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Know The Enemy (And What He Believes) By: David Horowitz

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THE WAR WE HAVE joined is defined by three simple but brutal facts. Our enemy is able to penetrate our borders and strike us in our homes; he can strike us with weapons of mass destruction; and he has made clear his intention is not to change our policies or to force our withdrawal, but to obliterate us and destroy our civilization. Because of these facts, the imperative of defending ourselves as quickly and effectively as possible is more important in this war – by a factor so great as to be impossible to calculate — than any we have ever fought.

In all wars the first essential is to know your enemy. Everything you can do to thwart his objectives or to protect your life and the lives of your countrymen depends on this knowledge. But if the war is a war of terror, in which stealth warriors target civilians, the importance of this knowledge is even greater still –again by a factor so large as to be impossible to calculate.

Who, then, is the enemy that has struck us and who threatens our destruction? Officially he has been defined in terms that invoke “terror” and “evil,” that are generic and that really describe the means by which he has chosen to fight the war, and not why he is fighting or how we have become his enemy. They do not tell us who he is. This failure to name our enemy is already a source of great weakness in erecting our defenses. This ignorance is the most pressing danger to us, after the threat itself. Already, in attempting to establish security perimeters at our borders, and in our airports and harbors, we have denied ourselves the ability to target the specific groups who have targeted us. The policy that will not identify the enemy by name is a policy that asks us to fight in the dark. Yet every terrorist who slips through these nets is capable of killing tens of thousands of innocent Americans.

Yet, we already know who our enemy is, no matter how many choose to deny it. Almost a year has passed since the attacks on Wall Street and the Pentagon — the twin symbols of American wealth and power. We have seen the face of the enemy, even if we are still reluctant to name him.

We are at war with radical Islam (not all of Islam but with Islamic radicals). And we are – or should be – at war with their allies, the international radical left. Both see us as the embodiment of evil – racism, oppression, on the one hand, and the frustrations of Islamic societies on the other. Both, therefore, seek our destruction.

The publication of a new al-Qaeda manifesto, translated by the Middle East Research Institute (MEMRI) makes its agendas abundantly clear. The statement called, “Why We Fight America,” and was issued by al-Qaeda spokesman, Suleiman Abu Gheith and appeared on an al-Qaeda website hosted by Center for Islamic Research and Studies.

The al-Qaeda statement begins by asking why the world is surprised by what happened on 9/11 – pretty much the question that Noam Chomsky, Tariq Ali, Edward Said, Barbara Kingsolver, Arundhati Roy and sundry professors at anti-American rallies on college campuses across the country asked within weeks of the horrific attack. And the answer is pretty much the same for both as well:

“What happened to America [on 9/11] is something natural, an expected event for a country that uses terror, arrogant policy, and suppression against the nations and the peoples, and imposes a single method,

thought, and way of life, as if the people of the entire world are clerks in its government offices and employed by its commercial companies and institutions.”

Anyone who was surprised by 9/11, the al-Qaeda statement continues, does not understand the root causes of the attack and in particular “the effects of oppression and tyranny on [the victims’] emotions and feelings.” Instead, such people must think, “that oppression begets surrender, that repression begets silence, that tyranny leaves only humiliation.”

In fact, according to al-Qaeda, humiliation, deprivation and oppression inspire righteous rage against the oppressor. And this righteous indignation is what al-Qaeda’s war is about. Of course, unlike the Western left, al-Qaeda does not wage its war in the name of an international proletariat and its goal is not a secular socialist utopia. Al-Qaeda’s war is about the future world reign of Islam. The al-Qaeda statement asks: How can a Muslim accept humiliation and inferiority “when he knows that his nation was created to stand at the center of leadership, at the center of hegemony and rule, at the center of ability and sacrifice? ... When he knows that the [divine] rule is that the entire earth must be subject to the religion of Allah – not to the East, not to the West – to no ideology and to no path except the path of Allah?...”

Credulous apostles of appeasement in the West like Ted Turner and Cherie Blair (wife of British Prime Minister Tony Blair) are so superior in their own minds to the Muslims who hate them that they don’t consider the possibility that the Islamic faithful could actually mean what they say. Justifying Arafat’s suicide brigades, Blair said, “As long as young people feel they have got no hope but to blow themselves up you are never going to make progress.” This is an inanity heard nightly on cable talk shows from the left. It is the propaganda line of Machiavellian spokesmen for the terrorist cause like PLO spokesman Abudl Rachman and westernized apologists like Hussein Ibish who equate the terrorists’ terror with the victims’ response. But it ignores what the combatants say about themselves and their inspiration, and patronizes them in the process.

The Middle East Research Institute has also translated an interview given to the Arab press by a mother of a suicide bomber, who has nothing to say about root causes like poverty, or thwarted national desires or “social injustice.” (Indeed when the al-Qaeda spokesman speaks of his “nation” he clearly means the entire world of Islam, and not any particular state whether Afghanistan or Palestine or Saudia Arabia or Iraq.) What she says is this:

I am a compassionate mother to my children,... Because I love my son, I encouraged him to die a martyr’s death for the sake of Allah... Jihad is a religious obligation incumbent upon us, and we must carry it out. I sacrificed Muhammad as part of my obligation. This is an easy thing. There is no disagreement [among scholars] on such matters. The happiness in this world is an incomplete happiness; eternal happiness is life in the world to come, through martyrdom. Allah be praised, my son has attained this happiness... I prayed from the depths of my heart that Allah would cause the success of his operation. I asked Allah to give me 10 [Israelis] for Muhammad, and Allah granted my request and Muhammad made his dream come true, killing 10 Israeli settlers and soldiers. Our God honored him even more, in that there were many Israelis wounded. When the operation was over, the media broadcast the news. Then Muhammad’s brother came to me and informed me of his martyrdom. I began to cry, ‘Allah is the greatest,’ and prayed and thanked Allah for the success of the operation. I began to utter cries of joy and we declared that we were happy. The young people began to fire into the air out of joy over the success of the operation, as this is what we had hoped for him.

