

**THE WINTER OF ISLAM
AND THE SPRING
TO COME**

HARUN YAHYA

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INTRODUCTION

About The Author

The author, who writes under the pen-name HARUN YAHYA, was born in Ankara in 1956. Having completed his primary and secondary education in Ankara, he then studied arts at Istanbul's Mimar Sinan University and philosophy at Istanbul University. Since the 1980s, the author has published many books on political, faith-related and scientific issues. Harun Yahya is well-known as an author who has written very important works disclosing the imposture of evolutionists, the invalidity of their claims and the dark liaisons between Darwinism and bloody ideologies such as fascism and communism.

His pen-name is made up of the names "Harun" (Aaron) and "Yahya" (John), in memory of the two esteemed prophets who fought against lack of faith. The Prophet's seal on the cover of the books is symbolic and is linked to the their contents. It represents the Qur'an (the final scripture) and the Prophet Muhammad, the last of the prophets. Under the guidance of the Qur'an and sunnah, the author makes it his purpose to disprove each one of the fundamental tenets of godless ideologies and to have the "last word", so as to completely silence the objections raised against religion. The seal of the final Prophet, who attained ultimate wisdom and moral perfection, is used as a sign of his intention of saying this last word.

All author's works center around one goal: to convey the Qur'an's message to people, encourage them to think about basic faith-related issues (such as the existence of Allah, His unity and the Hereafter), and to expose the feeble foundations and perverted ideologies of godless systems.

Harun Yahya enjoys a wide readership in many countries, from India to America, England to Indonesia, Poland to Bosnia, and Spain to Brazil. Some of his books are available in English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Urdu, Arabic, Albanian, Russian, Serbo-Croat (Bosnian), Polish, Malay, Uygur Turkish, and Indonesian, and they are enjoyed by readers worldwide.

Greatly appreciated all around the world, these works have been instrumental in many people recovering their faith in Allah and in many others gaining a deeper insight into their faith. The wisdom, and the sincere and easy-to-understand style gives these books a distinct touch which directly effects any one who reads or studies them. Immune to objections, these works are characterized by their features of rapid effectiveness, definite results and irrefutability. It is unlikely that those who read these books and give serious thought to them can any longer sincerely advocate the materialistic philosophy, atheism or any other perverted ideology or philosophy. Even if they continue to do so, it will be only a sentimental insistence since these books refuted such ideologies from their very foundations. All contemporary movements of denial are now ideologically defeated, thanks to the collection of books written by Harun Yahya.

There is no doubt that these features result from the wisdom and lucidity of the Qur'an. The author modestly intends to serve as a means in humanity's search for Allah's right path. No material gain is sought in the publication of these works.

Considering these facts, those who encourage people to read these books, which open the "eyes" of the heart and guide them to become more devoted servants of Allah, render an invaluable service.

Meanwhile, it would just be a waste of time and energy to propagate other books which create confusion in peoples' minds, lead man into ideological chaos, and which, clearly have no strong and precise effects in removing the doubts in peoples' hearts, as also verified from previous experience. It is apparent that it is

impossible for books devised to emphasize the author's literary power rather than the noble goal of saving people from loss of faith, to have such a great effect. Those who doubt this can readily see that the sole aim of Harun Yahya's books is to overcome disbelief and to disseminate the moral values of the Qur'an. The success and impact of this service are manifest in readers' conviction.

One point should be kept in mind: The main reason for the continuing cruelty, conflict, and all the ordeals the majority of people undergo is the ideological prevalence of disbelief. This state can only be ended with the ideological defeat of disbelief and by conveying the wonders of creation and Qur'anic morality so that people can live by it. Considering the state of the world today, which leads people into the downward spiral of violence, corruption and conflict, it is clear that this service has to be provided more speedily and effectively. Otherwise, it may be too late.

It is no exaggeration to say that the collection of books by Harun Yahya have assumed this leading role. By the will of Allah, these books will be a means through which people in the twentyfirst century will attain the peace, justice and happiness promised in the Qur'an.

TO THE READER

The reason why special attention is devoted to the collapse of the theory of evolution in this and our other works, is that the theory forms the basis of all anti-religious philosophy. Darwinism, which rejects creationism and thus the existence of Allah, has caused many people to lose or doubt their faith over the last century and a half. It is therefore a major duty of faith to demonstrate that the theory is indeed a deception. It is thus an obligation to ensure that this important service be available to everyone. Some readers may only have the opportunity to read one of our books. That is why each book contains a brief summary of the subject.

Another matter that needs to be clarified is the content of these books. In all the author's works matters of faith are explained in the light of the Qur'an, and people are invited to learn and live by the holy verses. All matters concerning the holy verses are explained in such a way as to leave no doubts or question marks in the mind of the reader.

The honest, simple and flowing style employed enables everybody, from seven to seventy, to understand these books quite clearly. Thanks to this effective and unaffected method of explanation, these books can easily be digested "in one go." Even people who are determined to reject religion are affected by the facts set out in these works, and are unable to deny that what they say is true.

This and the author's other books can either be read alone, or used as a discussion tool. It will be useful for groups that wish to benefit from these works to read them together and then discuss them in the light of their own reflections and experience.

It will also be a great service to help to have these books, written fundamentally to obtain Allah's good pleasure, presented and studied. That is because all the author's works are exceptionally explanatory and convincing. For that reason, the best method for those who wish to explain the religion is to encourage other people to read these books.

There are also important reasons why brief descriptions of the writer's other works are included at the back of this book. Someone who picks up this book will also see many other works, all bearing the same qualities we have just mentioned and which we hope he will also enjoy reading. He will see that they contain a large store of information on religious and political matters that he can make use of.

Unlike many other works, these books contain no personal views of the writer, explanations based on doubtful sources, absence of the appropriate respect for holy things, and no twisted explanations that could lead to despair or doubt.

Those who were expelled from their homes without any right, merely for saying, "Our Lord is Allah." If Allah had driven some people back by means of others, monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques, where Allah's name is mentioned much, would have been pulled down and destroyed. Allah will certainly help those who help Him – Allah is All-Strong, Almighty. (Qur'an, 22: 40)

A call to all people of conscience...

What people come across frequently, they tend to eventually grow used to. This familiarity can so develop over time that things which elicit violent surprise or protest when first witnessed become routine matters just a short while later.

The wars and conflicts taking place in our world are a case in point. When a country is first occupied and a slaughter or genocide first begins, this can lead to violent protests worldwide. Let us, for instance, consider the first days of the Bosnian conflict, or Chechnya, or Palestine... The image of a Palestinian child on his father's lap who will soon be a target for the bullets of Israeli soldiers, Chechen babies murdered in their nappies, women, the elderly and children alike subjected to a terrible genocide in Bosnia...

When people first see such images, they often talk about their feelings of outrage and say they want to do something. However, over time the never-ending stream of horrific reports ceases to attract their attention anymore. More people die every day, women are raped, and children are shot or lose a foot after stepping on mines... However, people's reactions in the early days are replaced by an odd insensitivity. When they buy a newspaper, they are often more interested in celebrity gossip than stories of war. That is because the deaths of a few people in Palestine, Chechnya, Kashmir or East Turkestan have become merely "routine news."

Moreover, propaganda at the same time portrays all this savagery as political developments. Thus it is that many people see the continuing slaughter in Chechnya as an internal Russian affair, what is going on in Palestine as a struggle for land between Israel and Palestine, and the Hindu oppression of the people of Kashmir as a problem rooted in the region's strategic position. Among others, it is true that historical and economic factors do play a role in the emergence of conflict. Chechnya is of great economic and strategic importance to Russia. Fanatical Jews have maintained the intention of occupying Jerusalem and other Palestinian territories for centuries. However, internal or economic problems aren't the only cause of the oppression visited on the Chechen people by the Russian administration, nor the violence that Muslim peoples in Africa are subjected to, nor the violent cruelty and ethnic cleansing suffered before the eyes of the whole world by Muslims in the Balkans. As we shall see in later chapters of this book, these people's Muslim identity is one of the main reasons for these conflicts.

Since these people believe in Allah and want to live their lives according to the demands of their religion, and want to raise their children to be believers too, they are subjected to various forms of oppression. The existence of strong states upholding spiritual values or a strong union of Islamic nations that would protect the rights of Muslims within a legal framework of justice gives rise to grave concerns among certain circles in the West and poses a threat to the interests of certain others.

Another aspect of the matter is that some people know nothing about the people who live in these countries, and often have never even heard of the countries themselves. The situation of someone who has no idea of the difficulties, oppression and acts of violence, hunger and poverty suffered by Muslims living in Sudan, Algeria, Indonesia, Myanmar, Djibouti and Tunisia is certainly food for thought. It is impossible for such a person to extend a helping hand to believers whom he does not know even exist. Other people are aware of this cruelty and injustice. Yet it does not even occur to them that they might be able to help or try to put an end to the oppression. Furthermore, they so convince themselves that they are unable to do anything about it

that neither the reports they read nor the images they see on the television screen trouble their consciences in the slightest.

A true believer, however, is responsible for all that he hears and sees. Allah calls on Muslims in the Qur'an:

What reason could you have for not fighting in the Way of Allah – for those men, women and children who are oppressed and say, "Our Lord, take us out of this city whose inhabitants are wrongdoers! Give us a protector from You! Give us a helper from You!" (Qur'an, 4: 75)

There is no question, of course, of people of conscience who obey the command contained in that verse closing their eyes and ignoring what is going on. It is impossible for a Muslim to sleep irresponsibly in his comfortable bed, fritter away his time, and think only about his own pleasure and interests when such violent cruelty is going on in the world. That is because a believer knows that the fundamental solution to unjust wars, massacres, cruelty, hunger and moral degeneration, in short to all of the world's problems, lies in spreading the morality of the Qur'an. That knowledge places a great responsibility on his shoulders: that of explaining the religion of Islam and the beautiful things it brings with it, propagating the morality of the Qur'an, and waging a war of ideas against atheism...

Those who take on that honorable duty will free all those who are oppressed in the world by the guidance of the Qur'an:

... A Light has come to you from Allah and a Clear Book. By it, Allah guides those who follow what pleases Him to the ways of Peace. He will bring them from the darkness to the light by His permission, and guide them to a straight path. (Qur'an, 5: 15-16)

The intention behind this book is to lay bare the plight of innocent Muslims all over the world, and to invite people of conscience to consider this situation and seek a solution. This is not a time to remain silent, behave uncaringly, dedicate ourselves to the petty benefits of this world and kill time with pointless debates and squabbles. At a time when millions of Muslims are suffering such terrible cruelty, it could be an act of the greatest heedlessness to refuse to shoulder any burden for Islam. There is also no doubt but that it will bring with it the gravest consequences in the hereafter.

ENEMIES OF THE ISLAMIC WORLD

The anti-Islamic alliance facing Muslims

Subsequent chapters of this book will examine the Islamic world country by country, and will reveal the oppression and cruelty inflicted on Muslims. Before that, however, we need to look at the roots of the attacks directed at the Muslim world.

The area known as the Islamic world consists of those countries which have a majority Muslim population. It stretches from Morocco and Mauritania in the West and as far as Indonesia in the East. The great majority, some 1 billion, of the people living in the region are Muslims. Over the last 200 years, they have come face-to-face with attacks, oppression, and terror and have even been massacred because they are Muslims. That is because many Muslims have been obliged to live under non-Muslim regimes, which look with hatred at Islam.

When we look at the Islamic world today, we can clearly see that there is an effort to crush, oppress and eliminate Muslims in Bosnia, Algeria, Tunisia, Eritrea, Egypt, Afghanistan, East Turkestan, Chechnya, Thailand, the Philippines, Myanmar and Sudan. At first glance, the Muslims in these different regions may seem to be facing different enemies. The Serbs in Bosnia, the Hindus in Kashmir, the Russians in the Caucasus, and the oppressive regimes in countries such as Algeria, Egypt and Morocco all target Muslims. Yet these anti-Islamic forces, which appear independent from one another, all act with a similar logic, follow similar strategies and employ similar methods. The singular factor they all have in common is that they are anti-religious.

These forces which deny the existence of Allah and see divine religions – particularly Islam, the only uncorrupted religion – as the greatest enemy of their own secular systems and so declare violent war on religion and believers, actually represent atheist ideologies. That is why the true enemy facing Muslims is not the Serbs, Hindus or various oppressive regimes, but the irreligious understanding prevailing in the world. The roots of this war against Islam take nourishment from atheism and go back a very long way.

Colonialism and the Hatred of Islam

The Islamic world was not always in such a position. A few hundred years ago, it was ruled by Muslim empires. At the start of the 1700s almost all of the Islamic world was governed by three great empires. There was the Moghul Empire in India, while the Safavid Empire ruled Iran and its surrounding area. The third and greatest power was the Ottoman Empire, which held sway over the entire Balkan Peninsula as well as Anatolia (modern-day Turkey), Mesopotamia (modern-day Iraq and Syria), the Arabian Peninsula, and North Africa.

