

You never ask questions
When God's on your side

BOB DYLAN

“Christians, Jews and Muslims and those without religious affiliation will welcome Aftab Malik’s brave efforts to create a dialogue about terrorism. Pulpits and parliaments have provided platforms for illegitimate and simple hate messages that cannot be justified by the core values of the Abrahamic faiths or the founding principles of democratic states. This book helps to create a rational and informed counterweight to those who pour oil on the flames.”

— **PROFESSOR ROBIN COHEN**

University of Warwick, England

“...an admirable and significant *tour de force* which probes the back room architects of the invasion of Iraq, the theological underpinnings of the Christian Zionists; how they have sanctified Empire, Islamicized evil and wrapped the shroud of Jesus around Israel.”

— **DR. S. J. NOUMOFF**

McGill University, Canada

“Speaking the truth about Israel and Zionism must include an honest discussion of the Bush administration’s war on Iraq. It must also acknowledge the role of Israel-first ideologues who strive to ‘redraw the map of the Middle East’ and to forge the relationship between the US and the rest of the world analogous to the relationship of the hammer to the nail. This book goes a long way in speaking these truths.”

— **PROFESSOR DANIEL A. MCGOWAN**

Director, Deir Yassin Remembered, www.DeirYassin.org

“...incisively and mercilessly exposes and analyzes government lies most of us live by, many of us kill by, and many more of us get killed by. This book is a must for anyone who is interested in awakening a human mind that has been duped by false propaganda.”

— **PROFESSOR RACHEL GIORA**

Tel Aviv University, Israel

“This book departs from the prevalent Western tendency to portray Islamic extremism as an isolated religious aberration rather than as a response to historical and political developments in the Islamic world. Not only does it point out that continuing American, Israeli and Russian

aggression against Islamic peoples has fomented religious-based militancy among Muslims, but it draws needed attention to the fact that religious extremists within Christianity and Judaism have routinely supported such aggression. What a refreshing contrast to the endless propaganda of American and Israeli ‘terrorism experts’ who systematically obfuscate any serious inquiry into the causes of political violence in the Middle East.”

— **PROFESSOR TOMIS KAPITAN**

Northern Illinois University, Illinois, US

“Scholarly, incisive, and a must read for individuals committed to confronting misinformation, illusions, and spin from the Bush administration and the media about Iraq, Palestine and the Middle East. Aftab Malik has done a masterful job of pulling together some of the best scholars in the field and this book will almost certainly become required reading for students and scholars alike. This is a breath of fresh air in the midst of a very toxic moment in our history.”

— **PROFESSOR JESS GHANNAM**

University of California, San Francisco, US

“This timely and richly sourced book spans the roots of the ‘War on Terrorism’ from Halliburton to the neo-cons to the Apocalypse... it unmasks a vast web of deceit consisting of media pundits, greedy executives and religious fanatics....”

— **ISRAEL ADAM SHAMIR**

Author of The Galilee Flowers

“A well-documented contribution to a critical understanding of the forces of current US policies in the Middle East.”

— **PROFESSOR GÖRAN THERBORN**

Uppsala University, Sweden

“At Nuremberg in 1946, the Allied Tribunal rejected the German argument for pre-emptive war (the Bush doctrine) with the statement: ‘To initiate a war of aggression is not only an international crime; it is the supreme international crime differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole.’ Since the Anglo-American-Zionist ‘axis of good’ has opted for the wanton disregard

for human life and criminal unconcern for human misery while calling immoral actions ‘moral,’ and illegal actions ‘legal,’ the cauterized collective conscience of members of the US government and their supporters can only be matched by the moralized drivel produced by ever-aggrieved Israel. This collection of articles serves as an illuminating and pointed examination of conscience for persons interested in scrutinizing their attitudes toward what has been happening in the Middle East.”

— **PROFESSOR BRUCE J. MALINA**

Creighton University, Nebraska, US

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— **PROFESSOR FATMA WAHDAN ANTAR**

Manchester, Connecticut, US

“The architects of the ‘war on terrorism’ and the war in Iraq have made a shameful art out of ignoring mountains of facts, creating others, and distorting the rest. In the face of such madness and the disdain for human life that it represents, this powerful book asserts what appears to be a radical idea: that the facts matter, and that they must be pursued, proclaimed and contextualized regardless of how uncomfortable this may be for those in power. In the finest public intellectual tradition, the contributors have produced work that is bold, engaging, humane, and deeply relevant to the troubling times in which we live.”

— **DR. JOHN COLLINS**

St. Lawrence University, Canton, New York, US

“This book asks the tough questions: What is terrorism and how does it differ from state terrorism? Who are the neo-conservatives and what accounts for their focus on Iraq? What is Israel’s role in the War on Terror? How do conservative Christians and Biblical prophecy fit into this volatile mix? What is the relation between Islamic theology and political violence? *With God on Our Side* is a must read for those not satisfied with explanations offered by mainstream media.”

— **STEPHEN A. HARMON PH.D**

Pittsburg State University, Kansas, US

WITH GOD ON OUR SIDE

Do not cause people to loathe the worship of God

SAYING OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

WITH GOD ON OUR SIDE

Politics & Theology of the War on Terrorism

Foreword by

JOHN L. ESPOSITO

Introduction by

KHALED ABOU EL FADL

Edited by

AFTAB AHMAD MALIK

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PREFACE

AFTAB AHMAD MALIK

O people, your creator is one.
You are all from the same ancestor.
All of you are from Adam
— *Saying of the Prophet Muhammad*

Has not one God created us?
— *Malachi 2:10*

INNOCENTS ARE BEING slaughtered. Whether it be done as a consequence of “collateral damage,” resulting from secular violence or by the delusion of serving God’s will through “religious” violence.

