 20/03/2003.

4. <http://encarta.ninemsn.com.au/find/concise.asp?mod=1&ti=761554555&page=2> accessed 22/04/2003.

5. <http://encarta.ninemsn.com.au/find/concise.asp?mod=1&ti=761554555&page=3> accessed 22/04/2003.

6. <http://encarta.ninemsn.com.au/find/Concise.asp?z=1&pg=2&ti=761563626> accessed 22/04/2003.

the hostage takers:

“Resisting foreign domination has deep roots in this part of the world. The Chechens, a distinct people with a unique language and culture, have survived attacks from numerous would-be conquerors in their 7,000-year history. Over the last 200 years, however, the gravest threat has been from Russia. Both Imperial and Communist Russia successfully annexed the Caucasus, and both met persistent Chechen resistance.”<sup>7</sup> Again, “Earlier in the year, Chechen forces had also taken part in an armed attempt to establish an Islamic state in neighbouring Dagestan.”<sup>8</sup>

### Former Yugoslavia

The break up of Yugoslavia saw a war in Kosovo:

“Six hundred years ago, on St. Vitus Day, the Christian army of Serbian Prince Lazar and Islamic conquerors under Turkish Sultan Murat fought a great battle on the plain of Kosovo. Serbs were defending themselves and Christian Europe from the Ottoman invasion, but at Kosovo they were defeated. Prince Lazar and the cream of the Serbian nobility all died heroically.”<sup>9</sup>

What do we know of modern day issues?

“The use of the Kosovo issue to reinspire Serbian nationalism was especially worrisome to other republics, while it radicalized most of Yugoslavia’s Albanian population.

In 1989 Slobodan Milosevic called Kosovo “the heart of Serbia,” citing Kosovo’s history as the center of the medieval Serbian kingdom that ended in a storied defeat by the Turks in 1389. However, Kosovo had similar historical significance for its largely Albanian population of the late twentieth century; this created an ethnic political struggle that some observers compared to the West Bank situation in the Middle East.<sup>10</sup>

“One of the major legacies of nearly five centuries of Ottoman rule was the conversion of up to 70 percent of the Albanian population to Islam. Therefore, at independence the country emerged as a predominantly Muslim nation, the only Islamic state in Europe. No census taken by the communist regime after it assumed power in 1944 indicated the religious affiliations of the people. It has been estimated that of a total population of 1,180,500 at the end of World War II, about 826,000 were Muslims, 212,500 were Orthodox, and 142,000 were Roman Catholics. The Muslims were divided into two groups: about 600,000 adherents of the Sunni branch and more than 220,000 followers of a dervish order known as Bektashi, which was an offshoot of the Shia branch. Bektashism was regarded as a tolerant Muslim sect that also incorporated elements of paganism and Christianity.”<sup>11</sup>

### Libya

Some years ago one could not mention terrorism without mentioning Libya:

“Under the revolutionary govern-

ment, the role of orthodox Islam in Libyan life has become progressively more important. Qadhafi is a highly devout Muslim who has repeatedly expressed a desire to exalt Islam and to restore it to its proper—i.e., central—place in the life of the people. He believes that the purity of Islam has been sullied through time, particularly by the influence of Europeans [Could we read Christians?] during and after the colonial period, and that its purity must be restored—by such actions as the restoration of sharia to its proper place as the basis of the Libyan legal system, the banning of “immodest” practices and dress, and the symbolic purification of major urban mosques that took place in 1978.”<sup>12</sup>

### Egypt

Egypt, while being part of the Arab world has experimented with different political systems and has tried to be moderate. These quotes look at two Presidents. Look at who has been instrumental in removing one—with a bullet—and trying to do the same to the other.

“On October 6, while observing a military parade commemorating the eighth anniversary of the October 1973 War, Sadat was assassinated by members of Al Jihad movement, a group of religious extremists. Sadat’s assassin was Lieutenant Colonel Khalid al Islambuli. The conspirators were arrested and tried. In April 1982, two of the conspirators were shot and three hanged.”<sup>13</sup>

“In 1983 Egypt’s isolation in the

7. <http://www.infoplease.com/spot/chechnya1.html> accessed 22/04/2003.

8. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/2355419.stm> accessed 22/04/2003.

9. <http://www.srpska-mreza.com/mlad/index.htm> accessed 22/04/2003.

10. <http://www.lupinfo.com/country-guide-study/yugoslavia/yugoslavia149.html> accessed 22/04/2003.

11. <http://www.lupinfo.com/country-guide-study/albania/albania51.html> accessed 22/04/2003.

12. <http://www.lupinfo.com/country-guide-study/libya/libya62.html> accessed 22/04/2003.

13. <http://www.lupinfo.com/country-guide-study/egypt/egypt55.html> Accessed 22/04/2003.

Arab world began to end. In that year, Arafat met Mubarak in Cairo after the PLO leader had been expelled from Lebanon under Syrian pressure. In January 1984, Egypt was readmitted unconditionally to the Islamic Conference Organization. In November 1987, an Arab summit resolution allowed the Arab countries to resume diplomatic relations with Egypt.”<sup>14</sup>

“Reelected in 1993, Mubarak cracked down on Muslim fundamentalist opposition groups after an upsurge in guerrilla violence by Islamic extremists. Mubarak survived an assassination attempt unharmed in June 1995 in the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa. Five of the assailants were killed during or after the ambush and three escaped to Sudan, which is widely believed to have sponsored the attack. In November 1995, just before parliamentary elections, Mubarak’s government accused the Muslim Brotherhood of helping violent Islamic groups. Many of the Muslim Brotherhood’s members were arrested, and several who planned to run in the elections or monitor them were tried and sentenced to prison.”<sup>15</sup>

### Sudan

Staying in Africa we move to Sudan, a country most will be familiar with:

“The Christian Nubian kingdoms, which survived for many centuries, achieved their peak of prosperity and military power in the ninth and tenth

centuries. However, Muslim Arab invaders, who in 640 had conquered Egypt, posed a threat to the Christian Nubian kingdoms. Most historians believe that Arab pressure forced Nubatia and Muqurra to merge into the kingdom of Dunqulah sometime before 700. Although the Arabs soon abandoned attempts to reduce Nubia by force, Muslim domination of Egypt often made it difficult to communicate with the Coptic patriarch or to obtain Egyptian-trained clergy. As a result, the Nubian church became isolated from the rest of the Christian world.”<sup>16</sup>

“On June 30, 1989, Colonel (later Lieutenant General) Umar Hassan Ahmad al Bashir overthrew Sadiq and established the Revolutionary Command Council for National Salvation to rule Sudan. Bashir’s commitment to imposing the sharia on the non-Muslim south and to seeking a military victory over the SPLA, however, seemed likely to keep the country divided for the foreseeable future and hamper resolution of the same problems faced by Sadiq al Mahdi.”<sup>17</sup>

“About 74 per cent of the people of Sudan are Muslims, about 17 per cent follow traditional religions, and most of the remainder are Christian. The people of northern Sudan are predominantly Muslims, practising a form of Islam that has been influenced by traditional, pre-Islamic religions; characteristics of Sudanese Islam include veneration of a great number of local “saints”, and, until

the late 1980s, a great tolerance of other faiths. Most of the people in the south either practise traditional religions or are Christian. These religious and cultural differences have been inextricably tied up in ancient tensions between the two regions, based in northern domination of the south, and have often come to symbolize them.”<sup>18</sup>

“**Legal system:** based on English common law and Islamic law; as of 20 January 1991, the now defunct Revolutionary Command Council imposed Islamic law in the northern states; Islamic law applies to all residents of the northern states regardless of their religion; some separate religious courts; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction, with reservations.”<sup>19</sup>

### Yemen

Yemen, scene of attacks on the USS Cole and US embassy:

“Almost all the people are followers of Islam.”<sup>20</sup>

“Yemen has been wracked by a series of blasts and political turmoil since the Yemeni government moved against Islamic militant cells in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks on the United States.”<sup>21</sup>

“The US vowed to work with Yemeni authorities to hunt down “any and all” people behind the slayings there of three US missionary

14. <http://www.lupinfo.com/country-guide-study/egypt/egypt56.html> accessed 22/04/2003.