However, these three empires gradually disappeared from world maps. The Moghul Empire grew weak, shrank and finally collapsed. The Indian sub-continent then fell into the hands of British colonialism. The area known as Indochina was colonized by the French. The Safavid State in Central Asia came under British and Russian rule. The Ottoman Empire, the third and greatest Muslim empire, was progressively reduced in size beginning in the nineteenth century. Ottoman lands in the West fell into the hands of Russia and the Balkan states encouraged by it. The Middle East, Arabian Peninsula and North Africa were occupied by the British, French and Italians. By the end of the First World War, a large portion of the world's Muslims were ruled by non-Muslim governments.

All of these were colonialist in nature. In the 1920s, Russia and Italy joined the ranks of such traditional colonialists as Britain and France. Each of these countries occupied and colonized a part of the Islamic world. They didn't hesitate to inflict the most ruthless slaughter and torture upon the Muslim populations under their rule. Britain and France "administered" the Muslims in the Middle East, North Africa and the Far East. In other words, they reaped and used the Muslim countries' natural resources for their own interests. Soviet Russia took over all of the Caucasus and Central Asia, and the Muslims in those regions were enslaved under the pressure of the communist regime. Italy occupied Libya in 1911, and then set about a bloody invasion of Abyssinia (modern-day Ethiopia) in the 1930s.

One important feature of the Middle East policies of Britain and France was to employ artificial states adapted to serve their own interests. This artificial order in the Middle East was a poisoned seed of never-ending wars. These two colonialist European powers were forced to abandon the region after the Second World War. However, they left behind them a much more ruthless, aggressive and destructive colonialist power in their wake: Israel.

When we look at the picture whose general outline we have just summarized, we can clearly see that the Islamic world has been a target for foreign powers ever since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Throughout the ensuing 200 years, the world's Muslims have been occupied by these powers, colonized, and subjected to oppression and cruelty. The puppet regimes these powers installed in the Muslim world also greatly oppressed Muslims, and they continue to do so to this very day. Moreover, the outside powers imposed a number of ideologies that were utterly foreign to the Islamic world, such as extreme nationalism, fascism and communism. Then they used those who were duped by these ideologies to work against their own Muslim communities.

The Basis of Ideologies Hostile to Islam

When we analyze the enemies of the Muslim world, we encounter three basic ideas:

- 1. Western imperialism:** For instance, British and French colonialism as described above.
- 2. Fascism-extreme nationalism:** Italian fascism, Israel, and pro-fascist groups that cause civil wars in the Islamic world.
- 3. Communism:** Soviet Russia, China, Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, communists in Afghanistan and various communist groups in the Middle East.

Close inspection reveals that each of these three is based on ideas that emerged in the nineteenth century, and developed in the twentieth. Extreme nationalism and the fascism that came in its wake are ideologies that emerged entirely in the nineteenth century, and were practiced to the greatest extent in the twentieth century. Communism began with the theory of dialectical materialism proposed by Marx and Engels in the nineteenth century, although the first communist regime was not installed until 1917, in Russia.

One can say that only Western colonialism goes back to earlier centuries, although it then consisted of limited economic initiatives and again came to a position of global domination with its philosophy and ideological foundations in the nineteenth century.

This shows us that the enemy of the world of Islam is not this or that nation or civilization (Western civilization, for instance), but the "ideologies" that turned these nations or civilizations into bloody oppressors. These ideologies dominated a great part of the world in the nineteenth century, and brought cruelty and

savagery with them wherever they held dominion. It was actually these ideologies that occupied, divided, plundered, enslaved and slaughtered the Muslim world.

When we look at these three ideologies, we see that what lies behind all of them is the West's increasing atheism. Each of them emerged as the Western world moved away from a belief in God and religion and began to take on a materialist worldview.

One important truth confirming this is that each of these three ideologies is based on Darwin's theory of evolution, which was portrayed as the "scientific basis of atheism" and which for the first time allowed atheist philosophy to be put forward as "scientific truth."

The Links Between Darwinism, Colonialism and Fascism

Darwinism is the so-called scientific foundation of colonialism. That is because Darwin placed the various categories of the human race at different levels in his imaginary evolutionary process. He considered the European white race to be the most advanced, and portrayed Asian and African tribes as being almost at the same levels as the apes. Furthermore, he suggested that all of mankind was in a constant state of conflict and a fight for survival, and said that it was a "law of nature" that the West should win this fight and enslave the other races. In his *The Origin of Species*, he wrote:

At some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilised races of man will almost certainly exterminate and replace the savage races throughout the world. At the same time the anthropomorphous (human-like) apes... will no doubt be exterminated. The break between man and his nearest allies will then be wider, for it will intervene in a more civilised state, as we may hope, even than the Caucasian, and some ape as low as baboon, instead of as now between the negro or Australian and the gorilla.¹

Darwin arrived at this interesting conclusion by means of the concept of the struggle for survival. According to this claim, the weak are eliminated in the fight for survival, and the strong and fit go on to survive. Moreover, he maintained that this was necessary for universal development, in other words that the disappearance of some races was a process that would allow man to progress and move forward.

This unscientific idea, known as "Social Darwinism," saw wide acceptance in the primitive scientific conditions of the time and came to be the basic justification for European colonialism. In short, Darwinism is the "scientific" foundation of colonialism.

Social Darwinism is as much the source of extreme nationalism and fascism as it is of imperialism. All of the nineteenth century theoreticians who are regarded as the founders of fascism (Friedrich Nietzsche, Heinrich von Treitschke, Francis Galton, and Ernst Haeckel, for instance) were strongly influenced by Darwin's theory of evolution, and particularly by the concept of the "fight for survival." Mussolini, the Italian dictator who established the first fascist regime, was a convinced Darwinist in his youth and drew attention with his articles in praise of Darwin. It is quite clear from the writings of Hitler and other senior Nazis that they were also inspired by Social Darwinism. (For further details, see Harun Yahya, *Fascism: Darwinism's Bloody Ideology*, Istanbul, Vural Yayincilik, 2001)

Communist Ideologies' Hatred for Islam

Darwinism also forms the basis of communism. This was clearly stated by its first founders, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Both were convinced atheists, both saw the elimination of religious beliefs as essential for communism, and both fully understood that the theory of evolution served that end.

As soon as Darwin's book was published, Engels wrote to Marx as follows: "*Darwin, whom I am just now reading, is splendid.*"² On December 19, 1860, Marx replied, "*This is the book that contains the basis in natural history for our view.*"³ In a letter to another socialist friend, Lassalle, dated January 16, 1861, Marx wrote, "*Darwin's work is important and suits my purpose in that it provides a basis in natural science for the historical class struggle,*"⁴ thus revealing the importance of the theory of evolution for communism.

Dictators such as Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin and Mao Tse-tung made their own comments about communism, stating and demonstrating its ideological links to Darwin. The theory of evolution came to be the basis of education and even agricultural policy in communist regimes. All communist movements found the ideological foundation and justification they were looking for in Darwinism.

For communist ideology, so greatly influenced by Darwinism, society is just "a herd of animals." Man is a soulless, dull creature, a "man-animal machine," and quite worthless. The logic of "There are many in the herd, so it doesn't matter if one is lost" rules the day. The handicapped and those unable to work are cast out of the herd and left to die. They are seen as sick and harmful. There are no feelings of compassion, mercy or loyalty. Since they believe that life stops at death, they cling to life with all their power. Since everyone is seen as an enemy and rival in the fight for survival, everything is held against them, and hatred prevails.

It is natural that communist ideology, which creates a society with no human or spiritual values or morality, should also be inimical to religion. Virtues such as morality, love, affection, compassion, self-sacrifice, cooperation and forgiveness have no place in the model aimed at by communism. When one looks at the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky, Mao and other communist ideologues, one can see this stated quite clearly. Marx described religion as "the opium of the people" and a culture formed by the ruling class to keep the poor asleep. Moreover, he suggested that religious beliefs would have to be eliminated if communism was to be achieved.

In Lenin's article "Socialism and Religion," published in 1905 in the Russian magazine *Novaya Zhizn*, he described religion as a "fog" that needed to be dispersed, and set out the atheist propaganda that communists needed to set in motion. In his "The Attitude of the Workers' Party to Religion," published in the magazine *Proletary* in 1909 as leader of the Russian Social Democratic Party (later the Communist Party), Lenin wrote:

The philosophical basis of Marxism, as Marx and Engels repeatedly declared, is dialectical materialism, which has fully taken over the historical traditions of eighteenth-century materialism in France and of Feuerbach (first half of the nineteenth century) in Germany a materialism which **is absolutely atheistic and positively hostile to all religion. "Religion is the opium of the people." This dictum by Marx is the cornerstone of the whole Marxist outlook on religion.**⁵

Those words express Marx's enmity towards religion, and also reveal his ignorance of it. These statements do not reflect the truth. Allah commands people to think and inquire. It is communism and other atheist ideologies that encourage people not to think, and to do what they are told without question. It is clear that people who do not think will also never come anywhere near the truth, and will thus lead lives rife with

deception and error. By thinking, man can understand the reason for the creation of the world, and the reason for his own existence. This truth is revealed in the Qur'an thus:

We did not create the heavens and the earth and everything between them as a game. We did not create them except with truth but most of them do not know it. (Qur'an, 44: 38-39)

For this reason, every individual must ponder the reason for first of all his own creation, and then that of every being or object he sees in the universe and will encounter throughout his life. Someone who fails to think will only understand the truth after he is dead, in the presence of Allah, but by then it will be far too late. Thinking while we have the chance in this life, and then drawing conclusions, will be of great benefit to us in the life of the hereafter. That is why Allah calls on all people, by means of his messengers and books, to consider their own creation and that of the whole universe:

Have they not reflected within themselves? Allah did not create the heavens and the earth and everything between them except with truth and for a fixed term. Yet many people reject the meeting with their Lord. (Qur'an, 30: 8)

Enemies of religion, however, like communist leaders, make all sorts of unfounded allegations to turn people away from religion, even going so far as to claim that religion prevents people from thinking. As we have seen, though, on the contrary, religion actually commands people to think.

Conclusion

In short, it is evident that the three ideologies hostile to the Islamic world all stem from the atheist culture that took over the Western world in the nineteenth century.

This demonstrates once again the importance of the intellectual struggle that needs to be waged against atheism, which is not just a force that tries to ruin people's lives in the hereafter by destroying their religious beliefs. Rather it also, at the same time, aims to ruin the world, turning it into a wasteland of chaos and war, and it views Muslims as its most important target.

That is why waging an intellectual struggle for the good is both a service to true belief and also a great "moral war" against the "corruption" pervading the earth. The existence of large numbers of Muslims who are still being crushed by atheist systems all over the world reminds us how important this struggle really is. Every ideological victory over atheism (and over philosophies, ideologies and so-called scientific theories such as Darwinism that lie at its foundations) is also a moral victory which helps oppressed Muslims all over the world.

CHECHNYA

Oppression as the whole world watches

After the collapse of the Soviet Union over a decade ago now, a difficult period was, and still is being experienced in many of the countries that formerly comprised it. The effects of Russian expansionist policy in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Dagestan have never been erased. These countries, which believed that they would be able to establish an order of peace and brotherhood after being liberated from the oppression of the Soviet regime, then found themselves confronted by an altered form of Russian oppression. On the other hand, there is also one nation which has never abandoned its 400-year struggle for freedom from Russia. That country is Chechnya, whose courage and yearning for independence has gone down in history.

The origins of the Muslim Chechens' great struggle against the Russians go back to the late eighteenth century with the capture and subsequent death of Imam Mansur, the legendary resistance fighter, in 1791, at the Russians' hands. In 1816, after the Czar appointed General Yermolov to lead the Russian army, the Chechen people in the northern Caucasus were subjected to terrible slaughter. When the Chechen Muslim leader Imam Hamzat was killed, Sheikh Shamil took over the leadership of the Chechen army, and began the struggle for independence, the details of which have come down from generation to generation right down to the present day.

Sheikh Shamil's armies heroically resisted Russian expansionism for fully a quarter century, from 1834 to 1859. In the end, however, Russia conquered the region, and never again left it. The fight for independence the Chechens are waging today is a continuation of the movement initiated by Sheikh Shamil.

How Was the Present Situation Reached?

There are a number of reasons, historical and economic ones in particular, behind the violent oppression and cruelty meted out to the Chechen people by the Russian administration. Chechnya is in fact of far greater importance to Russia than the other Caucasian republics. The region contains considerable energy reserves, especially oil and natural gas. During the Cold War, communist Russia met all its raw material needs very cheaply from that country, and used them to serve itself. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, however, declarations of independence issued by Chechnya – a huge source of raw materials – and the other ex-Soviet republics placed Russia in a terrible quandary.

In addition to the economic factor, Russia's centuries-old policy of expansionism is a historical cause for the chaos currently being experienced in Central Asia and the Caucasus. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Moscow experienced a short period of uncertainty, but then pulled itself together, and took a number of wide-ranging initiatives to re-establish its dominion over the former republics. The first sign of what Russia is at present doing in these republics was given in 1993 in a speech by then President Boris Yeltsin. In this speech, he said that **Russia will again win the status of a superpower by regaining all the positions it has lost.**⁶ In other words, Russia refuses to accept these countries' declarations of independence, their winning back their freedom, and their being able to stand on their own two feet. Instead it sees them as "positions to be won back."

