

Islamic Armageddon

by: *Ronald L. Dart*

Not long ago I ran across an item which observed that Britain is only now coming to realize that the terrorism going on there is religious. I was shocked. I suppose the English were long accustomed to Irish terrorism, which was a political thing, and they tended to think of Islamists in the same term. But I've said all along that the west is the object of a jihad; and a jihad is a religious war. We've gotten into, involuntarily, a religious war. The western press is no help at all. I heard some "talking heads" discussing the news that al-Qaeda in Iraq had unanimously selected a new leader. The story was presented as though there had been some kind of a convention somewhere, and nominees had been discussed and voted on as they do at the Democratic National Convention. One of the opinion brokers I've heard also compares al-Qaeda to a gang. The leader selects himself in a gang and often, by violence against his own people, establishes himself.

Recently I watched a movie that I first saw in 1966. This was before the advent of video tape and DVD, so the theater was the only place you could see it, and the movie quickly faded into the background. The movie was *Khartoum*, starring Charlton Heston and Lawrence Olivier. What struck me as I watched this movie for the second time in forty years was how little I understood about the film, its background and its history at the time it was released. The Mahdi played by Olivier was a religious leader in the Sudan on the march to conquer the world. Mohammad had commanded the Mahdi that he must pray in the mosque in Khartoum, and he was going to slaughter everyone in the city to do that. In fact, he made it plain that he was going to kill everyone in the city whether they surrendered, gave up, walked out or what—they were all going to die. Then he intended to proceed down the Nile and do the same thing at Cairo, Constantinople, and beyond, killing infidels everywhere he went. When I first saw this movie I thought of the Mahdi only as an apparition. The movie was a good action flick—great acting, beautiful photography. What I did not understand, and I fear too many people still don't understand, was that the Mahdi was *not* an apparition. Islam has spawned so many just like him through time, and at one time, it was the most powerful religion in the world. No, not just the most powerful religion, it was the most powerful empire in the world and the truth is, Islam makes no distinction between government and religion at all. Government is the handmaid of religion.

The Mahdi in the Sudan featured in the movie *Khartoum* was the Osama Bin Laden of his day. He killed people, then spread terror as an instrument for the acquisition of power. The thing that makes people like this so dangerous is that they are religious. They are not people who are self-serving in the sense that they will do almost anything to stay alive, and they don't love life. They love only Islam, Allah, and Mohammad, and they are willing to do anything to spread their faith. Hitler and Mussolini were dangerous enough, but they could not be called religious leaders by any normal stretch of those terms. They didn't want to die; they wanted to live. Osama, like the Mahdi before him, aspires to be the one true leader of Islam in the world. Unfortunately, some who influence opinion in our world still don't seem to grasp that. I hope the White House does, somewhere inside that they don't talk about. The press at large certainly does not. Or at least, if they do, they never talk about it.

I recently read an article by Mort Zuckerman, the respected editor of *US News & World Report*. He focused primarily on Palestine and Hamas, the ruling political party in Palestine. He said, "So many on both sides have died and will continue to die as a result of the Hamas Manifesto that has virtually transformed Palestine into a terrorist state and that now threatens Jordan and Egypt as well as Israel." I dare say that hardly anybody realizes that. When have you heard it? I don't recall anyone mentioning it, other than Mort Zuckerman. Hamas is not merely a threat to Israel; it's a threat to Jordan and to Egypt as well. And I have absolutely no doubt that the Hamas leadership sees themselves as the new Mahdi. They intend, once again, to move out, take over the Middle East, and spread their faith everywhere, killing infidels as they go.

