



News & Views

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A CLASH BETWEEN JUSTICE AND GREED

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The clash between Islam and the West is not a clash of civilizations. It is a clash deliberately created after the collapse of the Soviet Union in order to justify U.S. "defense" spending, and to provide a pretext for controlling the world's resources and markets—primarily in mainly Muslim countries.

The clash between Islam and the West may be summed up in three words: justice versus greed.

Muslims, Christians, Jews

Islam teaches that "the most excellent jihad is for the conquest of self." It teaches Muslims to speak out against oppression, and to fight if necessary for justice. This is jihad.

The *Quran*—the Word of God for Muslims—states:

O mankind! We created you from a single soul, male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, so that you may come to know one another. Truly, the most honored of you in God's sight is the greatest of you in piety.

Thus, Islam, perhaps like no other religion, declares to Muslims the sanctity of all "nations and tribes." What may surprise Christians and Jews, and even many Muslims, is that the *Quran* refers to them all as "muslim."

Muhammad Asad, born Leopold Weiss in Poland in 1900, in his interpretation of the *Quran* wrote:

When his contemporaries heard the words islam and muslim, they understood them as denoting man's "self-surrender to God" and "one who surrenders himself to God," without limiting himself to any specific community or denomination—e.g., in 3:67, where Abraham is spoken of as having "surrendered himself unto God" (kana musliman), or in 3:52 where the disciples of Jesus say, "Bear thou witness that we have surrendered ourselves unto God (bianna musliman)." In Arabic, this original meaning has remained unimpaired, and no Arab scholar has ever become oblivious of the wide connotation of these terms.

The three faiths share the Abrahamic heritage, the same values, and revere many of the same prophets. The prophets of Judaism and Christianity, are also Islam's prophets.

Muslims, Christians, Jews once lived in peace in Palestine—all three referred to God as Allah. The three faiths thrived in Muslim Spain until its fall to Christian armies. Maimonides, highly revered among Jews, studied and practiced in Muslim Spain.

With the fall of Muslim Spain to Christian armies in 1492, Muslims and Jews were expelled or forced to convert to Christianity. The Jews who chose to convert and remain in Spain, were called maranos (pigs) by the Christians.

Indonesia has more Muslims than any other country. No Muslim armies came to convert them to Islam.

A poll conducted by TIME magazine, Europe edition, asked: "Which country really poses the greatest danger to world peace in 2003?"

With 673,027 responses received by March 10, 2003, the results were: North Korea 5.6 %; Iraq 6.5 %; U.S. 87.9 %.

Following the September 11, 2001 attack on the U.S., virtually every Muslim country supported the U.S. "war on terror" until it degenerated into an excuse for a crackdown on Muslims by governments across the world.

While leading Christian evangelists, and the hawks in U.S. government, pushed for war on Iraq, predominantly Christian Europe opposed it. Church leaders including the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, questioned the legality and morality of an American-led assault on Iraq. Jews, Christians, Muslims, and others around the world demonstrated together against the war.

Many Jews support statehood for the Christians and Muslims in Palestine. "Britain's chief rabbi, Jonathon Sacks, head of the Jewish community in the U.K. and the Commonwealth for 11 years, warned that Israel's stance towards Palestinians is incompatible with Judaism," reported *BBC News*.

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Because of Israel's increasing repression of Palestinians, Presbyterians are divesting from Israel, and Anglicans have called for sanctions on Israel. Naturei Karta International, an Orthodox Jewish organization, has printed on its stationery: "Pray for the peaceful dismantling of the Zionist State."

Clash between peoples, nations, and within civilizations

But, there have been, and perhaps there always will be, clashes both among and between peoples and nations, and within civilizations.

The clash between the Dalits—the lowest caste in India—and the upper castes is a clash that has persisted for centuries. Europe, throughout its history, has been ravaged by clashes within Christianity. Muslims have fought wars with Muslims.

For the most part, the underlying reason for these clashes is economic. Economics, more specifically greed, is the primary reason for the clash between Islam and the West.

The U.S. desire to control the world's resources and markets, its abject surrender to the Zionists regardless of the cost to Americans and others, and the virtual exclusion of dissenting voices from the national dialogue, were key factors which led to war.

Control of the world's resources, markets

Following the fall of Muslim Spain in 1492, Europeans spread out over the world—to the Americas, Africa, Asia, Australia. Millions of natives in those continents were brutalized, enslaved, killed.

By some accounts, 15 million natives of North America perished, 50 million natives of South America perished, and 100 to 200 million Africans perished—"since ten people had to be killed for one to be taken alive during capture by the slave-dealers," according to French Senator Roger Garaudy.