On the other hand, some Muslim communities were unable to win their freedom and remained within the Russian federation. One of these, Chechnya, was the main target for that pressure, and for that reason was exposed to great cruelty.

In order to have a correct grasp of what is going on in Chechnya, we need to concentrate on certain points. The war in Chechnya is not the kind of conflict where two sides resort to arms because the conflict between them has reached such a scale that it cannot be resolved by peaceful means, the kind of war that can be encountered anywhere in the world. The justice of the Chechens' demands for independence is being debated in various international circles, and different views are being expressed. Each one of these views is debatable. The matter that everyone is agreed on, however, is that the Russians are behaving with absolutely no restraint and targeting innocent civilians, turning the war from one involving solely the soldiers at the front into an attempt to wipe out the whole population of Chechnya. This is unacceptable, and one of the matters we shall be particularly concentrating on in this chapter.

In order to portray itself as in the right in the international arena, Russia suggests that the war in Chechnya is a "domestic matter," believing that it can thus keep the truth of the savagery going on there from the public. Yet that pretext is totally insufficient to account for the way Chechen men are rounded up in the streets and sent off to torture centers, captured prisoners are tied to tanks by their feet and dragged along the ground, babies of cradle age are fired upon and all the people's assets plundered. A great many political scientists and experts are agreed that Russia is engaged upon a genocide in the region and employing the kind of savagery that has seldom before been seen, all in order to keep Chechnya within its own borders.

On the other hand, the attacks by some Chechen circles aimed at Russian civilians also need to be unequivocally condemned. The Chechen people are naturally justified in wishing to live free and honourable lives. Yet actions of that type cast a stain on that justified demand and make it more difficult to defend the Chechen cause. In addition, it must not be forgotten that targeting innocent civilians is a complete violation of Islamic principles. Throughout his life, the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, always defended the rights of civilians, even during the fiercest fighting, and ordered all Muslims to be moderate and to avoid all forms of fanaticism. That is what the morality of the Qur'an requires. In the Qur'an, Allah has commanded Muslims to be forgiving and tolerant and to behave justly, even in war. A Muslim must be someone who first feeds his prisoner even if he himself is hungry, always behaves with moderation even in the middle of a war, defends the rights of the oppressed and never deviates from the path of honesty and justice. For that reason, the Chechen people must never forget Our Lord's stricture **"You who believe! Show integrity for the sake of Allah, bearing witness with justice. Do not let hatred for a people incite you into not being just. Be just. That is closer to heedfulness. Allah is aware of what you do."** (Qur'an, 5: 8), even when fighting Russian oppression, and must never, ever target the guiltless and defenceless public.

Our hope is to see a search for a solution to the differences between the Chechens and the Russian administration based on a moderate and peaceful framework, as should also be the case in other regions of the Islamic world.

Moscow's Concerns Over a "United Caucasus"

Chechnya, which has been on the world's agenda for the last decade, is a very small country of some 16,000 square kilometers. Within the Russian Federation, there are presently 19 autonomous republics in the

same position as Chechnya. These republics make up 28 percent, over one-fourth, of Russian territory. Moscow still has a very strong influence on them, and is very keen that that influence should never be diminished. The loss of Chechnya would mean breaking the stranglehold of Russian power over the other republics, and would result in this nation setting an example to them. If the Chechens, whose total numbers are only that of the troops in the Russian army, break away from Russia, that could spark off independence movements in the other autonomous republics. The most noteworthy characteristic of the republics within the Russian Federation is the way they greatly influence one another, and how a change in one affects all the others.

Alongside all this, there is another element that makes Chechnya important for Russia. Moscow's real fear, as in the examples of Bosnia and Kosovo, is the establishment of a Muslim state right on its borders. That is the most important reason for the inhuman war waged against Chechnya by the Russian administration, which has tried for years to eliminate the Chechens' religious identity and so inflicted violent oppression on them, demolished mosques, banned worship and prohibited religious education.

The Chechen people are known for their loyalty to their religion, their determination to struggle to be allowed to live by that religion, and for their Islamic identity with its powerful effect on other Islamic states in the Caucasus. The idea of a "United Caucasus," put forward by the aforementioned Imam Mansur in the 1780s, which aimed at uniting the whole of the Caucasus, greatly alarms Russia. That is because the outstanding feature of such a union would be its Islamic nature, and that represents a serious threat to Moscow's interests.

These fears give rise to the Russian desire to see a "Chechnya without Chechens." With its current policy, Russia wants to eliminate the Chechens to the last man, prevent any possible Islamic union, and bring the lands it has lost under its domination once again. Whereas even if a "United Caucasus" is established, there is no need to regard this as an anti-Russian development. If the Russian administration enters into good relations with the Muslim peoples of the Caucasus, then there will be no need for these peoples, whether independent or not, to adopt an attitude opposed to Moscow.

The Continuing Struggle of the Defenseless Chechen People

There are many examples of Russian policies in favour of violence instead of peace rebounding on it. Russia has worked up some secret plans in Chechnya, especially at the start of the 1990s. It thought that it could never destroy the Chechens, with their unbreakable unity, by force of arms alone, and so resorted to undermining them from within and tried a number of means of doing so. It worked to destroy that popular solidarity and create chaos in Chechnya by interfering in elections, buying politicians, kidnapping and committing acts of terrorism, using pro-Russian clerics to try and stir up religious differences, as well as through economic and political pressure.

However, these methods failed to lead to the success they had expected.

Russia's occupation of Chechnya in 1991 was ended by Dzhokhar Dudayev. Then the serious harassment in November 1994 turned into war on December 11 of that year. More than 100,000 Chechens lost their lives in that war, and tens of thousands were forced to flee. The use of banned chemical weapons resulted in a kind of genocide. Furthermore, because Russia had portrayed Chechnya as an "internal matter," no serious reaction came from the outside world. No helping hand except a few European countries was extended to the Chechen people.

The war ended in August 1996 when the Russians admitted defeat. This Chechen success against the Russians deeply affected their fellow republics in the Caucasus. In 1998, the peoples of the northern Caucasus met in the "Northern Caucasus Peoples' Convention" in the Chechen capital, Grozny. All the participating countries agreed on a common position in order to avoid any conflict breaking out between the peoples of the northern Caucasus, and to support each other in the event of a Russian attack. This unity meant the nightmare the Russians had feared for so long actually becoming a reality. If Russia allowed it to happen, the Islamic union that had been dreaded for years would emerge. This was one of the main reasons why the Russian administration embarked on a second operation against Chechnya. This time, even more ruthless methods were employed, and inhuman tortures inflicted on defenceless people before the eyes of the world. Yet for some reason, the savagery was generally regarded as a Russian "internal affair."

This second full-scale war between the Chechens and the Russians started when the latter surrounded and bombed a number of villages in Dagestan in the early months of 1999. The 1,500 or so people of these villages asked for help from Chechnya, which they regarded as their natural leader. Shamil Basayev, who had become popular due to his success in war, began to offer assistance to the people of Dagestan in the summer of 1999. Only two of the villages being pounded by the Russians could be saved. There was terrible slaughter in those villages, and innocent people had been viciously murdered. The war between Russia and Chechnya, that is still going on today, was sparked off yet again by this incident.

Russian forces entered Chechnya on October 2, 1999 and began to ruthlessly kill anyone they came across, making no exceptions for women, children or the elderly. They began to attack civilian targets. Chemical weapons, scud missiles and napalm were used in the attacks, and hospitals, maternity wards, public shopping areas and refugee camps were deliberately selected as targets.

One of the ways the Russians ruthlessly attacked civilian targets was to poison the Argun River, a source of water for the populations of a number of Chechen villages. Most of the women and children who drank from the river died, and hundreds of others were left to suffer long-term ill effects. Chechnya lost three-quarters of its population in just two years. Even now, some of the native Chechens are still trying to survive in neighboring countries under the most difficult conditions.

The massacre of the Chechen people by the Russian government, which still retains the same old communist mentality, resembled the one carried out millennia ago by the Pharaoh. In his own time, he also attacked the weak and defenseless (in that case, the tribe of Israel), and brutally slew them. Allah states Pharaoh's cruelty in these terms:

Remember when Musa said to his people, "Remember Allah's blessing to you when He rescued you from the people of Pharaoh. They were inflicting an evil punishment on you, slaughtering your sons and letting your women live. In that there was a terrible trial from your Lord." And when your Lord announced: "If you are grateful, I will certainly give you increase, but if you are ungrateful, My punishment is severe." (Qur'an, 14: 6-7)

Pharaoh exalted himself arrogantly in the land and divided its people into camps, oppressing one group of them by slaughtering their sons and letting their women live. He was one of the corrupters. (Qur'an, 28: 4)

The mentality that permits the murder of children, the slitting open of pregnant women's bellies, the crushing old people under tanks and many other atrocities, is far removed from any moral sensitivity, human feelings, compassion, love or sympathy. Many of these people do not even know the reason for the atrocities they carry out, but because of the dark state of the soul that atheism brings with it, they can easily perform all kinds of evil acts. What is expected of Russia is that it should put an end to this dark mentality, left over from the time of the Red Army, which directs its Chechen policy, and for it to adopt a moderate policy that will bring peace and security to both the Russian and Chechen peoples.

The Situation Facing Chechen Refugees

A number of human rights organizations conducted studies into the Chechen refugees who fled the Russian slaughter, and their reports show violations on an enormous scale. Some 250,000 Chechens who fled the war are now in Ingushetia, and the rest can be found in neighboring regions. Chechens are faced with hunger, thirst and contagious diseases. Women and children, young people and old who were forced to migrate, now try to survive in the freezing cold and rain, two or three families in abandoned train carriages, or in stables in the villages where they have taken refuge.

For example, the Chechens in the Znamenskoye refugee camp to the north of Chechnya are unable to send their children to school because they have no winter clothes. Almost half of those taking shelter there have fallen sick because of the dreadful conditions and freezing cold.⁷ Diseases such as tuberculosis and hepatitis are spreading among Chechen refugees, who have nothing hot to eat for weeks at a time and whose bodily constitutions are unable to stand up to the conditions. The death toll is rising.⁸

Perhaps the most surprising thing is that the majority of the Western nations, which claim to be in the vanguard of the protection of human rights, don't lift a finger to help these people. A significant part of the world's public opinion is not totally aware of the suffering and sometimes insists on ignoring the cruelty inflicted on the hundreds of thousands of Chechens who fled the Russian slaughter. The aid from other countries in the region keeps being cut, and these people who are fighting hunger, thirst and bitter cold are hard put to find even a crust of bread. The terrible plight of these refugees needs to be addressed as a matter of the greatest urgency.

How Can a Solution be Found?

The path to a solution lies in both Russia and the Chechen resistance being called to peace, on the basis of the peace-loving and moderate approach Allah commands. Moscow must abandon regarding the existence and national aspirations of the Muslim peoples of the Caucasus as a threat, and those peoples must reduce the conflict and tension to a minimum by adopting a moderate and peaceful policy. As we have seen in some detail, the Russian terror in Chechnya is unacceptable savagery. On the other hand, however, the Chechen fighters who engage in terror attacks on Russian civilians are also on the wrong path. Both sides must prevent the spilling of any more blood, and make efforts to establish peace.

Extending a helping hand to the Chechen people in the face of the oppression they are suffering is a responsibility of all Muslims in the world. It is clear that nobody with courage who fears Allah and possesses the concept of justice revealed by Him in the Qur'an can stand idly by in the face of this cruelty being visited on

innocent people. A true believer always helps the poor, those in need, and those who have been driven from their homes, and will make any sacrifice for them. The self-sacrificing and tolerant behavior of believers in the Prophet's time, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, towards those who had been expelled from or had to leave their homes is described thus in the Qur'an:

It is for the poor of the emigrants who were driven from their homes and wealth desiring the favor and the pleasure of Allah and supporting Allah and His Messenger. Such people are the truly sincere.

Those who were already settled in the abode, and in belief, before they came, love those who have emigrated to them and do not find in their hearts any need for what they have been given and prefer them to themselves even if they themselves are needy. It is the people who are safe-guarded from the avarice of their own selves who are successful. (Qur'an, 59: 8-9)

Naturally, the spread of this superior morality among people is only possible with the dissemination of religion. For that reason, what intelligent people of good conscience need to do as a matter of priority is to find the best ways of communicating the morality of the Qur'an and actually put this into practice. Allah has promised to help those who help His religion:

Those who were expelled from their homes without any right, merely for saying, "Our Lord is Allah." If Allah had not driven some people back by means of others, monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques, where Allah's name is mentioned much, would have been pulled down and destroyed. Allah will certainly help those who help Him – Allah is All-Strong, Almighty, (Qur'an, 22: 40)

PALESTINE

The policy of terror of the occupying Israeli government

For years now there has been chaos and oppression in the Palestinian lands, where for 400 years during the Ottoman period peoples of different religions, languages and cultures lived together in peace and security. The slaughter and killing that continue with all their ruthlessness in the present day began when the region came under British domination and accelerated with the founding of an independent Jewish state.