15. <http://www.us-israel.org/jsource/biography/Mubarak.html> accessed 22/04/2003.

16. <http://www.lupinfo.com/country-guide-study/sudan/sudan12.html> accessed 22/04/2003.

17. <http://www.lupinfo.com/country-guide-study/sudan/sudan38.html> accessed 22/04/2003.

18. <http://encarta.ninemsn.com.au/find/concise.asp?mod=1&ti=761559614&page=2> accessed 22/04/2003.

19. <http://www.us-israel.org/jsource/arabs/sudan.html#Govt> accessed 22/04/2003

20. <http://encarta.ninemsn.com.au/find/Concise.asp?z=1&pg=2&ti=761578405> accessed 22/04/2003.

21. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/s558639.htm> accessed 22/04/2003.

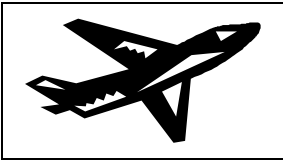
hospital workers by a suspected Islamic extremist.”<sup>22</sup>

### Lockerbie

The verdict in the Camp Zeist trial revives two difficult questions for America, the United Kingdom and the United Nations: Do they now let Libya in from the cold and, if so, how far?

Relatives of the Lockerbie victims want Libya to remain classified as a rogue state. Western public and media opinion largely seems to be behind them. But some Western leaders believe that Libya has begun to step aside from state-sponsored terrorism

and, if so, wants the country to be encouraged along



that path rather than driven back into isolation. The court decided that Abdel Baset Al-Megrahi was guilty of placing the bomb which killed 259 people on PanAm Flight 103 and another 11 on the ground at Lockerbie in December 1988 but that Al Amin Khalifa Fhimah was innocent. But an underlying question was not determined at Camp Zeist, a conspiracy charge having been dropped. Who gave the orders for a bomb to be placed? Although some have sought to point the finger at Syrians, Iranians or various Palestinian groups the Gadhafi regime has always been the prime suspect.<sup>23</sup>

### German Disco 1986

“There is evidence that Libya ordered the attack. This is clearly a form of state terror,” said Berlin Prosecutor Dieter Neumann. He would not explain what led prosecutors to the suspected bombers 10 years after the attack took place. Still another suspect, Yasser Mohammed Chreidi, a Palestinian, was extradited to Germany in May in connection with the bombing. He is to be tried in Berlin. Chreidi has been tied to suspected terrorist Abu Nidal, also a Palestinian, who lived in and was financed by Libya in the 1980s. German prosecutors believe the four suspects for whom warrants were issued bankrolled the bombing, then returned to Libya.<sup>24</sup>

### Israel

An apparent suicide bomb attack in front of a crowded discotheque in Tel Aviv late Friday killed at least 17 people, police said. More than 70 people were injured, eight seriously, according to hospital officials. Israeli television reported the Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>25</sup>

### Bali

Apart from September 11, the most momentous act of terror would be the Bali Bombings which occurred on October 12, 2002. Here are some snippets:

The Islamic militant group, Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), whom Australia has named as a suspect in the bombing massacre in Bali, is an Al Qaeda-linked group whose alleged

leader lives openly in Indonesia, despite intense international pressure for his arrest. Warnings that JI was planning major terrorist attacks have come thick and fast recently, from countries including Malaysia, Singapore and Australia. All three have pointed to Indonesian Islamic cleric Abubakar Ba'asyir as a leader of the organisation but the Indonesian Government has said it has no evidence against him.<sup>26</sup>

Indonesian prosecutors have accused Muslim cleric Abu Bakar Bashir of plotting terror bombings in Indonesia and Singapore as part of a campaign to topple the Indonesian government and set up an Islamic state. An indictment filed in court describes the Muslim cleric as “emir” or leader of the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) regional terror network which is blamed for a series of bombings or attempted bombings in the region, including the Bali attack.<sup>27</sup>

A court date has been set for Muslim cleric Abu Bakar Bashir, who is charged with trying to overthrow the Indonesian Government and setting up the regional Jemaah Islamiah (JI) terrorist network. Bashir will go on trial on April 23. Police have blamed the militant network for last October's Bali bombings, which killed 202 people including 89 Australians.<sup>28</sup>

When these pieces are analysed, one simply cannot deny the fact that Islam is inextricably linked to the major conflicts and acts of terrorism

22. [http://news.ninemsn.com.au/World/story\\_44410.asp](http://news.ninemsn.com.au/World/story_44410.asp) accessed 22/04/2003.