The will to genocide is not specific to the martyrs who blow up little children, but is shared by the community of radical Islam. It comes not from despair, but from a hope of heaven – from extending the territory of Islam and doing Allah’s will. Nothing could be more obvious to anyone paying attention.

That is, to anyone paying attention without the screen of liberal arrogance, which denies what it has seen in order to explain it. And thereby understand it. And thereby surrender to it.

The hope for heaven – or for the global reign of Islam as the path to heaven — is generically the same fanatical inspiration that caused believers in socialism (a heaven on earth) to kill tens of millions of innocent unbelievers during the 20th Century. It is the same faith that causes progressive fellow travelers like Ted Turner, Barbara Kingsolver and Edward Said to support the agendas of America’s enemies. And of perverse America-haters, like Gore Vidal and Noam Chomsky to support any anti-American war.

The present war against us may be about humiliation and a sense of inferiority stemming from Islam’s centuries of eclipse, but it is not about despair. The new statement from al-Qaeda is not addressed to people who have nothing. Quite the opposite It is an incitement to people who have something — and who might be reluctant to give up what they have — to sacrifice life itself for the glory of Islam: “As long as the Muslim knows and believes ... he will not – even for a single moment — stop trying to achieve [the universal triumph of Islam], even if it costs him his soul...his time, his property and his son, ...”

This is not a war about land in the Middle East or the structure of a Palestinian state, or a U.S. military presence in the Arabian peninsula. It is a war about redemption. In this it exactly parallels the Communist threat from the past. In the eyes of the Communists, America stood in the way of heaven – a socialist paradise in which racism, sexism, and economic inequality would vanish from the earth. In the eyes of radical Islam, America — the Great Satan — stands in the way of Islam’s rule, and thus of human redemption and it is for this reason America must be destroyed.

Thus, the al-Qaeda proclamation: “America is the head of heresy in our modern world, and it leads an infidel democratic regime that is based upon separation of religion and state and on ruling the people by the people via legislating laws that contradict the way of Allah and permit what Allah has prohibited. This compels the other countries to act in accordance with the same laws in the same ways ... and punishes any country [that rebels against these laws] by besieging it, and then by boycotting it. By so doing [America] seeks to impose on the world a religion that is not Allah’s...”

Americans wake up! Your enemies hate you for who you are. They hate you because you are democratic, and tolerant and unbelieving. They hate you because you are Christians: “America’s standing with the Christians of the world against the Muslims has stripped the camouflage from its face.” And they hate you because you are Hindus and Buddhists and secularists and Jews.

This war is not a war we are facing. It is a war we are in. Americans have hardly begun to understand this, but the enemy is already keeping score: “We have not reached parity [with America’s alleged attacks on Muslims. [Therefore], we have the right to kill 4 million Americans – 2 million of them children – and to exile twice as many and wound and cripple hundreds of thousands. Furthermore, it is our right to fight them with chemical and biological weapons, so as to afflict them with the fatal maladies that have afflicted Muslims because of the [Americans’] chemical and biological weapons.”

Americans have also only begun to understand that if radical Islam is one face of our enemy, the other is the radical left. For two hundred years the radical left has believed in a religion promising a heaven on earth whose end justifies any means. That is why progressives like Lenin and Stalin and Pol Pot killed so many innocent people. That is why radical leftists in America and other European countries have joined in denouncing America’s war of self-defense and in abetting the Arab crusade to obliterate Israel and (in the process) exterminate the Jews of the Middle East.

How serious are some American leftists about abetting the war to destroy their own country? Attorney Lynne Stewart is a veteran of the radical left going back to the 1960s and is the lawyer for the “blind sheik” who led the first terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in 1993. Six people were killed in the attack and 1,000 injured. Stewart is associated with the Center for Constitutional Rights and has been a supporter of Communist causes and Arab terrorists for her entire professional life. Recently, the Attorney General indicted Stewart for helping the “blind sheik,” who is now in prison, to communicate with his terrorist followers in the Middle East and further their bloody agendas.

A chorus from the left has attacked Attorney General Ashcroft for infringing on the civil liberties of the imprisoned terrorist and his “lawyer.” Stewart has been defended as a persecuted civil libertarian by the left-wing National Lawyers Guild, the ACLU, The Nation and other institutions of the “progressive” left.

In 1995, Lynne Stewart was interviewed by the New York Times, which reported her radical beliefs. “”Ms. Stewart suggested that violence and revolution were sometimes necessary to right the economic and racial wrongs of America’s capitalist system.” Among other things, Lynne Stewart said this: “I don’t believe in anarchistic violence, but in directed violence. That would be violence directed at the institutions which perpetuate capitalism, racism, and sexism, and the people who are the appointed guardians of those institutions, and accompanied by popular support.”

The World Trade Center is an institution which perpetuates capitalism and — in the eyes of the left — racism and sexism as well. According to every leftist – from the Nation magazine to the Chomsky fifth column (the distance is not great) –, America is a land of capitalism, racism and sexism, and the enforcer of capitalism, racism and sexism globally. This is the world that the Islamicists call Dar Al-Harb: The world of darkness. The world that is not socialist (for the leftist believers) and that is not Islam (for the faithful). According to Lynne Stewart and the al-Qaeda spokesman, the people who dwell in Dar Al-Harb and support its profane agendas deserve to die. This is what the present “war on terror” is about. Americans better understand it sooner than later.

David Horowitz is the founder of The David Horowitz Freedom Center and author of the new book, One Party Classroom.

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