At the root of what is going on in the region lies the fact that the Palestinian lands are seen as sacred by the three divine religions. However, those who defend the Zionist view have followed a policy aimed at eliminating the other peoples, instead of maintaining that sacred nature in peace and brotherhood. Zionist thought says that the Jews are a "superior race", which God has chosen, and that all other peoples in the world must bow their heads down to them. For Zionism, the belief in "the promised land" is just as important as that of the "chosen people." According to that belief, the Jews must live in the holy lands that God has promised to them. This region, from the Nile River to the Euphrates, consists of Palestinian lands more than anything else, and has Jerusalem at its center. Zionism believes that it is the Jews' most natural right to live in the promised land, and that all sorts of violence and oppression may be used against those who try to prevent this. At the root of the present injustice in Palestine, and the state of Israel's policy of violence and oppression towards the Palestinians, lies this racist belief and view.

For the Jews, the founding of an independent Jewish state on Palestinian land was a sacred mission. Another important aim is to preserve the existence of that state, which was established in May 1948. According to the rulers of the state of Israel, that can only be guaranteed by increasing the population on Palestinian territory and widening the areas inhabited by them. In order to bring that about, the entire Palestinian population must either be moved off that land, or else eliminated. For fully a half century now, the state of Israel has been engaged in the long-term extermination of the Palestinian people in accordance with that belief.

It needs to be made clear that the Jews' wish for a homeland of their own is entirely justified. Neither is there anything wrong in that homeland being in Palestinian territory, the Jews' historical homeland. However, Zionism is a twisted ideology which harbours an aggressive plan to take over all of Palestine and exile or eliminate the Muslim Arabs living in the country, and which sees nothing wrong in carrying that plan out. That is why its measures are condemned not just by Muslims, but also by a great many Israelis, Jews and Christians.

The Exiling of the Palestinian People

When the Zionists decided to found an independent Jewish state on Palestinian territory, one of the first problems they faced was the small size of the Jewish population living there. In the early 1900s, Jews constituted less than 10 percent of the population of Palestine. Thanks to the efforts of the Zionists, the number of Jewish migrants, 100,000 in the 1920s, reached 232,000 in the 1930s according to official figures. By 1939 there were 445,000 Jews out of a total population of 1.5 million. From representing 10 percent of the population just two decades before, they now constituted 30 percent by 1939. Jewish settlement areas were also expanded

in line with the rise in population. By 1939 the land owned by Jews had doubled in comparison to the 1920s. By 1947, there were 630,000 Jews in Palestine and 1.3 million Palestinians. Between the partitioning of Palestine by the United Nations on November 29, 1947 and the founding of the state of Israel on May 15, 1948, the Israelis acquired a substantial part of Palestinian lands. As a result of pressure and killing in Palestinian villages, the number of Palestinians living in some 500 cities, towns and villages fell from 950,000 to 138,000. A great number of these people had been killed, and others were exiled. The Zionist terror groups that would later form the Israeli Army attacked Muslim villages at night. Muslims were shot, and everywhere these groups passed through was burned and destroyed. **By these means, some 400 Palestinian villages were wiped off the map in 1948 and 1949.** The property left behind by the Palestinians was taken over by the Jews by virtue of the Absentee Property Law. Until 1947, Jewish land ownership in Palestine was some 6%. By the time the state was formally established, it had sequestered 90% of the land.⁹ The Palestinian Arabs were left with just two separate areas, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

As we have seen, each new arrival of Jews meant cruelty, oppression and violence for the Muslim population. In order to settle the new arrivals, Zionist organizations forced the Palestinian people to abandon the lands they had lived on for hundreds of years. Joseph Weitz, the head of the Israeli government's transfer committee of 1948, wrote in his diary in December 20, 1940: **"It must be clear that there is no room for both peoples in this country. No development will bring us closer to our aim, to be an independent people in this small country. After the Arabs are transferred, the country will be wide open for us; with the Arabs staying, the country will remain narrow and restricted. The only way is to transfer the Arabs from here to neighboring countries, all of them. Not a single village, or a single tribe must be left."**¹⁰ Heilburn, the chairman of the committee for the re-election of General Shlomo Lahat, the mayor of Tel Aviv, expressed the Zionist view of the Palestinian people in these words: **"We have to kill all the Palestinians unless they are resigned to live here as slaves."**¹¹

Refugee Camps

By far the greater part of the Palestinian Muslims who were forcibly removed from the places they had lived in for hundreds of years are still living in refugee camps. The number of Palestinians living in refugee camps, and in those in neighboring countries such as Lebanon and Jordan, is some 3.5 million.

The conditions faced by the Palestinians in the refugee camps and the regions under Israeli occupation are particularly unpleasant. These people have difficulties in meeting even their most basic human needs. They can enjoy electricity and water only to the extent that the state of Israel gives permission, and have to walk miles to poorly paid jobs in order to make a living. Even journeys of just 10-15 minutes, to go to work or visit relatives in a nearby refugee camp, are not easy for a Palestinian. They are subjected to identity checks at frequent intervals along the road, and to verbal and physical abuse. Sometime Israeli soldiers close roads for "security" reasons, and Palestinians are then unable to go to work, or anywhere, not even to hospital if they are ill.

As well as all this, they survive every day with the constant fear of being killed, injured or detained. That is because the people living in the camps are frequently subjected to armed attacks by fanatical Jews living in the nearby settlement areas, particularly during the night.

In his book *The Israeli Connection*, Benjamin Beit Hallahmi, a professor of psychology at Israel's Haifa University, describes the situation of the Muslims living in the Gaza Strip and Israel's view of them:

In 1986, the Gaza population stood at 525,000 and the density at 2,150 per square kilometer (in Israel it is 186). Most able-bodied Gazans, starting sometimes at age eight, work in Israel, at wages which are 40 percent below average Israeli pay. They pay income tax - without being entitled to any benefits, since they are defined as nonresidents.

In the Israeli consciousness Gaza has become the symbol of helplessness and squalor, but there is no sympathy for the denizens of Gaza, for they are the enemy.¹²

It will be useful at this point to briefly consider the impressions of a Palestinian-American citizen who visited the refugee camps in order to get a better idea of the conditions there. Yasmine Subhi Ali, a medical student, says this of her 1999 visit to the Shatila Camp:

... passing many damaged remnants of the civil war and the Israeli invasion all along our route. I expected that we would have to stop at some gate signifying the entrance to the camp when we reached it, but I saw nothing of the sort. I didn't need to: the contrast between the camp and the surrounding area (which was not the nicest part of town in the first place) was so striking that there could be no mistaking it. There were piles upon piles of trash, junk, and stones lining both sides of the road... Crowded shops line the street now, but in the distance behind them reminders remain: those bullet-hole-ridden, gunpowder-stained buildings... and a graveyard for which (we were told) the camp inhabitants were not allowed to build any memorials or even tombstones.¹³

Genocide Against the Civilian Population

Israel has implanted systematic state terror against the Palestinian people ever since it was founded. Naturally, the main targets of that terror are the Muslims living in the region. For half a century now, Palestinian Muslims have been ejected from their homes with no justification even being offered, and have been shot and attacked, have seen their homes demolished and their fields and gardens torn up, and been subjected to torture and violence. What is going on in Palestinian lands reveals that there is a terrible genocide being carried out by the state of Israel.

Very few of the attacks on and bombings of women, young people and children in Palestine are reported by the world media.

In Palestine, 70 percent of whose population consists of young people, children have experienced exile, detentions, imprisonment and slaughter ever since the occupation in 1948. They have been treated as second-class citizens in their own land, and learned to resist, even under the most intolerable conditions. Half of those who lost their lives in the Intifada which started with Ariel Sharon's provocative visit to the Dome of the Rock in October 2000 were under age 16. Sixty percent of those injured were less than 18. At least five children a day still die in those regions where the conflict continues, and more than 10 are injured.

Journalist-writer Ruth Anderson described the inhuman images from the Aksa Intifada in *The Palestine Chronicle*, published in Palestine:

No one mentions the newly married young man who went off to demonstrate only to die a martyr leaving his young bride a widow. **No one mentions the Palestinian youth whose head was crushed by Israelis and whose arms were broken before he was so brutally slaughtered.** No one mentions the little 8-year-old boy who was shot to death by Israeli soldiers. **No one says how** Jewish settlers armed with all sorts of weapons and encouraged by Barak's government, **storm Palestinian villages and uproot olive trees and murder**

Palestinian civilians. No one mentions the Palestinian babies who have died when their homes were bombed by air raids or who were caught in a hail of Israeli bullets while being transported to an envisioned safety. **Everyone knows that babies cannot throw stones.** Everyone knows but Israelis and Americans.¹⁴

The reply from Ehud Barak, the prime minister of the time, to the inhuman scenes going on in Palestine was particularly interesting as a reflection of the state of Israel's view. He simply stated that he doesn't mind how the conflict in Gaza, the West Bank and the other zones will ever die down and that the use of all means against Palestinians crowds was justified. He also noted that he is not interested in how many Palestinians die, but he is only concerned with the security of his own people.¹⁵

The response from E. Eytan, a general in the Israeli army, is even more thought-provoking. He stated that they do not regret anything they have done and they are ready to use all means for the security for their people and soldiers. He said that the order was given to the troops to use weapons against Palestinian demonstrators and that people must be shot in the head and chest to instill fear into the population.¹⁶

The above statements from Israeli officials are the clearest possible expression of this cruel mentality. The figures show that most Israeli soldiers carried out their orders with the greatest efficiency. According to a Palestine Health Organisation report, 34 percent of the more than 400 people killed during the Aqsa Intifada were under age 18. The important thing, however, is that 47 percent of the dead were people who did not take part in the demonstrations or clashes. Thirty-eight percent of those injured on the West Bank were hit by real bullets, and 75 percent of those in the upper parts of their bodies. In the Gaza Strip, 40 percent were injured by real bullets, and 61 percent of them in the upper body, in other words in the chest. The total number of wounded exceeded 10,000. Some 1,500 people suffered permanent disabilities. The hospitals where these people were being treated were also frequently attacked. A total of 1,450 people were detained, and 750 of these are still in Israeli prisons.

Some 2,760 buildings were seriously damaged. Of these, 773 were the homes of Palestinian civilians, 180 of which were completely destroyed. Among the damaged buildings were 29 mosques, 12 churches and 44 water depots. Forty-one schools were rendered completely unusable, and four of them were actually used as military warehouses by Israeli troops. Thirty school buildings were burned by Israeli soldiers. The situation led to damage totaling around \$400,000.

Finally, 45 students were killed on their way back home from school during the first two months of the al-Aqsa Intifada.¹⁷

All these statistics point to one clear fact: The state of Israel is engaged in a conscious and systematic policy of the elimination of the Palestinian people. The above figures show that Israeli troops did not use their weapons to remove a threat to public security, but to kill and maim. Most of the children who were killed and crippled were shot in the head or chest, or else from behind. It is obvious that no soldier whose aim is simply to maintain order would shoot people in the head or chest, or from behind as they run away.

There is no doubt that the terrorist actions targeting civilians resorted to by some radical Palestinian groups in the face of the Israeli oppression were unjustified, and we duly condemn those. Such attacks are generally the subjects of massive world criticism and are much more harmful than beneficial to the Palestinian cause. Yet it must not be forgotten that the starting point for these acts of terror was the Israeli occupation. Before 1967, in other words before it had occupied all the Palestinian territories, Israel faced no terrorist threat.

It was the Israeli occupation and strategy of "ethnic cleansing" that gave birth to and sustained Palestinian terrorism.

However, Muslims are charged with behaving in the manner commanded by Allah and being guided by the sunnah of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, at all moments of their lives.

The verses of the Qur'an call people to the ethics of Islam, through which the world can be made a haven for peace and tolerance. Allah commands us to rule justly without discriminating among people, to preserve people's rights, not to tolerate cruelty, to support the oppressed in the face of cruelty, and to lend a helping hand to those in need. This justice requires one to face a decision by protecting the rights of both parties, to evaluate events objectively, and to think without bias. It requires justice, honesty, mercy, and compassion.

It is obvious that attacks such as these against civilians cannot be excused. As explained above, such a method is absolutely inconsistent with Islam. When we examine the Qur'anic verses and the actions of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, it is clear that there is no place in Islam for attacks against civilians. Whether during the conquest of Mecca or during other wars, the Prophet carefully protected the rights of innocent and unarmed people, and prevented them from being harmed. He reminded believers in this regard on various occasions, commanding them to "Set out for war in the name of Allah and for the sake of Allah. Do not lay hands on the old verging on death, on women, children and babies. Do good, for Allah loves the virtuous and pious" (*Muslim*) Muslims oppose tyranny and barbarism, the unnecessary use of weapons, and all unjust practices.