23. <http://www.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/europe/01/31/lockerbie.oakley.diplomacy/index.html> accessed 22/04/2003. It is noteworthy that Libya has now taken responsibility for this attack.

24. <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/9610/11/germany.arrests/> accessed 22/04/2003.

25. <http://www.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/meast/06/01/israel.explosion.03/index.html> accessed 22/04/2003.

26. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/indepth/featureitems/s700523.htm> accessed 23/04/2003.

27. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/s831900.htm> accessed 23/04/2003.

28. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/s833670.htm> accessed 23/04/2003.

that have rocked the world in the last thirty years. The evidence for tanks on the street and overt action is plain for all to see. 'There is simply no one blinder than him who will not see.'<sup>29</sup>

Has the "ostrich syndrome" struck the world again?

Moving on to the second part of this section, we look at the idea of covert operations. This is, of course, harder to examine by its very nature. In the previous section we have listed some maleficence that points in this direction. Bali, Lockerbie and the bombing of a Berlin disco were all covert operations. People purporting to be everyday citizens on everyday business carried briefcases with bombs instead of cut lunches. In the case of Bali, unarmed civilians in nightclubs were attacked with ruthless cunning and devastating force.

In conjunction with this, our best evidence comes from September 11. Those guilty of this crime lived in the United States for some time. One report spoke of one of the terrorists who would interact with neighbourhood children. It even stated that he had at times bought the children ice-cream or pizza. We know that several of these people lived quietly, took flying lessons and, in every way, looked like *bona fide* citizens. The disguise was only rent when they flew jetliners into crowded office buildings.

If September 11 taught us anything, it is this: Terrorism is alive and well and the terrorist will go to any lengths—even operating and maintaining sleeper cells.

Equally, as we conclude this section, it should not escape our attention that the September 11 terrorists were all Islamic. Significantly, the

majority of these terrorists were Saudi nationals. In short, they came from a country which pretends to be a friend of the West.

### Peace and Prosperity

As we enter the examination of wealth, we must also look at its distribution within society. The case in which you have several billionaires at the top of the tree, no lower branches, and a mass of people dwelling in abject poverty at the base, does not constitute peace and prosperity. As a total whole, the country may have an incredible amount of wealth. However, if this wealth is found in the hands of only a few, we cannot say that the nation and, in particular, the people are wealthy.

The point here is to be found in the contrast between East and West. In our Western societies there is a reasonable wealth distribution. It is true that gaps are beginning to appear because of the unjust systems that are now in place. This aside, it is still tolerable to say that wealth is attainable and that the distribution is reasonable. In short, you can work and earn enough to buy food and accumulate goods, including investments.

When we look elsewhere in the world, we tend not to see this. Tyrannical leaders, corrupt governments, unjust social structures and the like tend to rob individuals of a just reward for their labours. Russia's experiment with socialism is just one example. There existed a rich elite, but by the time of Russia's fall the middle class had all but been wiped out and there were swelling masses

of poor people dependant upon the State. People queued for hours to gain basic essentials. Productivity was low, quality was low, and the morale of the people was almost non-existent.

Similar scenes have been televised lately from Iraq. Pure gold sinks, gold plated AK47's and Bedouin tribesmen in the desert with a few goats. Could the disparity be any greater?



This is not peace and prosperity. These situations, as Russia and Iraq prove, lead to repression by force. In fact, the very turmoil seen in Iraq today has its roots in such a system. These people are angry and for the first time in thirty years they are able to raise their voices without fear of reprisal.

Despite Iraq having great wealth because of its oil reserves, there is no peace and very little prosperity.