I wondered about the Hamas Manifesto when he mentioned that. I'd never read it so I looked it up. More of us should do this sort of thing. What have these people stated about their goals, their purposes, and so forth? Is Hamas merely a political movement or is it more than that? Since you can find out everything you want to know on the Internet these days, I went to the Internet. Here's the beginning of the Hamas Manifesto: "In The Name Of The Most Merciful Allah You are the best nation that hath been raised up unto mankind: You command that which is just, and you forbid that which is unjust, and you believe in Allah. And if they who have received the scriptures had believed, it had surely been the better for them: there are believers among them, but the greater part of them are transgressors. They shall not hurt you, unless with a slight heart; and if they fight against you, they shall turn their backs to you, and they shall not be helped. They are smitten with vileness wheresoever they are found; unless they obtain security by entering into a treaty with Allah, and a treaty with men; and they draw on themselves indignation from Allah, and they are afflicted with poverty."

I read that and I had to shake my head. Consider what Islam has done for its people; you see it everywhere—a people afflicted with poverty. Their religion has not brought them

to a better life. He said, "This they suffer, because they disbelieved the signs of Allah, and slew the prophets unjustly; this, because they were rebellious, and transgressed." It may well be that we will hear someone say, in the killing of Al-Zarqawi, that one of the prophets was slain unjustly.

Then there is this line that stands in a paragraph all its own in this manifesto. It says this: "Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it just as it obliterated others before it." This is not that hard to understand, and if you're an Israeli living day by day next door to these people, what are you supposed to think they're trying to do? They're intending, deliberately, to obliterate your nation. Many people think, if we would just give them Israel they would be satisfied. That would be a terrible mistake. In fact, I think many people would do well to rent the movie *Khartoum*, watch it again, and realize that what you are seeing in the Mahdi is Osama bin Laden, trying to do what Osama bin Laden has done since and what Hamas thinks they can do now.

If you wonder where the President of Iran obtains his rhetoric, you need look no further. It comes from the same poisoned well as the Charter of Hamas. Herbert London wrote in the *Washington Times* not long ago, "Only two of the world's religions believe they will come to dominate global allegiance: Christianity and Islam. The Crusades lasted so long and were so bloody because these religions were at odds for what each considered worldwide dominance." I'm not sure he has that exactly right. In fact, scholars have made a lot of progress in understanding the Crusades, and it doesn't look as it used to look to them. But he's close enough to give us all pause. From the point of view of the new would-be leaders of the Muslim world, we are, at best, a Christian nation trying to dominate the world; at worst, we are a nation of infidels that needs to be wiped out. And we support Israel. That, for Islamists, is a singular crime.

Back to Mort Zuckerman's piece in *US News*, he said, "The true nature of Hamas must be fully understood. It is not just another nationalist political party. It is a radical Islamist terrorist group with a totalitarian DNA just as it has been since its inception." Sometimes words fly by us without our taking notice. He said they have "a totalitarian DNA." What does that mean? Totalitarian is defined as "relating to a political regime based on subordination of the individual to the state, strict control of all aspects of the life and productive capacity of the nation, especially by coercive measures as censorship and terrorism." Take note of that because what he's saying is that a totalitarian state uses terrorism against its own people—the state puts down its own people in terror and in fear. It isn't just a matter of some radical group trying to attack a nation different from their own. It's not just Israel who is suffering from Hamas. The Palestinians are suffering as well. Zuckerman continued, "Hamas supported the Popular Resistance Committee, [the PRC] [it's] a terrorist group in Gaza. [Hamas] appointed its leader [of this terrorist group] as the head of

the new security force, despite the fact that the PRC killed three Americans in the Gaza Strip in 2003—not to mention dozens of Israelis. [The leader of that group] [mind you, the head of the security force] immediately restated his goal, ‘We have only one enemy. They are Jews. We have no other enemy. I will continue to carry the rifle and pull the trigger.’” Oh boy, is that symbolic of some of these people on the news reports you see— carrying rifles, pulling triggers. I’ve been struck over the years, in the film I have seen, by the utter lack of weapons discipline among these people. It harkens back to Arabs riding their camels out in the desert, waving their swords in the air. Then it became guiding their camels and shooting their rifles in the air. And, in Libya, they came roaring out in fighter jets and shot their missiles into the air. They died for their trouble when they tried to attack two F15s off an American aircraft carrier.