In any discussion of the attacks on Israeli citizens, another topic which must be examined is the place of suicide in Islam. Some circles are gravely misinformed about Islam, believing that this religion of peace permits the practice of suicide attacks; nothing could be further from the truth. The fact is that Islam forbids the taking of one's own life, just as it forbids the taking of another's. Allah condemns suicide explicitly when he says, "**do not kill yourselves.**" (Qur'an, 4: 29). No matter what his reason, it is forbidden in Islam for anyone to kill himself. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, also condemns suicide in one of the hadiths, indicating that those who choose this path will suffer eternal damnation:

Whoever purposely throws himself from a mountain and kills himself, will be in the (Hell) Fire falling down into it and abiding therein perpetually forever; and whoever drinks poison and kills himself with it, he will be carrying his poison in his hand and drinking it in the (Hell) Fire wherein he will abide eternally forever; and whoever kills himself with an iron weapon, will be carrying that weapon in his hand and stabbing his abdomen with it in the (Hell) Fire wherein he will abide eternally forever. (*Muslim*)

Consequently, every Muslim should condemn these incidents, which cast a pall on the just cause of the Palestinian people.

It should be bore in mind that any mode of struggle outside of the values of the Qur'an – for example, the "guerilla" tactics envisaged by communist ideology – is not correct, and cannot succeed. For this reason current situation on Palestinian lands must be evaluated sensibly and realistically, and a new strategy consistent with the Qur'an must be determined. If Palestine were to engage in a diplomatic and cultural struggle against Israel, which is militarily so much more powerful than Palestine, instead of a military one, it would not only enjoy much greater success, but would also put an end to the sufferings of innocent people.

Conclusion

One could say a great deal more, and cite a great many more examples of what is going on in Palestine. Yet what we must above all not forget is the responsibility that falls to every person of conscience in the face of them. The events in Palestine mean much more than an Arab-Israeli war. First of all, the Muslim people whose lands have been forcibly taken from them are engaged on an important quest for justice. The lands in question are considered holy by the entire Islamic world. The Palestinian people are resisting abandoning Jerusalem, a city which belongs to the whole Muslim world. That is why all believers have a duty to wage a war of ideas with those ideologies used to support the continuing oppression in Palestine, and to try to find a solution to it.

Every person of conscience must consider that fact and look for a way out. As we have said in other sections of this book, that way out lies in spreading Qur'anic morality among people worldwide. That is the only way to bring about peace and brotherhood, whether in Palestine or any of the many other countries experiencing war and conflict. If the justice, cooperation, compassion, love, self-sacrifice and forgiveness that the morality of the Qur'an commands come to prevail in the world, then the result will be a place of justice, peace and security.

With the words, "**Let there be a community among you who call to the good, and enjoin the right, and forbid the wrong. They are the ones who have success**" (Qur'an, 3: 104), Allah draws attention to this honorable duty placed on all believers. What all Muslims therefore need to do is themselves to live by a morality that is pleasing to Him, explain it to other people, and preach the morality of the Qur'an to the entire world.

KASHMIR

The Muslims of Kashmir Are Waiting for Help

Like many other Muslim peoples on the continent of Asia, the people of Kashmir spent the second half of the twentieth century in a state of war and conflict. The main reason why there has been no peace or stability in Kashmir for some 50 years is the oppression of the occupying Indian administration.

Kashmir is an economically important area of the world, with its gold, emerald and ruby mines. Since this region under Indian occupation lies high up in the mountains, it is a strategic locale that can be used to dominate the whole surrounding area. That is why Kashmir, with its strategic importance and underground wealth, has attracted the attention of many nations throughout history. However, the most important reason why countries in the region are so interested in Kashmir is its Muslim identity.

It seems that neither India, known with its prejudiced attitude against Islam, nor Russia and China have any intention of allowing Kashmir to achieve its objective of becoming an independent Islamic state, or else to unite with the Islamic state of Pakistan. The fact that the Kashmiri people are Muslim is the fundamental reason for the economic embargo, acts of violence, unjustified detentions and torture that they are subjected to. In this way, the powers in question aim to prevent Muslims from gaining power, both economically and politically. In the same way, they also want embargoes and international pressure to prevent the Muslim Pakistan government from supporting the people of Kashmir.

Maneuvering Over Kashmir

The Indian sub-continent remained under British hegemony until the end of World War II. When the British departed, Indian Muslims wished to have their own state and so established Pakistan. There was an exchange of populations between India and Pakistan. Many Muslims living in India migrated to Pakistan. Jammu/Kashmir, however, with its overwhelmingly majority Muslim population, remained under Indian control, thanks to that country's intrigues and support from the British. Kashmir has been living under Indian oppression ever since.

The Kashmiri Muslims wished to resist the oppressive Indian rule and to gain their independence. Indian forces carried out three major massacres in the country, in 1947, 1965 and 1971. Tens of thousands of Kashmiri Muslims were killed. More than 4,000 women were tortured and raped. Schools providing religious education were shut down in order to prevent any Islamic awareness.¹⁸ The killing and assimilation movement took on its most ruthless form after 1990. People were detained for no reason and tortured to death. Homes were looted, defenseless people subjected to all kinds of persecution, and newspapers and schools shut down. Nor was the Indian government content with restricting itself to armed violence. Dams supposedly needed for agricultural purposes were also employed to oppress Muslims. They were filled up to the brim and then suddenly opened when the monsoon rains came. The lower-lying areas, Kashmir and Pakistan, were thus flooded. Thousands of people lost their lives as a result, and the affected areas suffered great damage.

In October, 1993, there was a major attack on the Hazratbal Mosque in the Kashmiri capital, Srinagar. The Indian authorities surrounded the mosque, which they said was being used as a military base of operations by

Muslims, for about a month. More than 100 people were killed during that time. A further 300 innocent people were detained. Electricity and water supplies to the city were cut off.

In addition to the persecution by the Indian government in Kashmir, there is also a serious refugee problem. Below you can read the impressions of Sefer Turan, a television reporter for Turkish channel *Kanal 7*, of the refugee camps in question. These alone are enough to stir a person's conscience:

The Ambor refugee camp was set up in 1990 for Kashmiris fleeing Jammu Kashmir. Living standards are far below the norm. People are crammed into tiny mud houses. In the one-room house we entered, there was a single bed. When I asked how many people lived there, I was told, "Nine." The camp consists of 214 families, or 1,110 individuals. It is enough to enter one of the mud huts they live in to see how low their standard of living really is. The huts generally consist of two rooms. There are a few unusable pots and pans. Also one or two beds, if they can properly be called that. A mother sits in the corner with a baby on her lap. A pan boils over an earth fire, where a few branches that someone has managed to scrounge up are burning. There's absolutely nothing to eat anywhere! I was too embarrassed to look under the lids off any of the pans. In none of the tents was there anything to eat or to sleep on! A very old piece of cloth was spread out in the middle of the floor in one of the tents. Maybe that was used as a bed. When I asked how many people lived in that tent, I was told 11. Outside, a single pot was boiling...¹⁹

The above example is just one of the refugee dramas experienced all over the world. The living conditions of the millions of refugees in Palestine, the sufferings of the nearly one million Muslim refugees during the Kosovo War, and the hundreds of thousands of Chechen refugees are even worse.

In all these situations there lies wisdom that all people of conscience need to grasp. There is wisdom in all things that happen in the world, as they are intended to be a test. The lesson that believers must learn from the experiences we have been considering is the clear importance of explaining the existence of Allah and the rewarding morality of the Qur'an to the whole world. What they need to do in the face of that truth is to fulfill their duty of waging a war of ideas against all tendencies that deny Allah, and to lead men from doing wrong and command them to do what is right. In this way, people with strong consciences who fear Allah will emerge, and all cruelty will disappear. Those who oppress others will pay the price for their deeds, both in this world and the next. Allah reveals this truth in the following verses:

Those who oppose Allah and His Messenger will be subdued and overcome as those before them were also subdued and overcome. We have sent down Clear Signs. The disbelievers will have a humiliating punishment. On the Day Allah raises up all of them together, He will inform them of what they did. Allah has recorded it while they have forgotten it. Allah is a Witness of all things. (Qur'an, 58: 5-6)

The basis of this struggle is a contest of ideas to be waged against all kinds of cruelty, conflict, and the atheist philosophies that provide the foundation for chaos. In this struggle, the basis of all peace, harmony and love, namely people's consciences, will be stirred into action and innocent people delivered from suffering. Allah has revealed the glad tidings of the outcome of this struggle:

**Rather We hurl the truth against falsehood and it cuts right through it and it vanishes clean away!
Woe without end for you for what you portray! (Qur'an, 21: 18)**

Cruelty Ignored by the World

The fact that India could carry out such a heinous policy of oppression in Kashmir for over 50 years is the result of overt and covert support it has received from some circles in the West. Muslims in Kashmir were abandoned to the oppressive regime of the Hindus as a result of U.N. decisions, which were mostly not even put into practice. The population of Kashmir is overwhelmingly Muslim. Its fight for freedom and the rightful support lent by Pakistan were undermined by the unjust policies of some Western circles.

While some circles in Europe try to ignore the question of Kashmir as much as possible, a certain part of the American media report the issue to the world community subjectively. Close examination show that some U.S. dailies seldom touch on the savagery in Kashmir. On the rare occasions that they do, the situation is portrayed as one of "putting down an internal rebellion in a part of India." For example, on Jan. 22, 1990, the *New York Times* carried an opinion piece accusing Pakistan of supporting Muslim "separatist" groups in Kashmir which damaged stability in the country and that this had caused an outrage in Pakistan.²⁰ It is possible to see subjective comments of this kind throughout the Western media.

Indian pressure in the region and moves towards assimilation have grown worse in recent years. There exist "fanatical Hindu groups" that the government says it is unable to control, although everyone knows that the conflict between them is a sham. These organizations aim at eliminating the Kashmiri Muslims altogether, as in the Babur Shah Mosque massacre.

How can we account for this situation? Why do some circles insist on leaving the people of Kashmir to face Indian oppression and also support terrorism from that country? The answer to that question is the intense activities of the anti-Islamic lobbies. These may sometimes be extremely influential over the administrative mechanisms of the West, which casts a shadow over the West's pro-democratic and pro-human rights stance.

In conclusion, the Muslims of Kashmir have not only had to defend themselves against India, or rather radical Hindu organizations, but have also had to wage an ideological war against these lobbies that support such groups behind the scenes.

Anti-Islamic lobbies appear behind what is happening on the propaganda level in particular. The violence faced by Kashmiri Muslims is truly terrible. Just as has happened throughout history, however, the people of Kashmir are portrayed by propaganda in a very different light. The cruelty and torture inflicted on innocent people is covered up, so the world remains silent in the face of what is going on. People behave as if bitter reports from human rights organizations don't even exist. The people of Kashmir, who oppose Indian oppression and are fighting to live in peace in their own land, are portrayed to the world as "radical groups."

Whereas the only desire of the Kashmiri people, who have been subjected to Indian control for over half a century, is to be able to live by their religion, not to be oppressed simply because they are Muslims, and to own a land where they can raise their children in peace and safety.

The fact that the Kashmiri Muslims are unable to enjoy that most natural right and are subjected to a host of tortures underlines once again how urgent and vital is the need for Islamic morality to be strengthened against atheism and for people of conscience to become aware of what is going on.

Clearly, people of good conscience cannot simply shut their eyes and ears to all this. Putting this enormous injustice in the public spotlight and explaining that living in peace and justice is possible only through following the morality of the Qur'an is one of the most important responsibilities of our times. It is also a duty of all Muslims to tell believers of the good news of Allah's help and also to warn the wrongdoers of the fate that awaits them if they do not desist. The verses below describe the vastly different rewards that await both the wrongdoers and those who believe:

We will certainly help Our Messengers and those who believe both in the life of this world and on the Day the witnesses appear, the Day when the excuses of the wrongdoers will not help them. The curse will be on them and they will have the most evil Home. (Qur'an, 40: 51-52)

EAST TURKESTAN

Savagery Hidden by the Communist Chinese Government

Then we consider ideologies that in the twentieth century spread misery throughout the world, communism comes at the top of this list. Based on the ideas of two German philosophers, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, this belief system was implemented by cruel leaders such as Lenin, Stalin and Mao, and led to the worst slaughter and killing in the history of the world.

No matter how much we agree that communism collapsed as a regime with the breakup of the Soviet Union, communist ideology and practice in fact still continue, whether openly or in secret. The Muslim Turks of East Turkestan still live under the oppression of Maoist Red China. The human rights violations in East Turkestan are such that they cannot be ignored.

Chinese Cruelty in East Turkestan

The Muslim Turks of East Turkestan, known as the Uighurs, have lived under Chinese domination for about 250 years. The Chinese gave this Islamic territory the name "Xinjiang," or "conquered land," and called it their own. Following the 1949 takeover of China by the communists, led by Mao, the oppression in East Turkestan rose to even greater heights than before. The communist regime turned to the physical elimination of the Muslims, a group which refused to be assimilated.

The number of Muslims killed was truly staggering. Between 1949 and 1952, 2.8 million people were either killed outright by the Chinese army or else died of starvation in a famine engineered by the regime. Between 1952 and 1957, over 3.5 million people died, then 6.7 million between 1958 and 1960, and then between 1961 and 1965, an almost inconceivable 13.3 million.

