

July 05, 2007 Islam's Global War against Christianity By Patrick Poole

From Nigeria to Indonesia, Christians are under siege in virtually every single country in the Muslim world, the victims of countless acts of discrimination, depredation, brutality, and murder that are so widespread and systematic that it can rightfully be called the new Holocaust. This time, however, the perpetrators of this Holocaust aren't wearing swastikas, but kufi skull caps and hijabs.

Some of the oldest Christian communities in the world are subject to relentless attack and teeter on the brink of extinction at the hands of the "Religion of Peace": Palestinian Christians in Gaza and the West Bank; Assyrian, Syriac and Chaldean Christians in Iraq; Coptic Christians in Egypt; Evangelical and Orthodox Christians in Eastern Ethiopia and Eritrea; Armenian Orthodox Christians in Turkey; and Maronite Christians in Lebanon.

Several of these communities date back to the beginning decades of Christianity and all have weathered wave after wave of Islamic persecution for centuries and more, but in the very near future some will simply cease to exist. In our lifetime, the only trace of their past existence will be in footnotes in history books (and probably only Western history books at that).

Meanwhile, we in the West hear much from radical Islam's apologists how the US is engaged in a war against Islam citing of our military actions in Afghanistan and Iraq. We are lectured on the inviolability of the Muslim ummah and justifications of defensive jihad.

But an extensive search this past weekend of the websites of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, the Islamic Society of North America, the Islamic Circle of North America, the Muslim American Society, the Muslim Student Association, the Fiqh Council of North America, and the Muslim Public Affairs Committee - the most visible institutional representatives of Islam in America - found not a single mention or reference of the religious persecution of Christians by their Islamic co-religionists, thereby making them tacit co-conspirators in the Final Solution to the Christian problem in the Muslim world.

The global war on Christianity by Islam is so massive in size and scope that it is virtually impossible to describe without trivializing it. Inspired by Muslim Brotherhood ideology and fueled by billions of Wahhabi petrodollars, the religious cleansing of Christians from the Muslim world is continuing at a break-neck pace, as the following recent examples demonstrate.

Iraq: In the current issue of the American Spectator, Doug Bandow observes that centuries of dhimmitude have left Christians in the war-torn country without any means of self-defense. Washington policymakers have refused to lend assistance for fear of showing partiality, despite the murder of hundreds of Iraqi Christians, the kidnapping and torture of Christian clerics, the repeated bombings of Christian churches, the torching of Christian businesses, and the flight of close to half of the entire Iraqi Christian population since April 2003. Those who remain have been subject to the imposition of shari'a by the Shi'ite Mahdi Army and Sunni militias (al-Qaeda doesn't bother with such niceties, preferring to murder them immediately instead), including the recent published threat in Mosul of killing one member of every Christian family in that city for

Christian women not wearing the hijab and continuing to attend school. (Be sure to remember that the next time an Islamist apologist claims that the hijab is a symbol of women's liberation.)

Egypt: Journalist Magdi Khalil chronicles in a new report ("Another Black Friday for the Coptic Christians of Egypt") the campaign of violence directed against Christian Copts almost weekly immediately following Friday afternoon Muslim prayers. Inspired by Islamist imams preaching religious hatred in mosques all over the country and protected by government officials willing to look the other way, rampaging mobs of Muslims set upon Christians churches, businesses and individuals, from Alexandria to cities all the way up the Nile. Coptic holy days are also favorite times for Muslim violence, which the Egyptian media likes to describe as "sectarian strife" - as if it were actually a two-sided affair.