By the end of the 18th century, the Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, British, and French ruled much of the world.

In the mid-twentieth century, when the British Empire was crumbling, and the colonial powers were pulling out from Asia and Africa, they drew up national boundaries for their continuing benefit, and the U.S. Empire began to take shape.

The U.S. had fought for control of the world's resources and markets while keeping the true reasons for war from Americans.

Major General Smedley D. Butler, recipient of two

Congressional Medals of Honor, described his experience in the U.S. Marine Corps:

War is just a racket. . . I helped make Mexico, especially Tampico, safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefits of Wall Street. The record of racketeering is long. I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909. . . I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. In China I helped to see to it that Standard Oil went its way unmo- lested.

George Kennan, recipient of the Albert Einstein Peace Prize, chairman of the Policy Planning Staff at the State Department, wrote in the top secret Policy Planning Study No. 23:

We have about 50% of the world's wealth, but only 6.3% of its population. . . . Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity.

While U.S. policy advisors may differ on the specific timing and means, this militant foreign policy—often backed up by assassination of opponents (aka "regime change"), military coups, terrorism—has powerful proponents.

Former National Security Advisor to President Carter, Zbigniew Brzezinski, writes in *The Grand Chessboard* (1997):

A power that dominates Eurasia [the territory east of Germany and Poland, stretching all the way through Russia and China to the Pacific Ocean—including the Middle East and most of the Indian subcontinent] would control two of the world's three most advanced and economically productive regions. A mere glance at the map also suggests that control over Eurasia would almost automatically entail Africa's subordination. . . . About 75 per cent of the world's people live in Eurasia, and most of the world's physical wealth is there as well, both in its enterprises and underneath its soil. Eurasia accounts for 60 per cent of the world's GNP and about three-fourths of the world's known energy resources.

The key to controlling Eurasia, says Brzezinski, is controlling the Central Asian Republics. He adds:

The three grand imperatives of imperial geostrategy are to prevent collusion and maintain security dependence among the vassals, to keep tributaries pliant and protected, and to keep the barbarians from coming together.



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According to the *Los Angeles Times*:

Behind a veil of secret agreements, the United States is creating a ring of new and expanded military bases that encircle Afghanistan and enhance the armed forces' ability to strike targets throughout much of the Muslim world.

Since Sept. 11, according to Pentagon sources, military tent cities have sprung up at 13 locations in nine countries neighboring Afghanistan.

Chalmers Johnson, author of *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire*, and *The Sorrows of Empire*, writes: "the Pentagon currently owns or rents 702 overseas bases in about 130 countries." It is reported that the U.S. is constructing 14 new bases in occupied Iraq.

Uncritical support of the apartheid state of Israel

The unresolved issue of Israel helps keep Zbigniew Brzezinski's "barbarians"—presumably, the Muslim nations of the Middle East, Africa, and Central Asia—from coming together. The U.S.—which displayed exceptional zeal in implementing UN Security Council resolutions against Iraq—has displayed the same zeal in blocking implementation of UN Security Council resolutions against Israel.

UN Security Council Resolution 242 of 1967 which emphasizes "the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war," and requires the "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict," has yet to be implemented.

While the U.S. pushed for war on Iraq, and maintained no-fly zones in Northern and Southern Iraq, under the U.S. interpretation of UN Security Council Resolution 687 (with which most others disagree), the U.S. ignored Article 14 of the same resolution which has "the goal of establishing in the Middle East a zone free from weapons of mass destruction and all missiles for their delivery and the objective of a global ban on chemical weapons" for all the nations in the region—including Israel which is known to possess chemical and biological weapons, and 200 to 400 nuclear weapons and the missiles to deliver them.

The United States which claims to promote democracy around the world continues its uncritical support of the apartheid state of Israel (*Israel: An Apartheid State* by Israeli lawyer, Dr. Uri Davis), and its unlawful occupation of Palestine. Israel has cost the U.S. about \$1.6 trillion since 1973 estimates Thomas Stauffer, a consulting economist.

A survey conducted by the *Guardian* (November 2,

2003) of 500 people from each of the European Union's member nations included a list of 15 countries with the question, "tell me if in your opinion it presents or not a threat to peace in the world". Israel was reportedly picked by 59 per cent of those interviewed.

Poll: U.S. greatest danger to world peace

Now the "barbarians" and most of the "civilized" world appear to be standing on the side of justice and not the U.S.

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BBC World (April 9, 2004) asked 1,500 viewers of its news and international channel for the biggest problems in the world. Fifty-two per cent said the U.S. and globalization.