What this shows is that it is peace that drives wealth and not wealth that buys peace. Throwing money at a country will not buy peace or prosperity. The people must first enjoy a real peace that allows for prosperity.

How do you arrive at this peace? Certainly not with the barrel of a gun. This type of peace is built upon a belief system. It is religious, ethical, and moral. It cuts to the heart of what a nation and the individuals of that nation believe. These deep seated beliefs are worked out every day in every culture.

If the basic religion of a nation leads to freedom, wealth and prosperity will be evident. If the basic religious notion is one of repression,

<sup>29</sup>. I am not sure of the origin of this saying, but U2 use it in one of their songs.



the tyrants and dictators will abound and peace and prosperity will be driven from the nation. Islam certainly falls into this second category.<sup>30</sup>

What I have attempted to show in the first section of this article is that Islam is responsible for most of the conflict and terror that has been known to the world in the last two decades. The point of this second part is to show that because there is no peace in these states they are not prosperous.

Why then have these states not collapsed? We speak often of the covenantal stipulation and of reward and curse. How is it that these sanctions are not unleashed upon these nations? The brute fact is that they are. The cold reality, however, is that we work hard to prop these states up.

Think here of our Western 'Welfare States.' Those who do not work, should not eat (2 Thessalonians 3:10.). Yet they eat, squander and live quite well. How so? Highway robbery! The hardworking individual is taxed (robbed) unfairly in order to support these lazy people who have no inclination to work. The situation with the Islamic States is exactly the

same, but on a grander scale.

"Prop them up?" "Who would prop up States like these?" Welcome to "World Politics 101." In 2003 America and Australia made the following foreign aid donations:

#### United States:

Egypt \$1.3 billion for military and \$615 million for economic; Jordan \$250 million economic and \$198 million for military; Pakistan \$200 million for economic and \$50 million for military (We should also add that in 2001 the ban on aid to Pakistan as a result of President Musharraf stealing power by *coup d'état* was lifted.); Turkey \$17.5 million Military; Uzbekistan \$43 million; Kyrgyzstan \$4 million; Yemen \$10 million economic and \$2 million to help stop 'bad guys'; and similarly, Indonesia will receive \$50 million in 'bad guy' eradication funding.<sup>31</sup>

Australia's outstanding contribution is \$121.6 million to Indonesia and \$4.2 million to Pakistan.<sup>32</sup>

With this in mind it is time for all you budding quizmasters to answer the following question, What do all these countries have in common? Yes, you guessed it. They are all Is-

lamic!

We, on the underside of the earth, have just pledged this rather large sum of money to the most populous Muslim nation on earth! All we need do now is give them the free set of steak knives. I would like to say something comical here to relieve the tension, but I am too gob smacked.

It is fair to say that those of us who live in the West realise that our societies are in a state of decay. We are also aware of the issues that plague our societies, especially funding shortages. We are sure that we could find very good and worthy causes at home on which this money could be spent. Let us be straight here. I am not saying that we should not help our neighbours. What I am saying is that if you live on Elm Street, paying Freddy Krueger a whole heap of money so that he can attend a 'knife sharpening' course and then inviting him round to tea would not be very smart. I mean, why buy the dynamite for a bank robber, a Jimmy bar for a home invader or a lighter and a can of fuel for an arsonist?

All jokes aside, we must seriously

30. "Why has America—and for the most part, the West—enjoyed such material abundance? Why have some Asian countries also prospered *after* they adopted economic ideas from the West. If you look at poorer nations around the world, you will find that what the Bible says is true: they are what they are because of what they believe. 'As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he' (Prov. 23:7 KJV). Look at India, a nation that has stagnated in its poverty for several millennia. Why? Because of what its people believe. Its Hindu religion teaches that there is no reality to matter. The external, visible world is unreal; therefore, you do not try to correct an unreal world; you try to escape from it. Consequently, progress dies. And the belief in reincarnation has also had a devastating effect on the nation's poverty. Or consider North Africa, which for centuries has been sunk in poverty, superstition and ignorance. Why? Because of what its people believe. The fatalism of Islam has kept the Muslims from progress because human initiative can accomplish absolutely nothing, and all that is, Allah has fated; therefore, they are left in perpetual stagnation. Or consider the many nations of the East (prior to Western influence) whose religion is Buddhism, which teaches that life is irreparably evil and cannot be changed. Man's only hope is to rid himself of all desire for any improvement in this life. The goal is not abundant life, but it is extinction—absorption into the world-soul—and so the very roots of social amelioration are severed. Not so with nations that have had a Christian base, especially when they have applied a more biblical interpretation of economics." D. James Kennedy, *What If Jesus Had Never Been Born* (Word Publishing; 1994) p. 142.