Gaza: Ethel Fenig recently noted here at American Thinker ("More Gaza Multiculturalism") the systematic destruction of churches and desecration of Christian religious objects by Jihadia Salafiya following the HAMAS takeover of the Gaza Strip from their Fatah rivals and the imposition of Islamic rule. The head of Jihadia Salafiya told reporter Aaron Klein that any suspected Christian missionary activity in the area will be "dealt with harshly". (Ynet News)

Saudi Arabia: According to the Arab News, a Sri Lankan Christian man barely escaped with his life in late May when he was found working in the city of Mecca, Islam's holiest city, which is officially barred to non-Muslims. In December, an Indian man had been sentenced to death for accidentally entering the city, but was spared after the Indian embassy made an urgent appeal to the Saudi Supreme Court.

Pakistan: In Islamabad, Younis Masih was sentenced last month to death under the country's frequently invoked blasphemy laws, which were also used against six Christian women suspended from a nursing school after they were accused of desecrating a Quran. And as protests against Salman Rushdie's knighthood raged, a Muslim mob armed with guns, axes and sticks attacked Christians worshipping in a Salvation Army church in Bismillahpur Kanthan. (Associated Press; United Press International; Mission News Network)

Bangladesh: Almost a dozen Christian converts in the Nilphamari district were beaten last week by Muslim villagers wielding bricks and clubs, and threatened with death if they did not leave town immediately. Local hospitals subsequently refused them treatment. Christians in the area have also been prevented from using the only potable water well in the area after a pronouncement by religious authorities at the mosque in Durbachari. This came after 42 former Muslims were baptized as Christians in the local river on June 12. (Compass News Direct)

Malaysia: Government authorities demolished a church building on June 4th in Orang Asli settlement in Gua Musang in Ulu Kelantan, despite prior government approval of the project. The church was built on donated property after the entire village had converted to Christianity just a few months ago. Also in late May, the Malaysian high court ruled that Muslims who convert to Christianity must appeal to the religious shari'a courts to officially be deregistered as Muslims and reregistered as Christians. (Journal Chretien; Associated Press)

Indonesia: Agence France Presse reported last month on an attack by the Islamic Anti-Apostate Movement, who stormed a church service in a Protestant church in the West Java town of Soreang. The AFP report notes that more than 30 churches have been forced to close in West Java and dozens more throughout the country in recent years due to Muslim violence, churches which were among the few spared during the outbreak of hostilities during 1997-1998, where hundreds of Christian churches were burned to the ground and never rebuilt.

Turkey: The Christian community is still reeling from the torture and ritual slaughter of three Protestants at a Christian publishing house in Malatya in April by an armed Islamist gang, which was preceded by the murder last year of Catholic priest Andrea Santoro in Trabzon and the assassination of Armenian journalist Hrant Dink in Istanbul in January. An additional six men allegedly associated with the same Muslim gang were arrested on May 30th for plotting an attack on a Christian pastor in Diyarbakir. (Lebanon Daily Star; ADKNI)

Cyprus: The Cyprus Mail reports that during a meeting last month in Rome the Archbishop of the Cypriot Greek Orthodox Church pleaded with the Vatican Secretary of State for the Pope's assistance to pressure Turkish authorities in restoring and repairing Christian sites and churches in areas occupied since the invasion of the island nation by Turkey in July 1974 and the ethnic cleansing of 160,000 Greek Christian Cypriots.

Lebanon: More than 60,000 Christians have left the country since last summer's war between Hezbollah and Israel, fearing the rise of both Sunni and Shi'ite extremism and terrorist activity. The Sunday Telegraph recently revealed the results of a poll finding that at least half of Lebanon's Maronite community were considering leaving the country. More than 100,000 have already submitted visa applications at foreign embassies.