The Independent (October 18, 2004) reported the findings of a new survey of African attitudes, thought to be the biggest-ever of its kind. Fifty-four per cent of the interviewees—not just among Muslims—saw the U.S. as a threat.

U.S. 'defense' spending

According to the Center for Defense Information (February 3, 2003), "the United States and its allies account for two-thirds of world military expenditures." Not counting the \$200 billion for the war on Iraq, the \$399 billion U.S. "defense" budget is equal to that of the next 15 biggest spenders combined—6 times bigger than Russia's (the second biggest spender), 8 times bigger than China's, and 52 times bigger than Canada's!

The defense spending of the "rogue states," or "axis of evil," pales in comparison. In 2001, Iran spent \$4.8 billion; North Korea 2.1; Iraq 1.4; Libya 1.2; Syria 1.0; Cuba 0.8; Sudan 0.6—a total just under \$12 billion.

Former Defense Secretary McNamara, in his 1989 testimony before the Senate Budget Committee, said U.S. "defense" spending could safely be cut in half. This was unacceptable to many.

With the demise of the Soviet Union, it became necessary to find new "enemies." The choice was between the Yellow Peril (East Asia) and the Green Peril (Islam). Islam was selected. Over the next decade this evolved into the "war on terror."



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International outlaw

Multi-billionaire George Soros, writes in *Open Society: Reforming Global Capitalism*: "The United States has become the greatest obstacle to establishing the rule of law in international affairs."

According to a survey done for the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations and the German Marshall Fund of the U.S., "a majority of people in six European countries believe American foreign policy is partly to blame for the Sept. 11 attacks."

The U.S. stands virtually alone against the world in efforts to build a safer, better world. For example:

International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (1966) was unanimously approved by the UN General Assembly but not ratified by the U.S.

Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (1972) was signed and ratified by the U.S. and USSR, but overturned by President Bush.

Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (1979) was ratified by more than 150 governments but not the U.S.

UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982) was supported by 130 governments but never ratified by the U.S.

Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) was ratified by 187 governments but not the U.S.

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (1996) was signed by President Clinton, ratified by all NATO allies and Russia, voted down by the U.S. Senate, and is opposed by President Bush.

Kyoto Protocol (1997) sets targets for emissions which cause global warming awaits ratification by the U.S.

Chemical Weapons Convention (1998) was crippled by the U.S. by limiting what may be inspected in the U.S.

Biological Weapons Convention (2001) was signed by 144 countries, but the U.S. rejected the "verification protocol."

Nonproliferation and Test Ban Treaties (2002) have been jeopardized by the U.S. by its announcement to build and use small, tactical, nuclear weapons.

International Criminal Court (July 1, 2002) was backed by 74 countries, signed by President Clinton, but was fiercely opposed by the U.S. unless American citizens were given immunity from war crimes prosecutions.

The opposition by a signatory to the treaty undermines the entire system of international law. According to the *Guardian*:

The U.S. threatened to assert it is no longer bound by the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, a 1969 pact detailing the obligations of nations to obey other international treaties. Under the convention, a country that has signed a treaty cannot act to defeat the purpose of that treaty, even if does not intend to ratify it.

Meanwhile, the U.S. continues to develop new nuclear weapons, microbes to wipe out entire cities, genetically engineered fungus, and genetically engineered materials-eating bacteria, and to test warheads containing live microbes.

The U.S. "government has been planning to test warheads containing live microbes in large aerosol chambers at the U.S. Army's Edgewood Chemical Biological Centre in Maryland," wrote George Monbiot in the *Guardian* (March 19, 2002).

At Fort Benning, Georgia, the U.S. operates what may be the best terrorist training academy in the world. "Put simply, the School of the Americas has trained some of the most brutal assassins, some of the cruelest dictators, and some of the worst abusers of human rights the western hemisphere has ever seen," says Rep. Joe Moakely (D-MA).

The need for dialogue

The voracious U.S. appetite for resources and markets, the desire to control those resources and markets, the uncritical U.S. support of Israel, and the need to justify military spending, drive U.S. wars. These are bound to create more "terrorists," and perhaps retaliation.

Those who stand to benefit by war, have characterized opposition to U.S. domination as a "clash of civilizations." They are not interested in just agreements freely negotiated. They understand only the language of realpolitik—often a euphemism for state-sponsored terrorism.

Fortunately, due to an increasingly multi-cultural society, and the Internet, the world is waking up. Many see the clash between Islam and the West for what it is: a clash between justice and greed.

The September 11, 2001 attack on America might have been prevented, had there been an honest exchange of dissenting views presented to Americans. President John F. Kennedy said: "Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable." Only through dialogue is "peaceful revolution" possible. ❖

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