He went on to say, “Thus, a self-declared terrorist has been put in command of the Palestinian police force for the first time.” Now you understand what he is telling us—a self-declared, card-carrying, certified terrorist is now in command of the Palestinian police force. “Equally telling, the interior minister, Said Sayyam, has stated that Hamas will not sanction any security cooperation with Israel. On the contrary, it will coordinate terrorist activity against Israel.” What are you going to make of that if you’re an Israeli? These people stand for nothing except for the destruction of your country, your own death, you being driven into the sea, the death of your wife, and the death of your children. They just simply want to destroy you. How should you think in response to that? Maybe, more important, what should you do in response to it? Because the Palestinians now are creating a new terrorist state.

Continuing: “For Hamas, nationalism exists only ‘as part and parcel of the religious faith.’ To Hamas, Palestine is Islamic land, and its covenant states: ‘God decreed Palestine to be a Muslim Trust for perpetuity,’ making the dispute not about territory and boundaries but about the need for Muslims to wage jihad until Israel no longer exists.” What is so sobering to me is that I have seen indications in the Bible that there is yet another holocaust coming, and I have said as much in past programs. And here is a man basically saying that it is their stated intent— their determination—to do precisely that. The article continues: “Hamas is not a democratic government. Yes, won an election, but a democracy is defined by more than one election. It is defined in practice by nonviolence, by respect for the rule of law, for minorities, and for individual rights, by an independent media and judiciary, and by a reasonable respect for agreements made by predecessor governments. Domestic violence is the antithesis of democracy. But this ‘democratically elected’ Hamas is now resorting to assassination of its Palestinian opponents...Hamas is preparing to get rid of the Palestinian leader, Mahmoud Abbas, and it is collecting intelligence on the houses of the senior Fatah commanders in the security service who support him.” He is telling us flatly that Hamas, theoretically a political party, is in the process of preparing to get rid of Abbas, assassinating him if necessary, and then collecting intelligence to get rid of all the people around him. If

you are a person who has read very much history of Germany pre-World War II and of the rise of Hitler, this has a very familiar ring.

He continues to say, “When Abbas is gone, according to the Constitution, the parliamentary speaker, who is a Hamas member, would then become president in his stead. Eliminating Abbas is the last obstacle preventing Hamas from achieving full control of the Palestinian Authority—its security forces, its commercial authorities and monopolies, and other business interests and associations. It wants the gun and the wallet.” Zuckerman comes to what he calls the inescapable conclusion that Hamas must be made to fail and seen to fail. There can’t be any equivocation. I know some people are going to say, “Oh but the Palestinian people will suffer.” His answer was, “They must endure the troubles that they have wrought.” They’ve wanted it, prayed for it, worked for it, voted for it in a more recent election, and some of them are going to die for it before all is said and done. Because what Israel has come up against this time, is a situation where there is no more going back to Oslo, there’s no more going to the peace table, there is absolutely nothing to discuss whatever with Hamas. And if it comes down to the place, to where you have a state next door to you practicing terrorism against your people, they are now practicing an act of war and Israel will be fully justified in going to war against Hamas. And in the end, it will be Hamas that’s driven into the sea unless. . . and there are some huge ‘unless’ questions that revolve around this.

The odd thing to me about Mort Zuckerman’s piece is that he recognizes that the goals of Hamas are religious and yet he still talks about the issue in political terms. I think it’s because he really can’t face the alternative or, perhaps, doesn’t see the alternative. It should be obvious to anyone that you really can’t negotiate on religious terms. When people are believers, they believe it all the way to the bone. It’s an interesting scene in the movie *Khartoum* when General Chinese Gordon comes up against the hard fact of the faith of the Mahdi. I guess he just hadn’t realized it; hadn’t come to grips with it up until that time. But it’s plain: you can’t negotiate with this. So what are your alternatives? You can submit or you can fight. It comes down to that. Hamas, indeed all the Islamists, are believers with guns and bombs and they are trying right now to obtain nuclear weapons.