Algeria: In what is considered one of the more "moderate" Muslim regimes, Al-Quds Al-Arabi announced that the Algerian government has just issued regulations requiring advance permission for non-Muslim public events, following a 2006 law aimed at limiting Christian evangelism in the Kabylia region and the Sahara. (MEMRI)

Morocco: In the country that The Economist magazine in 2005 anointed "the best Arab democracy", all Moroccans are considered Muslims at birth and face three years in prison if they attempt to convert. They are also prohibited from entering any of the few churches permitted to operate for the foreign inhabitants of the country. Moroccan Christians must operate covertly for fear of imprisonment by the government and attacks by Islamists. They cannot bury their dead in Christian cemeteries, and they must be married by Islamic authorities or face charges of adultery. Late last year, a 64 year-old German tourist, Sadek Noshi Yassa, was sentenced to six months in jail and fined for missionary activity. (Journal Chretien)

Nigeria: Police in Gombe arrested sixteen suspects after a Muslim mob stoned, stripped, beat, and finally stabbed to death a Christian teacher, Christiana Oluwatoyin Oluwasesin, after she caught a student cheating on an exam in March. Her body was then burned beyond recognition by the mob who falsely accused her of desecrating a Quran. The suspects were released last month without any charges being filed, prompting Christian leaders to accuse government authorities of a cover-up and raising concerns about additional attacks. (Christian Today)

Eritrea: Just a few weeks ago, the Islamic government installed a new Orthodox Patriarch after they removed the previous Patriarch and placed him under house arrest for no stated reason. Compass News Direct reported in February the death of Magos Solomon Semere, a Christian who had been imprisoned in a military jail for four and a half years for illegal Christian worship, the third Christian to die in government custody since October. Authorities have also cracked down on unapproved churches, jailing at least two thousand Protestants and members of the Medhane Alem Orthodox renewal movement since the beginning of the year and publicly burning confiscated Bibles. (Christian Post; Compass News Direct ; Journal Chretien)

It is not an exaggeration to say that I could extend this brief list ad infinitum with additional Islamic countries and news items from just the past few weeks' worth of incidents of violence, discrimination, intimidation and murder targeting Christians in the Muslim world. In many instances, the government and religious authorities in these Muslim countries work hand-in-hand in their campaign of religious persecution.

A scene in the Academy Award-winning movie Schindler's List gives us some insight into what is happening all across the Muslim world with respect to Christianity. As the SS Commandant Amon Göth and his Nazi Stormtroopers prepare to liquidate the Jewish ghetto in Krakow, Poland, Göth (played in the movie by Ralph Fiennes) gives his men a peptalk:

For six centuries there has been a Jewish Krakow. Think about that. By this evening, those six centuries are a rumor. They never happened. Today is history. This scene is being repeated in the Friday sermons in mosques and on Islamic satellite TV all over the world, only this time it is the Christians in addition to the Jews who are targets. Great efforts are being made to make the two-thousand year history of Christianity in North Africa, the Middle East and Southeast Asia a blasphemous rumor. Soon students in Turkey will be taught that the Hagia Sophia, the greatest architectural structure in the Muslim world, wasn't built by the Christian Emperor Justinian in the Sixth Century, but by the Sultan Mehmed II a thousand years later after the Ottomans seized the Byzantine capital. That Christians lived at all in the Muslim world, let alone that much of the territory occupied by Muslims used to be Christian lands before the Islamic Wars of Conquest, will be nothing but a rumor by the end of this century punishable according to the precepts of shari'a.

President Bush announced last week that he will be sending a special envoy to the 57-member Organization of Islamic Countries. Hopefully, the systematic persecution of Christians and other religious minorities will be the first and primary item in the new envoy's portfolio, with the 2007 annual report of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom and the State Department's Annual Report on International Religious Freedom, which name virtually every single country in the OIC for its human rights abuses and religious cleansing, as evidence for our country's concern.

The fact remains that not a single Christian or Jew lives in peace in the Muslim world, and if it is truly our nation's foreign policy to spread democracy around the world, this issue is the perfect topic for us to press. Back at home, raising Islam's global war on Christianity should be the immediate response to the seemingly endless media grievance machine of radical Islam's

Western apologists. Until they begin to address the new Holocaust perpetrated in the name of Islam, their complaints and denials are nothing but bald hypocrisy.

Patrick Poole is an occasional contributor to American Thinker. He maintains a blog, Existential Space.

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