Those Uighurs who managed to survive were subjected to torture and oppression. The late East Turkestan leader Isa Yusuf Alptekin, who spent many years in exile, described this in his books *Dogu Turkistan Davasi* (The East Turkestan Affair) and *Unutulun Vatan Dogu Turkistan* (East Turkestan: The Forgotten Land). According to these volumes, the oppression of the people of East Turkestan was no different from that of the Muslims in Bosnia, or the Albanian majority in Kosovo by the Serbs. The "punishments" meted out by the Chinese courts in the country are exceedingly ruthless and savage. These include burying people alive, beating people almost to death and then stripping them and leaving them to die in the snow, and tying oxen to people's legs in order to literally tear them apart limb-from-limb.

Assimilation Practices Aimed at the Wholesale Destruction of a Culture

Ever since 1949, the communist regime has set about eliminating the Muslim population, and has systematically moved Chinese immigrants into the region. The effects of this campaign, initiated by the Chinese government in 1953, are particularly striking. In 1953, fully 75 percent of the population was Muslim, and just 6 percent Chinese. By 1982, the ratio had changed to 53 percent Muslim and 40 percent Chinese. The 1990 census, which reported a population of 40 percent Muslim to 53 percent Chinese, began to lay bare the full dimensions of ethnic cleansing in the region.

Currently, the Uighurs are being made to stay in the villages, and Chinese are being installed in the cities. Thus, some cities now have populations which are as much as 80 percent Chinese. The aim is to establish a Chinese majority in the cities. The Chinese government's policy encouraging intermarriage between the local people and the Chinese is another part of this assimilation policy.

The Chinese administration has also used the Muslims of East Turkestan in nuclear tests. These tests began on Oct. 16, 1964, and as a result, people in the region have developed deadly illnesses, and some 20,000 handicapped children have been born. The number of Muslims who have lost their lives as a result of the tests is known to be in the area of 210,000. Thousands of others contracted cancer or were left crippled.

From 1964 to the present, China has detonated approximately 50 atomic and hydrogen bombs in East Turkestan. Swedish experts measured the effect of tremors set off by a 1984 underground test as registering 6.8 on the Richter scale.

The Real Reason for the Cruelty: Hatred of Islam

The one critical reason behind China's oppression of the people of East Turkestan is that they are Muslims, because communist China sees Islam as the biggest obstacle to its tightening its grip over the region.

Chinese intolerance resorts to all possible methods of oppression in order to turn the people from their religion, and went through its most fanatical period during the communist dictator Mao's Cultural Revolution of 1966-76. Mosques were torn down, mass worship was banned, Qur'anic courses were shuttered, and the Chinese moving into the area harassed the Muslim population however they could. Schools were used to spread atheist propaganda. All available means of communication were marshaled in a concerted effort to turn people away from their religion. People were banned from learning about their faith, and religious leaders were prohibited from teaching about it. However, in the face of all this oppression, the people still held fast to Islam.²¹

One of the methods of intimidation and pressure still used today shows itself in the schools. University education in the region is given in Chinese, and Muslims allowed to study in these universities make up only 20 percent of the student body. Economic difficulties are another barrier keeping the level of education low among the Muslim population. Schools that teach in Chinese enjoy advanced facilities, but Uighur schools lack such advantages. So-called religious education in schools is built upon a pillar of atheism.

The fact that the alphabet has been changed four times in the space of 30 years is another part of the assimilation policy aimed at local Muslims. Despite the Cultural Revolution, Mao left the Chinese script unchanged, but changed the Uighur alphabet from Roman letters to Russian-type Cyrillic. After that alphabet had been used for a while, the system went back to the Roman. Then, however, it changed over to Arabic script in order to block any cultural bridges from being established with Turkey. The difficulty in simply understanding each other faced by generations whose alphabets have been switched around so many times is all too clear.

Communist China's Anti-Islamic Role in the Far East

The savage oppression of Muslim Uighur Turks in East Turkestan continues unabated today. Chinese officials round up young Uighur Turks who have committed no offense, just because they see them as potential enemies of the regime. To escape this persecution, young people flee to the mountains or the deserts.

Since 1996, tens of thousands of Uighur Turks have been held in camps where it is known that many of them are subjected to severe torture. As one international human rights organization detailed in an official report, suspects are tried in mass hearings and either sentenced to hard labor or executed by firing squads in public squares. Courts operate under orders from the Communist Party. Perhaps more terrible yet, pregnant women are taken from their homes and forcibly sterilized under unhygienic conditions, and children born outside the government's quotas are killed, their families' wishes in the matter swept aside and unlistened to.

The events of February 1997 summed up this Chinese persecution. On the Night of Power (*Lailat-ul Qadr*) during Ramadan, which occurred on Feb. 4, more than 30 women who had gone to a mosque to celebrate this important night for Muslims, were burst in on while they were reading the Qur'an, beaten by members of the Chinese militia and then dragged to security headquarters. Local residents went to the headquarters and asked for the women's release. In response, the bodies of three women who had been tortured to death were hurled in front of them, and fighting broke out between the outraged locals and the Chinese. Some 200 East Turkestan natives lost their lives between Feb. 4 and 7, and more than 3,500 ended up imprisoned in camps. On the morning of Feb. 8, people who had gathered in mosques were blocked by security forces from carrying out their prayers. Fighting broke out again, and as a result the number of people detained, which had been 58,000 in April-May 1996, suddenly shot up above 70,000. Up to 100 young people were publicly executed, and 5,000 Uighur Turks were stripped naked and put on public display in groups of 50.

Despite all this, it is noteworthy that the people of East Turkestan still do not receive the support from the West that they expect.

The United Nations' official definition of genocide fits exactly the situation in Chinese-occupied East Turkestan. Despite this, the people of East Turkestan are unable to benefit from U.N. protection. All their applications to the U.N. are rejected. Twenty-five million East Turkestan Muslims are still suffering under Chinese oppression, and the world closes its eyes or turns away from this cruelty. There are thousands of political prisoners, and many have "disappeared" in prison. The torturing of detainees has become a routine matter.

In order to bring an end to this persecution in East Turkestan, the world must first of all be told in no uncertain terms what is taking place there, and then international sanctions must be applied to make China feel the heat. China is engaged in a massacre behind closed doors, and the oppressed people of East Turkestan lack any means of making their voices heard. The people of the world have to act in unison on this vital matter.

It must not be forgotten that at the root of this savagery and persecution in East Turkestan lies the atheist philosophy of communist China. This inhuman war being waged against a defenseless people is the result of materialist and atheist communist thinking. The ruthless communist leaders of the twentieth century left a bloody ideology and millions of dead in their wake. East Turkestan is but one example. The only way of stopping this nightmare from ever harming mankind again is to wage a war of ideas against atheist ideologies such as communism. The removal of the fundamental bases of communist ideology will be the first step in putting an end to communist oppression.

As was stressed in the first chapter of this book, the fundamental basis of communism is Darwinism. Karl Marx, the founder of communism, dedicated his *Das Kapital* to Darwin, a figure whom he greatly admired. In his book *Ever Since Darwin*, the world-famous Marxist-evolutionist scientist Stephen Jay Gould writes:

...Marx and Darwin did correspond, and Marx held Darwin in very high regard... Darwin was, indeed, a gentle revolutionary.²²

The communist Chinese leader Mao said in one address, "**Chinese socialism is founded upon Darwin and the theory of evolution,**" thus clearly identifying the ultimate source of the violence he inflicted.²³

These statements laying bare Marxism's roots show clearly that Darwinism is the ideology lying behind the ruthless cruelty practiced in past years in countries such as Russia and China, and which is today still inflicted on Chechens and the Muslims of East Turkestan. (For details of Darwinism's scientific and ideological collapse, see the appendix on the evolution deception.)

BOSNIA, KOSOVA AND MACEDONIA

The peoples of the Balkans Dragged From One War to Another

Towards the end of the twentieth century, the world witnessed a huge and terrible genocide. It began in 1992, and over its course hundreds of thousands of people were thrown out of their lands, killed, thrown in concentration camps, and subjected to inhuman torture. The most striking and singular feature of this genocide, which began in Bosnia and then moved to Kosovo, was that it took place before the eyes of the whole world, right next door to the countries of Europe.

The savagery in Bosnia which began in 1992 lasted until the spring of 1995. Throughout its course there was violence the likes of which has seldom been equaled in history. The number of Bosnian Muslims killed by the Serbs was more than 200,000. Fully 2 million people were exiled from their homes, and some 50,000 Muslim women were raped. The same things happened later in Kosovo.

Destroying All Traces of the Ottomans

In order to understand this savagery inflicted on the innocent Muslims of Bosnia, we first need to take a look at the history of the region. It is well known that after the dissolution of the Yugoslavian Federation, some countries became uneasy at the way a number of regions with majority Muslim populations were heading towards independence. The setting up of independent Muslim states in the middle of Europe, and the possibility that these might form a union amongst themselves, meant Islamic civilization coming uncomfortably close to Western states. For that reason, the Muslims in the Balkans were subjected to genocide by the Serbs, with secret encouragement by the effective anti-Islamic lobbies in certain Western countries and under the security umbrella of those lobbies.

Even before people had forgotten the terrible atrocities in Bosnia-Herzegovina, a second wave of Serbian savagery began, this time in the Yugoslavian republic of Kosovo. Looking at these events from a historical perspective, it seemed that the Serbs were trying to avenge the pain of their defeat some 600 years previously. The Serbs in Kosovo see the Muslim Albanians as a "continuation of the Ottoman Empire," for which reason they are set on a policy of assimilation, or more accurately, are trying to do away with all traces of the Ottomans.

The hatred of the Serbs for the Ottomans goes back over 600 years. During the First Kosovar War, in 1389, Sultan Murat I was stabbed and seriously injured in the northwest of Pristina by a Serb disguised as a messenger. Murat eventually died after witnessing the Ottomans' victory. The second great Ottoman victory in Kosovo took place in 1448, when Sultan Murat II found himself facing a crusader army led by the Serbians, and he defeated them. Following the Second Kosovar War, Muslim Turks settled in the Balkans in large numbers.

Throughout the centuries that the Balkans remained under Ottoman rule there was no ethnic problem of any magnitude, but rather a general air of peace and security. However, certain international powers stirred up feelings of nationalism in the Ottoman territories, which led to the Balkan wars. When these came to an end, those same powers reshaped the region. This new order turned the Balkans into a battleground in the making.

The Fear of a "Greater Albania" and Kosovo

The new map of the Balkans which was agreed upon at the Treaty of Versailles at the end of World War I highlights one interesting fact: Instead of uniting the Albanians – a key segment of the population of the Balkans – in a single state, they were left scattered over a number of countries. Why were the Albanians not brought together within common borders when the map was drawn up?

In the answer to that question lies the fundamental cause of all the conflict there up to our day. **The prospect of the formation of a "Greater Albanian" state, one made up of Muslim Albanians, is regarded by certain international powers as not being in their interests.** The reason why no solution could be found to this decade-long problem lies in yet the same idea. If Kosovo is recognized as independent, a "Greater Albania" could again be established in the southern Balkans.

Albanians make up more than 95 percent of the population of Albania. Moreover, there is an important Albanian population of 35 percent within the borders of Macedonia, and some 50,000 Albanians live in Montenegro. Within Yugoslavia, the region of Kosovo also has a large Albanian population.

What if these neighboring countries were to unite, thus forming a "Greater Albania" in the heart of Europe? That is one fear of the Western powers.

It should be made clear that this fear has more to do with religion than ethnicity. Just as with Bosnia, a state here consisting mainly of Muslims is seen as "undesirable."

This calculation, which still applies today, played an important role in the drawing up of the map of the Balkans after World War I. That is why the Albanians have lived as an unwillingly divided nation ever since.

After World War II, the Albanians were ruled by communist regimes. The Albanians of Kosovo and Macedonia remained within the borders of Tito's Yugoslavia, and Albania itself fell into the hands of Enver Hoxha's more oppressive regime.

Following the collapse of communism over 40 years later, the powers which perceived a potential "Greater Albania" as a threat due to its Muslim nature again moved into action. It was the former communist and new fascist Slobodan Milosevic who began using savage methods to carry out this anti-Islamic policy.

As soon as Milosevic came to power, he ended the autonomy that had been granted to Kosovo in Tito's time. He began holding fascist-style meetings to fan the flames of Serbian nationalism. Places of higher education in Kosovo were barred from teaching in Albanian, newspapers publishing in that language were closed down, and the people were oppressed. It was intended that the Albanians should leave the region, and in fact some 400,000 did so during that time. At the same time, there was an attempt to change the demography of the region by moving in Serbs. They wanted to "Serbianize" the region by getting rid of the Muslim Albanians who made up fully 90 percent of the population. They even tore up property deeds and marriage documents in order to erase the Muslims' cultural identity. In 1989, Kosovo's autonomy was revoked altogether. Every day, Milosevic imposed new sanctions on the region.

The Albanians continued their peaceful resistance in the face of all the measures being used against them, and under the leadership of Ibrahim Rugova they began a constitutionally based campaign to win back their rights. The Albanian people, who had lived for many years under an oppressive system possessing no rights at all and as targets of assimilation, began to attract the attention of the world when they were subjected to ethnic cleansing. The Serbs poured police and troops into the region. These forces attacked the population, which lacked any means of self-defense, using heavy weapons. It was Feb. 27-28, 1998 when the systematic ethnic

cleansing campaign began. Serbian aggression was halted by the NATO operation on March 24, 1999. However, the fact that this operation came late meant huge suffering being inflicted on the Kosovar Albanians.

