

ourselves. It has destroyed all their state structures, it has trampled upon their dignity and pride. It has systematically incited the Iraqis to turn on each other. It is so hypocritical of the West to then be "amazed" that the strategy really works and that the despair of the Iraqis sometimes turns into self-destruction. It is absurd to claim that "something like that could never happen here" – a claim often uttered with an undertone of racist disgust. Just consider how a power outage in New York in 1977 and a hurricane in New Orleans in 2005 were enough to trigger widespread looting, murder and mayhem. Homo homini lupus est – "Man to Man is an arrant Wolfe" (Thomas Hobbes). This is true, not only of Muslims, but of Jews and Christians as well.

Terrorists in Islamic disguise are murderers. The same holds true for the ringleaders disguised as Christians who wage wars of aggression in contravention of international law.

The attacks carried out since the mid-'90s by Arab terrorists on Western facilities are in their view a response to the never-ending "organized robbery and murder" on the part of the West. The attacks, including those on the World Trade Center, have killed more than 5,000 Western civilians. They are morally completely unacceptable. The end never justifies the means. That is why the attacks on the World Trade Center were condemned by all Muslim governments, by Syria and Iran, even by Hizbollah and Hamas. In many Muslim countries distraught people laid flowers in front of the U.S. embassy. Terrorists who kill innocent people are not freedom fighters or resistance fighters, holy warriors or martyrs. They are murderers.

But are not those who mastermind illegal wars of aggression also terrorists and murderers – even murderers of their own soldiers? If one talks about the 5,000 Westerners murdered by Al-Qaeda, must one not also talk about the hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians who have been killed in George W. Bush's illegal war? Do not the legal yardsticks we apply to Saddam Hussein or Slobodan Milosevic also apply to Western heads of governments? Why do Western elites not even dare to ask whether George W. Bush and Tony Blair should be brought before an international criminal court because of a war in Iraq that is based on lies?

In the opinion of the Nuremberg war crimes tribunal, "To initiate a war of aggression, therefore, is not only an international crime: it is the supreme international crime differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within it the accumulated evil of all crimes of war." The chief U.S. prosecutor Robert H. Jackson stated: "We must never forget that the record on which we judge these defendants today constitutes the record on which history will judge us tomorrow."

"Wars of aggression are the terrorism of the rich," as Peter Ustinov put it. For an Iraqi child it makes no difference whether he is blown apart by an "Islamic" suicide bomber or a "Christian" bomb. For this child, George W. Bush and Tony Blair are just as much terrorists as Bin Laden is for us.

The high number of civilian victims of military operations is often excused with the argument that such "collateral damage" is not intentional. That is disingenuous – at least with respect to aerial attacks – because the death of civilians is almost always tacitly accepted in such cases. However, in advanced legal systems "tacit acceptance" means "intent." Aerial bombardment is, moreover, rarely effective. Special-forces operations on the ground can usually achieve much more. But then one would have to accept a greater number of fatalities within one's own ranks. And that could cost votes. So instead one drops cluster bombs and tacitly accepts the death of civilians. Dropping cluster bombs from the safety of a pilot's cockpit is the most cowardly form of terrorism on the part of the powerful. The myth of the honorable war is mankind's greatest lie. "Dulce bellum inexpertis" – War is sweet to those who have not experienced it (Erasmus of Rotterdam).

Armed resistance to wars and occupation that are illegal under international law is nonetheless only legitimate if it is conducted in accordance with the humanitarian law that applies in armed conflicts. Suicide attacks against civilians who have different beliefs, such as we see every day in Iraq and elsewhere, are acts of terrorism. They have nothing to do with legitimate resistance. The most spectacular attacks on civilians in Iraq are, however, for the most part directed from outside the country. According to a statement issued on July 11, 2007, by the spokesman for the multi-national forces in Iraq, General Kevin Bergner, between 80 and 90 percent of the suicide bombers come from abroad.

One must clearly distinguish between this almost entirely foreign terrorism directed against civilians and the legitimate multi-confessional Iraqi resistance to foreign occupation. Nobody can take away from the Iraqis' their right to resist. It is a timeless inviolable right of all peoples. The great majority of the Iraqi people support the resistance movement, which explicitly rejects attacks on civilians. The resistance not only involves Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims, but Christians as well. The number of Christian resistance fighters in Iraq is greater than the number of Al-Qaeda fighters. Women also fight in the multi-confessional Iraqi



British soldiers interrogate Arab man, 1967, Aden-Yemen

resistance. Is that really surprising? What would we do if there were enemy tanks on our streets? Are only those resistance fighters who are on our side "freedom fighters" and the rest "terrorists"?

The Iraqis have long since lost the media war. There are still at least 100 military operations conducted by occupation forces against the Iraqi civilian population every day, and a comparable number of attacks every day by the resistance on occupation forces and their allies. The daily tally of suicide attacks against civilians is two or three at most. Nevertheless, TV broadcasters show almost exclusively pictures of such suicide terror attacks, which are carried out mainly by foreigners, as if that were typical of the Iraqis' struggle against the United States. They therefore convey a completely distorted picture of the situation in Iraq. We do not get to see the true face of this war. The Pentagon has a monopoly on information in occupied Iraq, and exploits this to the full.

Of course non-violent resistance in the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi or Martin Luther King would be preferable to violent resistance, even when it is legitimate. In the religious war between the city states of Mecca and Medina Muhammad's most fascinating victory came when, to the amazement of his enemies in Mecca, he and his followers gathered, unarmed, outside the gates of Mecca and demanded access to the holy sites. Passive resistance born of the power of faith would also make the Iraqi resistance more credible. But for centuries have we not shown the world that only brute force guarantees success?