31. <http://www.terrorismsanswers.com/policy/foreignaid.html> accessed 23/04.2003. This information has been condensed and edited.

32. <http://www.usaid.gov.au/country/default> accessed 23/04/2003.

question what our governments have in mind. These rogue States would collapse if it were not for the constant flow of cash from the West. All this money may be handed over with very good intention, but, how do we know that it is not used to finance terror either directly or indirectly?

### The Newcomers

One last point regarding the influence of Islam can be seen in some of its converts. When the war in Afghanistan drew to a close, most in the West were shocked to find an American and Australian amongst those fighting for the Taliban. In both cases, and one other that has surfaced here in Australia, these men began the study of Islam on Western soil. Before long they had packed up and moved to training camps deep inside Islamic territory.

Two observations are in order. First, it is always interesting to see how a new convert reacts to teachings. In a sense, they come with a clean slate. Christianity is little different. A child raised within the Church will often take on beliefs and practices without question. This is where dead tradition enters. People do something because it has always been done that way. The new convert can at times view things without this excess baggage. Thus it is interesting that these two men, on becoming Muslims, saw that fighting for the Islamic faith was the true way.

Second, when these cases came to light the spin doctors came out of the woodwork. "Islam is peace." "The guy was quiet". "Very nice bloke." and so on *ad nauseam, ad infinitum*. Then came the clerics from the Is-

lamic centre where they had studied. Guess what? They said the very same thing. Here they stood with the same expression of disbelief on their face as one would find on a child at a magic show—"Wow, how did that happen?"

Here is our difficulty. How does a white, European, Westerner, with Quasi-Christian upbringing, hop on a jetliner and fly express to one of Osama's training camps? I mean, please, how stupid do you think we are? You cannot just go to the local store and sign up to become a *bona fide* card carrying member of Osama's "Destruction Club"; waltz off into the desert, ring the bell on the cave entrance, flash the card and be welcomed like a brother! You could be a CIA plant.

To achieve this you would need connections, money, references, language training, everything! Right down to the secret handshake and the Grand Pooh-Bah head wobble.

What are we saying? Simple. These men had to have received copious amounts of help to do what they did and that help had to emanate from within our own countries. Particularly, it had to come from particular segments of our society. People who are, "In the know." People who are not really part of our society. People whose loyalties are not to this country and to its Christian heritage. We are harking back to the wolves in sheep's clothing.

### Conclusion

The evidence is glaring. Islam is not a religion of peace. The States where Islam predominates are mostly

in turmoil. Some of these States have sponsored terrorism. Certainly most of the individual acts of terrorism have been perpetrated by Islamists in the name of Allah.

The incongruity of this situation is that while Islamists gather in the streets to denounce the West, and in particular the United States, our governments hand over millions of dollars to these people so that they can launch even more terror campaigns against us.

This is madness on all sides.

It is also worth noting that those Islamic Arab states that are a little more progressive have become so by moving away from, rather than back to, the Islamic Fundamentalist State.

Herein, we hope there is food for thought. For too long we have been lied to and had the wool pulled over our eyes. Christianity has made the West great. Christianity can do this because it is God's truth—a truth that sets people free. Yet, it is this truth that is under attack in the current debate. We are told that Islam is peace, when, in fact, every where we look we see that Islam has blood on its hands. States like Jordan and Egypt try to walk a middle line, but they know that they are in danger from Islam at every turn. Yemen has felt reprisals from Islamic groups since it cracked down on terrorists in the wake of September 11. If moderate Islamics fear Islam in its purest form, should not we Christians also be on our guard?

Our government will not raise the alarm, so we must.