Bosnia: A Massacre Before the Eyes of the World

When Sarajevo became part of Ottoman territory in 1463 it also came into contact with the religion of Islam, and it remained an Ottoman domain for some 400 years. Throughout that long time the Slavs, linked to a Christian sect called the "Bogomils" and living in the area of Bosnia-Herzegovina, turned to Islam of their own free will. A Muslim people thus emerged in Bosnia, in the middle of the Balkan Peninsula. With the 1878 Treaty of Berlin, Bosnia was given over to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, although in effect it still remained part of the Ottoman territories. But the empire occupied it in 1908, and Bosnia was no longer under Muslim rule. The Bosnians bade farewell to the withdrawing Ottomans with much regret, as they guessed the persecution they would suffer under their new rulers. Indeed, no sooner had the Ottomans withdrawn than attacks on and harassment of Muslims began.

After World War I the "Kingdom of Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia" was established, thus bringing together all the Slav communities in the region. Bosnia-Herzegovina also became part of the kingdom. In 1929, the running of the state, now called the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, fell into the hands of Orthodox Christian Serbs. Until World War II, Bosnian Muslims had their goods and property stolen and were kept under close watch.

During World War II the region was occupied by the Germans. The war years saw 100,000 Muslims killed in attacks on Bosnian towns and villages by ultra-nationalist Serbian partisans (Chetniks). The communists played an important role in the resistance against the Nazis, and when the war ended they took over the country's administration. The policy of oppression of Muslims began anew when the communists came to power. Islamic foundations were taken over, mosques and religious schools were seized, and an intensive campaign of atheist propaganda began. As a result of this pressure, one part of the Muslim population of Bosnia-Herzegovina was forced to migrate to Turkey and other European countries.

Following the collapse of the Cold War Warsaw Pact, a referendum was held on March 1, 1992, and Bosnia-Herzegovina declared its independence. However, the Serbs then occupied the country and began three years of slaughter. The number of Bosnian Muslims killed by the Serbs in just those three years totalled more than 200,000. Some 2 million Muslims were forced from their homes. Fifty thousand Muslim women were raped. Muslims sent to Serbian concentration camps were subjected to unbelievable torture, and tens of thousands of them were crippled.

Some of the cases of torture inflicted on the Muslims were taken up by the United Nations' International War Crimes Tribunal. Statements given by Muslims there show the extent of the persecution they were subjected to. For example, according to a statement by 46-year-old Sulejman Besic, a Chetnik called Dusan Tadic went up to a Muslim woman one day and shouted at her to tell him where her husband was. He later told the woman to undress, threatening to kill her if she refused. In tears, she began to strip, at gunpoint. In less than a minute, however, Tadic shot her in the head. That same Chetnik then brought her son, who during this horrific scene had been lying a short distance away with his hands tied, and ordered him to rape his dead mother. The young man then gave out a terrible cry, and was immediately shot dead by Dusan Tadic.

Bodies lay at the scenes of their murders for long periods. Such a thing was nothing extraordinary in the concentration camps. According to Sulejman Besic, many injured Muslims were in a truly terrible situation.

Some of them lay unconscious as maggots crawled in their open wounds. The stench given off by the corpses lying in the open and the maggot-infested flesh was truly dreadful.

Basic witnessed these things during internment in the Trnopolje camp, and he spoke of his experience to the International War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague, which was set up to investigate war crimes in the former Yugoslavia and try the suspects. These terrible things he both witnessed and experienced were just a few examples out of thousands of the systematic torture and slaughter inflicted on Muslims by the Serbs in Bosnia.

The long savagery and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia may have come to an end, but it left behind it a great human tragedy. The Serbs carried out their threats, and responded to the rise of Islam in Bosnia with an enormous slaughter, carried out before the eyes of the entire world.

Our fervent wish is that the people of Bosnia, who were subjected to that savage genocide simply because they were Muslims, will be actively and practically supported by people of good conscience in all societies, and particularly the Islamic world on their path to recovery.

ALGERIA

The Bloody Toll of Endless Cruelty and Oppression

Algeria enjoys an important place in the spread of Islam in North Africa, but has been wracked by social and political chaos for many years now. The roots of the conflict in Algeria, which the world has grown used to hearing about over the last decade, go back a long way.

The French Occupation of Algeria

Algeria lived in peace and security under Ottoman rule from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. However, as the Ottoman Empire began to fall apart, colonialist powers divided up the Islamic world. One of these lands was Algeria. In 1827, French armies with 37,000 men invaded the country. In the three years of fighting that ensued, the whole country came under French rule. Algeria was of great importance to the French with its rich oil reserves and strategic position as a port on the Mediterranean. The country officially became part of France in 1830, and remained under the French colonialist thumb for the next 132 years.

In line with the colonialist view, the French saw the people of nations besides themselves as second-class human beings, and so established a system based on pressure and violence, as in all the other lands they occupied. A campaign of cultural assimilation was begun. Firstly, speaking and teaching Arabic was banned. French became the only official language. This policy was aimed at destroying the people's national identity and cultural heritage. Later on, Algeria was made totally economically dependent on France, and the country's political structure was reshaped in line with French interests.

The first Algerian resistance to French occupation came from Abd-el-Kader, the governor of Mascara, in 1832. Thousands of Muslim Algerians were killed in the struggle, and the French took over the whole of the country. Throughout the period that followed the uprising, there was no force able to coordinate the anger that people felt towards the colonizers. A number of moves for independence inspired by the policies of violence and repression were savagely put down. That remained the state of affairs in the country until the mid-twentieth century.

With the outbreak of World War II, a new era dawned in Algeria. Nazi Germany first occupied France and then Algeria. Many Algerian patriots were detained by the Germans, most of whom were either killed or sent to concentration camps. When the Allies put an end to the German occupation in 1942, those Algerian intellectuals who had imagined that this would be the start of a new and democratic dawn in Algeria quickly realized that they were mistaken. In 1943, a group led by Ferhat Abbas proposed to the Allies that colonialism be ended in favor of an independent state being founded at the war's end, with a new Constitution, as well as that Algerians should run the country and all those imprisoned for their beliefs should be released. The Algerians, who had fought alongside the Allies against the Germans, thought that their just demands would be accepted. However, they were instead, rejected. Furthermore, a new wave of killing was just around the corner.

When a large crowd of people unfurled the Algerian flag on May, 8, 1945, during celebrations to mark the end of the war, this action was met with terrible bloodshed. French troops opened fire on those carrying Algerian flags, and 40 people were ruthlessly slain. This met with considerable reaction from other Muslims in

the area. The protest grew, and France decided in favor of an even greater show of force. Army units began opening fire on civilians at random. As a result, according to figures from American sources, **some 45,000 Muslims died in the ensuing slaughter.** Many more were wounded. This incident, known as **the Setif Massacre**, was followed by other acts by the oppressive French regime. All political activity was banned. Thousands of Algerians were detained with no justifications given. The Algerians were getting another painful taste of the colonialists' cruelty.

During the decade that followed the Setif Massacre, independence movements matured. A notice published by resistance forces on Nov. 1, 1954, urged the Algerian people to rise up for freedom and independence. The National Liberation Front (FLN) and the National Liberation Army (ALN), founded that same year, led the independence movement. The FLN was not a homogenous movement, and people of diverse political persuasions gathered under its umbrella. It met in Cairo in September 1958 and formed the Temporary Government of Algeria.

France, of course, had no wish to lose Algeria with its rich reserves of oil and natural gas. The potential emergence of a Muslim country with rich natural resources made France and other anti-Islamic forces uneasy. The French administration calculated that such a development would have a domino effect on other Muslim countries in Africa, and so it turned to further killing. Many villages were burned by the French, and schools and mosques were demolished, until Algeria declared independence. During this period, which saw thousands of people lost their lives, the French did not shrink from ruining the Algerian people's harvests and killing their animals as well. Some 400,000 vines were uprooted and thousands of animals were slaughtered.

However, France finally accepted the Algerians' desire for independence, although French forces had never hesitated to kill innocent people, women, children and the elderly. In 1959, French President de Gaulle announced in a speech given to the United Nations that he would recognize Algeria's independence. The FLN and France declared a ceasefire with the Evian agreements, and Algeria finally gained its independence in 1962. The seven-and-a-half-year struggle for independence from colonialist France left behind it 1.5 million Algerian dead.

This violence carried out by France is a sad confirmation of the disbelieving and corrupt character revealed to us in the Qur'an. Destroying defenseless peoples' ability to make a living in time of war, causing famines which make it impossible for them to survive, and leaving them in poverty and want are all methods that cruel regimes have resorted to throughout history:

Whenever he holds the upperhand, he goes about the earth corrupting it, destroying (people's) crops and animals. Allah does not love corruption. (Qur'an, 2: 205)

We must not forget, however, that people who implement such policies in this world will pay the price in the next. The Qur'an gives Muslims the following good news:

That abode of the hereafter – We grant it to those who do not seek to exalt themselves in the earth or to cause corruption in it. The successful outcome is for those who believe. (Qur'an, 28: 83)

Tortures the Algerian People Suffered at the Hands of the French

The oppressive and ruthless policy adopted by France throughout the Algerian war of independence was savagely criticized by a great many French intellectuals, and civilian initiatives were taken to put a halt to the oppression. This violence, believed to have been consigned to the dusty pages of history when Algeria finally gained independence, has recently been placed back on the agenda by recent statements by commanders who served in Algeria at the time.

The French administration's policy in Algeria was very frankly and succinctly set out by Jacques Massu, emergency rule commander at the time:

Torture? Of course we torture. Some of the press have made it very difficult for us. But how can you expect us to behave differently? ²⁴

Even more hair-raising were the impressions of Jacques Duquesne, a *La Croix* correspondent at the time:

The questions of torture and disappearances constantly weigh on your mind. Men and sometimes women are detained, and nothing is heard of them ever again. The practice of tying bodies to rocks and throwing them into the sea is well known. The number is generally put at around 3,000, although Algiers Mayor Jacques Chevallier speaks of a figure closer to 5,000. **Among the methods of intimidation carried out by French troops were rape and the destruction of entire villages.** One soldier told how as a medical orderly every morning he had to treat people who had been tortured by his unit throughout the night. The most popular technique most everywhere was to apply electric shocks all over the body, sometimes even to women's sexual organs. **Other torture methods were intended to kill. Victims had rubber pipes placed in their mouths and then the water was turned on, or fingernails were pulled out, or people were held head-down in baths full of water, or they were hung for hours at a time by their wrists in such a way that their feet could barely touch the floor.** There were still other methods. It is not easy to write of these things. I have only repeated a part of what I know. ²⁵

What Changed With Independence?

Algeria won its independence in 1962, although very little actually changed for the Muslim people. With the declaration of independence, the FLN assumed power and turned into an organization intimately tied to colonialist France. Following a tradition frequently witnessed in the Islamic world in the twentieth century, the party set up an oppressive regime. The leaders of that regime exploited the country's rich natural reserves during their time in power. As the FLN leaders and their backers made fortunes, the people grew ever poorer. In the 1990s, unemployment levels rose to around 70 percent. However, all the pressure and exploitative policies directed at the Muslim population carried the seeds of the regime's own destruction.

All these developments in Algeria led to popular demonstrations, boycotts and protests through which the people expressed their anger. More and more voices called for a free, multi-party system to replace the single-party one. Eventually, in 1989, a multi-party system was formed.

General elections were held on Dec. 26, 1991. It was to be a two-round ballot, and the results of the first round were announced on Dec. 30. The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) had secured an overwhelming majority, winning 188 out of the 232 seats in the parliament. The ruling FLN only managed to win 15 deputies. The second round was seen as just a formality. It was certain that the FIS would emerge victorious.

However, the oppressive regime in the country did not allow that to happen. The army, led by Chief of General Staff Khalid Nezzar, took power in a military coup. A number of provocations and blatantly false news items were produced to "justify" the coup. Before the results of the first round had been announced, the prime minister said that the vote had taken place calmly, peacefully and securely. After the results became clear, on the other hand, he made a statement that the polls had "not been sufficiently free and honest," hinting that the FIS had either cheated or resorted to force.

The development of the coup was also interesting. The events that unfolded were showing that the whole thing had been planned beforehand. Following the coup, and contrary to the impression that was being given to the rest of the world, Muslims did not begin a "civil war." It was those who carried out the coup who began the conflict. The FIS called on all sides to abandon the use of force and to use peaceful methods. The government's answer was to detain thousands of FIS members and supporters and inflict the most terrible torture on them in prison.

The years that followed brought no change in the pressure put on the Algerian people. Following provocations blamed on Muslims, special courts with extraordinary powers were set up. At first, the FIS and its supporters tried to keep a level head and stick to peaceful methods, but eventually they began to change their attitude in the face of the increasing pressure and injustice. One group resorted to arms to respond to the armed attacks on it by security forces. In the end, Algeria found itself in a state of civil war.