This book was in page-proof when the taking of over 1,000 hostages consisting of school children, their parents and teachers occurred in Beslan, Russia. The end result was carnage. Under horrific circumstances, children were forced to drink their own urine¹ as the “rebels” refused anything more than a bucket of water to be shared amongst the children and adults under the sweltering heat. The sickness that pervades the minds of those individuals who use religion to justify the most grotesque and horrific acts should not and cannot be defended by anyone. Islam is suffering continuously at their hands and Muslims can no longer remain silent; our silence is our acquiescence to the crimes that are being carried out.

Innocent people have become targets of fanatical individuals who represent no-one but their own twisted minds and darkened hearts. Islam is free of these *muharibs*, rebels, vigilantes, these terrorists. Muslims are innocent of such crimes against humanity.

The world continues to grow in confusion as people are told that “Islam is a religion of peace” and they then witness the carnage which results from the hands of extremists being beamed across television channels world-wide. Despite the suffering of Muslims through state sponsored

violence and the uneven application of international law, whether it is in Chechnya, the occupied Palestinian territories, or in Algeria, nothing can justify heinous actions that result in the spilling of innocent blood.

The books of Islam, the Qur'an and the sayings of the Prophet (*hadiths*) have both fallen victim and hostage to the "armies of ignorant people clashing in the darkness of ignorance."² Devoid of the necessary skills and tools to decipher the religious texts, these students of chaos have side stepped over one thousand years of scholasticism and Qur'anic exegesis to create their own deluded *Sharia*³—a new law couched in Islamic terminology established solely to be the antithesis of the West. Under this law, there is only hatred and rejection. Under this law, Muslims and non-Muslims alike are its victims.

Theology cannot be ignored when trying to understand this aberrant attitude that has spread like a virus within the Muslim world and has infected some of the minds of the unwary in the West.⁴ This "war theology" has been derived from a literal understanding of the Qur'an, which has a disregard for the basic principles of jurisprudence and rejects the established consensus by the scholastic community. This reading of Islam has long been rejected and discarded by the scholars of Islam. The Chechens know first hand of how this brutal theology has devastated its traditional society, pitting father against son, family against family. The official Chechen rebel leader, Aslan Maskhadov, condemned the seizure of the school, describing the Beslan attackers as "madmen." He said that the acts of terror were "carried out by people whose desire for revenge against acts of brutality by Russian troops had driven them out of their senses."⁵ Most commentators are aware how Chechnya's battle for independence has been to a large degree hijacked by a violent and radicalized reading of Islam that nutures itself on powerful emotions. This version of Islam has been quick to introduce the use of indiscriminate violence and terror,⁶ which is justified as a response to the horrific deaths of thousands of Muslims at the hands of the Russian army. This blood-thirsty ideology has only served to impede the Chechen cause for independence.⁷

Muslims have to reject this exchange of indiscriminate violence which is a modern phenomenon; a *bid'a* (reprehensible innovation) that must be called by what it truly is. Human life, its sanctity and the human soul is precious and to be honored in Islam. Out of the hundreds of thousands

of *hadiths*, only five hundred have the transmitted status of the Qur'an, (*mutawatir*) and among them is the saying that the Prophet continually forbade the killing of women and children. Muslims do not share the secular conception of "collateral damage." In Islam, the unjust killing of just one soul is akin to "taking the lives of all humanity."⁸ Islam bestows dignity and honor for each and every soul, irrespective of being a believer or not.⁹ It is related once that a funeral procession passed in front of the Prophet, and he stood up. Then he was told it was a bier of a Jew. The Prophet said, "Is he not a human soul?"¹⁰

It is a well known fact that in Islam, fighting has always been prescribed as a last resort and Muslims should never initiate hostilities. In addition, there are higher forms of *jihad* other than fighting.¹¹ The striking difference between a *jihad* conducted according to the principles of Islam to the current corrupted conception of *jihad* waged by Muslim vigilantes, can be epitomized in the example of Emir 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jaza'iri. Resisting French colonial efforts, as leader of the Muslim Algerian resistance between 1830 and 1847, the Emir fought for justice with justice. At a time when the French army was massacring entire tribes, collecting severed Arab heads as trophies and being paid for collecting Arab ears, the Emir insisted that captives should be treated well and he forbade any ill treatment.¹² When the Emir was questioned about the reward for a live French soldier, the Emir replied "eight douros." When he was further asked about the reward for a severed French head, he responded "twenty-five blows of the baton on the soles of the feet."¹³ The Emir did not fight like with like. His mission was determined and shaped by the moral imperative as set in the Qur'an which forbids excess and aggression being carried out against people.¹⁴ Even after being sent into exile in Damascus, the Emir did not allow his experiences fighting the (Christian) French army to distort his moral responsibilities. In 1860, during the civil war, he tried to avert an ensuing massacre of Christians. Unable to prevent it, no less, he and his followers were able to protect 15,000 Christians, among who were dignitaries and European ambassadors. It was Winston Churchill who said:

All the representatives of the Christian powers then residing in Damascus, without one single exception, had owed their lives to him [...] An Arab