Muslims were and are at least as tolerant as Jews and Christians. They have made a major contribution to Western civilization.

It was not Muslims who invented "holy war", joined Crusades under the rallying cry "Deus lo vult – God wills it" (Urban II.) and in the process massacred more than four million Muslims and Jews. It was not Muslims who waded "ankle-deep in blood" in Jerusalem before they "rejoicing and weeping from excess of happiness ... came to worship and give thanks at the sepulcher of our savior Jesus," as a contemporary reported. Islam never associates the word "holy" with war. Jihad means "exertion, a struggle on the pathways of God" (Hans Küng), an effort that can involve defensive war. Nowhere in the Qur'an does jihad mean "holy war." Wars are never "holy", only peace is holy. "Holy war" is unfortunately a concept from the Old Testament (see Jeremiah 51:27).

Nor was it Muslims who massacred up to 50 million people in the name of colonizing Africa and Asia. It was not Muslims who instigated the First and Second World Wars, in which almost 70 million people perished. And it was not Muslims, but we Germans, who ignominiously murdered six million Jews – fellow citizens, friends and neighbors – in an industrially organized breach of civilization. No other culture has been more violent and bloody over the past centuries as Western civilization. When we so-called "Christian" politicians ever honored Christianity, this wonderful religion of love?

treasures of Greek and Roman culture and philosophy, they also created new sciences. They pioneered experimental optics, invented the compass, discovered the paths of the planets and crucial elements of modern medicine and pharmacy. Even if we do not want to believe it: We live in a culture that was formed by Judaism, Christianity AND Islam.

Love of God and love of one's neighbor are the central commandments not only in the Bible but also in the Qur'an.

A comparison of the texts shows that the Qur'an is at least as tolerant as the Old and New Testaments. God and his prophets do, to be sure, sometimes express themselves in very martial tones in all three scriptures. In the Old Testament Book of Numbers 31:7,15,17 it is written: "They did battle against Midian, as the Lord had commanded Moses, and killed every male. ... Moses said to them, 'Have you allowed all the women to live? ... Now therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman who has known a man by sleeping with him.'"

In the New Testament, Jesus is quoted in Matthew 10:34 as having said: "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword." In his Table Talk the powerfully eloquent Protestant Martin Luther said: "One may give short shrift to heretics. While they perish at the stake, the faithful should destroy the evil by the root and bathe their hands in the blood of the bishops and the pope."

Surah 4:89 of the Qur'an is no less violent: "They but wish that ye should reject Faith, as they do (...). Take (...) not friends from their ranks until they flee in the way of God (from what is forbidden). But if they turn renegades, seize them and slay them wherever ye find them."

Extremists and preachers of hate in East and West almost always ignore the historical context of these passages. Moses, Jesus and Muhammad were not born in a historical vacuum but into a belligerent world. At first glance, the Old Testament, especially in its historical passages, might seem to be the bloodiest of the three holy books – much bloodier than the Qur'an. But anybody who has studied the Old Testament knows that its central commandment – apart from the commandment to love God and justice – is: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18). For Christians too, love of one's neighbor and justice are the most important commandments after the love of God (Matthew 5:6, 5:10).

The Qur'an tells Muslims to "Do good ... to neighbors who are near, or neighbors who are strangers" (Surah 4:36). Islam also endorses the "Ten Commandments," including



Blackened corpses of Iraqi soldiers lay sprawled on a destroyed truck. Kuwait, 1991

the prohibition on killing – with the sole exception of the commandment to observe the Sabbath, as according to the Islamic view God did not need a day of rest after creating the world. The Qur'an calls for "more humanity and more justice" (Hans Küng). The main problem with the Western debate about the Qur'an is that everybody talks about it but hardly anybody has read it. The bellicose passages in the Qur'an have to do with "the religious wars of the period

between Mecca and Medina and therefore only (have to do with) the people of Mecca and Medina of the period," as the Egyptian minister of religious affairs Mahmoud Zak-zouk has correctly pointed out.

In Surah 29:46 it is written: "Our God and your God is one," even though God is called Jehovah in Hebrew and Allah in Arabic – by Arab Christians as well. Is it not outrageous blasphemy when Jews, Christians or Muslims misuse the Bible and the Qur'an as a weapon, in order to hammer home their particular view of this one God?

Terrorism is never religious. To be a terrorist is to adopt the methods of the devil; no terrorist may invoke God. There is no "Islamic" terrorism, just as the terrorism of the IRA in Northern Ireland was never "Christian" or "Catholic". There is merely terrorism that bears an Islamic mask, and it does not lead to paradise, but to hell, as do wars of aggression that bear a Christian or democratic mask. The claim that violence is above all a religious problem is an atheist myth. People committed murder before religion existed and have continued to do so ever since. The mass murder of the National Socialists and of the Soviet and Chinese Communists are the sad proof that man is the cruelest creature – with and without religion.

To be continued in Sunday's paper.

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This advertorial is the first part of the updated epilogue of Jürgen Todenhöfers newest book *Why Do You Kill, Zaid?*. This two-part advertorial is published simulta-

neously in the German newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, the Arab paper *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* and this paper.

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An Egyptian boy stands near a British tank amidst the rubble of destroyed buildings during the Suez Crisis; Port Said, Egypt; November 1956