And the world has changed in important ways with 9/11. We really ought to realize that our old thoughts about nuclear war are no longer valid. The idea of mutually assured destruction worked with the Soviet Union because they didn’t want to die. Now you have some Islamists who believe that a nuclear Armageddon *must* come; and seem to be quite willing to bring it about even if it means the destruction of their own people. Now we have people who are willing to die to kill you. They believe we are in the last days. And this is crucial to understanding what’s going on.

Here's how Herbert London sees it, writing in the *Washington Times*, "With all this as a backdrop, it's worth asking why there were so many riots and chaos across the globe over cartoons that caricature the Prophet Mohammad and every real perceived slight against Islam? After all, in the old, old book, *The Divine Comedy*, Dante meets Mohammad suffering in the fires of hell. Civilization survived that. The Cathedral of Bologna has shown frescoes of Mohammed in an unfavorable light for centuries." Why now? Why the extreme reaction to seemingly innocuous events? This is what Herbert London sees, "In my judgment, Islamic clerics have decided the final solution, the triumph of Islam over Christendom is near. Here is the contemporary Crusades fought on a new stage. There will be many battles fought over trifling issues, an insult or perceived incident, that triggers riots. Why now? Because there is a belief circulating in the Islamic world that a secular West no longer has the will to resist Islamic jihad. In fact, the compromises and willingness to accommodate Islamic factions in European societies are recognized by them as signs of weakness. The more open and liberal the society, the more likely it is a target for jihad." Think about that! "The more open and the more liberal the society, the more likely it is to be a target for jihad. It is not coincidental that Denmark now faces daily riots, or the Netherlands where our film maker Theo Van Gogh was murdered on the streets." The Mahdi in the Sudan saw himself in this light. But he was stymied by General Gordon and the British almost accidentally because Gordon was a shaken man once he realized what the Mahdi was doing and what he believed. In other words, he was every bit as much a believer as was Gordon; maybe even more so, and Gordon had not realized that.

"For Islamists the moment for a triumphalist campaign has arrived," according to London, "a moment not unlike the jihad Mohammed launched against the three Jewish tribes in Arabia in the seventh century. That the West considers this Islamic fanaticism a form of acting out over deplorable conditions faced by Muslims within their border also plays to Islam's strength. Believing that there must be a rational explanation for seemingly irrational behavior, Western leaders bend over backward to make accommodations. Rarely do leaders conclude the violence is fomented by religious zealotry no liberal concessions can mitigate." There's not a thing in the world we can give them that will make any difference. "The riots are aimed at breaking Western will. They are a tactic to test the fortitude of the West, to see if there is any religious devotion that can withstand the onslaught. If one considers the feeble response from European capitals, you would have to believe the Islamic clerics are right."

I thought about that after watching the movie, *Khartoum*. There's a scene—I don't know if it happened or not, but something like it probably did—where General Chinese Gordon tells the Mahdi, "I may die of your miracle, but you will surely die of mine." What Gordon did was put his faith right up there against the Mahdi faith and, even though he died, he defeated the Mahdi who was dead in a few months.

I think Herbert London takes what Mort Zuckerman says to its logical conclusion. It's good to know the Islamists won't win because they have made a terrific miscalculation. There are people in the West who, when they finally face up to it, will resist. There will be more bloodshed because they didn't resist earlier, but they will.

Christians are naturally concerned about the Middle East. Jerusalem is where our Savior did his work, where he was crucified and died, where he was buried, and where he rose again. And Jerusalem is where he will once again return. We know that. Christian preachers are constantly scanning the prophecies of the end time in Jerusalem to catch a glimpse of what God has in store. Some think they see an Islamic power in the prophecies of the anti-Christ. But there is this one passage in 2 Thessalonians 2 that should give a person pause. The Apostle Paul says, "The day of Christ will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed. He is a man who will oppose and exalt himself over everything that is called God, he sets himself up in the temple of God proclaiming that he is God." I'm sorry, but there simply is no way for a Muslim authority to do that. But we'll keep watching.

This article was transcribed with minor editing from a message given by
Ronald L. Dart titled: "Islamic Armageddon" (06IA) 6/13/06

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