Who Directs the Civil War in Algeria?

The civil war had but one aim: to destroy the Muslims' power, if necessary by means of physical elimination. That is why death squads were set up, under the name of "anti-terrorist teams." Muslims targeted by these squads were murdered, and these cases were never solved. According to the description of one Algerian police officer, who admitted what had gone on, special teams would **knock on the doors of Muslims they had targeted and then fire their weapons when the door was opened.**²⁶ Professor Abdelhamid Brahimi, Algeria's prime minister of 1984-88, spoke of the methods employed in the war that was declared against Muslims:

The Algerian people have been hurt in their dignity since the coup d'etat of January 1992. Mass and arbitrary arrests of innocent people, including teachers, engineers, doctors, lawyers, merchants, and students; people sent without trial to internment camps or thrown into prison in inhuman conditions of detention. Furthermore, young Algerians are killed everyday without any evident reason by death squads, only because they represent a potential danger for the regime.²⁷

In his Nov. 16, 1997 article entitled "We Accuse 80,000 Times," John Sweeney, a reporter for British daily *The Observer*, lent support to Brahimi's words. Sweeney was particularly interested in Algeria and expressed his views on the slaughter in the country after interviewing people who had witnessed the savagery with their own eyes:

... [T]he weight of evidence indicts the state of Algeria. Around 80,000 people have been killed since the generals cheated the people by scrapping elections in 1991. The government – *le pouvoir* – is corrupt, hated and stays in power by a reign of terror. Consider the evidence from Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the International Federation of Human Rights, Reporters Without Frontiers; evidence from Algeria's own state-controlled media...²⁸

Sweeney's received a worldwide reaction from his interview with an Algerian secret policeman, an interview which fingered a number of Western countries, France in particular, as being responsible for the ruthless killing of innocent people. His reports and firsthand impressions showed that the terror in Algeria was actually backed by the state. Although the whole world is aware of this, nobody said it had to stop, preferring instead to avoid speaking about it all whenever possible. In other words, "The Algerian state and its Western friends preferred to act under cover of darkness."

Those Really Responsible for the Murders

Sweeney gave the examples of three separate killings in that article, revealing precisely who was responsible for the murders attributed to the Muslims. The first of these happened in July 1994. On the day that the Western G-7 leaders met in Naples, seven Italian sailors had their throats cut while at an Algerian port, allegedly by "Muslim extremists." The Western press immediately and fiercely condemned the "radical Muslims" who had carried out the attack.

However, Joseph, the Algerian secret policeman used by Sweeney as a source, had a different view of the attack than most in the West. He said that the killers were his colleagues in the secret police. The interesting thing was that at the time of the attacks the port concerned was within a military area, and a well-protected naval base. Sweeney drew attention to the extraordinary nature of the events:

Jenjen was, at the time of the massacre, a heavily guarded naval dockyard, in a military zone, with a naval barracks a few yards from the ship where the Italians were butchered. If extremists were the killers, they had to pass the military control, tiptoe by the barracks, slit the throats of the Italian crew, unload 600 tones of cargo, which was found to be missing, and tiptoe back without being spotted.²⁹

The second example provided by Sweeney in his article was no less fascinating:

In 1995, a series of bombs went off in Paris. **Islamic extremists were blamed and the West agreed.** Joseph told us **the men who planned the bombs were Generals Tewfik and Smain**, commanders in the Algerian secret police, and the operation was controlled from the Algerian embassy in Paris. After the bombings, the then French Interior Minister, Jean-Louis Debre, was asked at an off-the-record lunch whether it was possible the Algerian secret police had been behind the bombings. He said: "The Algerian security military would like us to go up the wrong trail so that we can eliminate people who annoy them."³⁰

The third example in the article also took place in a mysterious fashion:

In 1997, three huge massacres took place south of Algiers. All three happened in a heavily guarded zone, surrounded by army barracks. It takes a long time to slit the throats of 200 people. No one has been brought before the Algerian courts for any of the big massacres. The killers, the regime admits, "left undisturbed."³¹

An incident similar to those described by John Sweeney was also reported in a Turkish magazine. This contained statements from witnesses of a massacre in Algeria's Seydi Musa region which ended in the deaths of 300 people. The incident is most important if one wishes to see the truth of what is taking place in Algeria:

The fact that there was no military intervention in the Seydi Musa massacre, which happened right next to a military headquarters and lasted five hours, is clearly the most noteworthy aspect of the whole affair. Survivors' statements that "We shouted for help, the security forces were right nearby, yet the first people to come in the early hours of the morning were the fire brigade," and of the flames and smoke issuing from the

houses, and that fact that the sound of the attackers' automatic weapons failed to attract the attention of the security forces are sufficient to demonstrate who is behind the killing in Algeria.³²

Abdelhamid Brahim and John Sweeney are not alone in their views of what is going on in Algeria. Many experts monitoring developments in the country agree that the Algerian government, supported by the junta, is behind the killing and acts of terrorism. One of these experts is the Rand Corporation's Graham Fuller, a former CIA agent. Fuller identifies military units as being responsible for the terrorist actions in Algeria, as well as the bombs in Paris, and describes their intention as manipulating world public opinion. He maintains that western intelligence agencies know all about that and that they try to influence world public opinion with misinformation.³³

Another fact providing important clues is that most of the generals in the junta held responsible for the killing served at one time or another in the French army. These people were serving in the French army during Algeria's War of Independence, in other words they were collaborating with the French. Chief of General Staff Mohammed Amari, for example, was an officer in the French army. He joined the Algerian army shortly before independence was won. Also among the officers in the French army were the head of the Intelligence Branch, General Tewfik, and the leader of the coup and former minister of defense, General Khalid Nezzar.³⁴

Added to all of this, former Prime Minister Abdelhamid Brahim's explanation that all acts of terrorism are blamed on the Muslims, whereas the Muslims know they cannot achieve their aims by killing, draw attention to another aspect. After saying that, Brahim stressed that it was former members of the OAS, a counter-guerilla organization set up to oppose Algerian independence in 1962 and actually run by the French administration, that was behind the state terror in Algeria.³⁵

Alongside all this, the fact needs to be made clear that those Muslim groups in Algeria who engage in terrorist attacks against civilians are on the wrong path. As we have already stated, such methods are incompatible with Islam. Islam requires Muslims to always prefer peaceful methods, and if war becomes a final resort Islam requires the lives and rights of innocent civilians not involved in the fighting to be protected. Outside this, all methods of "struggle" which resort to unjustified violence are a violation of Islam. The Muslims in Algeria need to be sensitive to this fact and to wage their struggle not with arms but with their culture, knowledge and reason. In that event it may be hoped that the blood and tears in Algeria can be replaced by peace and security.

TUNISIA

A People Oppressed Solely For Their Faith

North Africa was another of the regions thrown into chaos in the post-Ottoman period. The Ottoman Empire had taken over control of much of North Africa in the sixteenth century and established a stable administration there. Colonialism destroyed peace and security there as well as Ottoman administration, however. The entry of the colonialists into Africa began with the Dutch in the seventeenth century. The Portuguese, British and French then established themselves in various regions of the continent. In order to take over the North African territories belonging to the Ottomans, however, they had to wait until the nineteenth century. Tunisia was one of the countries that went through this process.

Tunisia's encounter with Islam took place with the conquest of the Muslim armies under the command of Abdallah ibn-abi-Sarh in 648 A.D. Within a short time the country became an Islamic nation, and by the end of the seventh century the whole population was Muslim. It changed rulers many times after that, but **real peace and security in Tunisia began in 1547 with Ottoman rule**. Tunisia was a province of the Ottoman Empire and maintained that status until 1881. Contrary to the dictatorial mode of administration in Western civilizations, Ottoman rule was based on peace and tolerance, both features of Islam. Alongside the Muslim Arabs who made up the majority of the population, various ethnic and religious groups such as Berbers and Jews lived together in peace and brotherhood during this tranquil time in Tunisia. This peaceful era continued until the French occupation of 1881.

The Bloody History of French Colonialism

France governed Tunisia by means of governors known as "senior commissars." Just like in Algeria, a policy of great cruelty thus began. All opposition movements and activities in support of independence were bloodily suppressed. Leaders of Islamic movements which favored independence, and those who supported them, came under violent pressure, and a great many of them were detained and subjected to torture.

France did not find it easy to halt the protests and put down the rebellions of the Tunisian people, with their powerful Islamic awareness. Just like all other colonialist countries, it therefore resorted to puppet governments. It brought over the Destour Party, originally set up to fight for independence, to its own side. It installed one of its most reliable men to head it: **Habib Bourguiba**.

At the beginning, Bourguiba, who had received a French education since his childhood, followed an Islamic line to attract popular support. During his youth he opposed the French colonialist administration and planned to gain popular support that way. He even went to prison a number of times, and tried to present the image of a popular hero by fleeing from Tunis to Cairo.

When he returned to Tunisia he encouraged the people to rebel without a cause, thus preparing the ground for a bloody French intervention. When the French occupation came to an end in 1956 he came to be France's representative in the country. When the colonialist French regime abandoned the country, it left behind it administrative teams exceedingly loyal to it. **These teams were part of the Bourguiba administration, and**

they defended France's interests and were crueller to the native population than even the French themselves.

Bourguiba took sole and indefinite power in the country in 1959, and later declared himself "president for life." He ruled Tunisia single-handedly for the next 31 years, until on Nov. 7, 1987 he was removed from office by Prime Minister Zein al-Abidin on the grounds of mental instability. Throughout this period **he made the country culturally, economically and politically dependent on France, and transferred Tunisia's wealth to that country.**

One of the striking features of this anti-Islamic dictator was that like many similar figures, he was a senior Freemason.³⁶ For Bourguiba, Freemasonry was more important than Islam or being Tunisian. He gave priority not to the Muslim people of Tunisia, but to the interests of the French Great Lodge. He demonstrated that by waging a great war against Islam in the country.

Bourguiba's first act was to set up a legal and education system similar to those in France. The main feature of that system was that it was shaped by hatred of Islam. He placed mosques under close watch and forbade the performance of prayers outside certain times. He had all Muslims who opposed the regime in favor of an Islamic society arrested and severely tortured. He had all Islamic education institutions closed down beginning with Zaytuna University, the symbol of Tunisia. Zaytuna was an important center, on a par with Al-Azhar University in Cairo, which kept Islamic life alive in North Africa and raised religious figures who enlightened the people. Bourguiba's pressure went so far that during the holy month of Ramadan he appeared on television with a drink in his hand and forbade people to fast, on the pretext that it "slowed down the country's development and pace of work." He said he wanted pilgrims to go to Kairwan, the holy city of the Maghrib, instead of Mecca, because going to the latter was very expensive.

The Tunisian administration at all times followed a policy in stark contrast and opposition to other Islamic countries. Tunisia suspended relations with Sudan, stood by the French government against Algeria, and forbade Tunisians to pray for martyred Palestinians or even discuss the Intifada.

Even today, Tunisia and Algeria both employ even greater oppression and cruelty against their own Muslim populations than during the colonialist period. The experiences of Muslims in both countries recall a cruel method employed by the deniers as revealed in the Qur'an. One of these is the destruction of holy sites to prevent people from living their religion. Allah declares the position of those who wish prevent His name from being recalled, both in this world and in the hereafter:

Who could do greater wrong than someone who bars access to the mosques of Allah, preventing His name from being remembered in them, and goes about destroying them? Such people will never be able to enter them except in fear. They will have disgrace in the life of this world and in the hereafter they will have a terrible punishment. (Qur'an, 2: 114)

The great torment promised in the verse is what awaits all those cruel administrations which attempt to destroy Islam in its own lands. Muslims must be aware of this, consider the condition of their oppressors in the hereafter in the face of the persecution they are subjected to, and know that they will be the eventual victors.

After Bourguiba, Nothing Changed

After Bourguiba had lost credibility in Tunisia, France tried to increase its influence over the country by having Tunisian Ambassador to Paris Hadi Mebruk appointed foreign minister. At the same time, Prime Minister Zein al-Abidin Bin Ali granted a number of freedoms to Muslims, who had suffered years of political oppression under the Bourguiba regime, in order to attract their support. The Bin Ali regime, which had removed Bourguiba from power through a civilian coup, released a number of political detainees. Those in exile were allowed to return. Sadly however, the new regime, which Muslims had such high hopes for, proved to be no different from the Bourguiba administration. Bin Ali began by promising that he would initiate a process of reform in the country, but after fully consolidating his rule he began implementing the same oppressive policies against the Muslim population as Bourguiba.

The only thing that changed in Tunisia after Bourguiba was an escalation in the repressive policies which Muslims had suffered under for so long. Bin Ali was no better than his predecessor, and his latest actions have made even Bourguiba pale in comparison. Tunisia today still has the most anti-democratic structure in the whole region, thanks to Bin Ali.³⁷ Muslims, who represent a wide spectrum of society, are waiting to take over the running of the country by democratic means, without harming other Islamic countries or their own people.

ERITREA – ETHIOPIA

Muslims Want Peace and Security

War and chaos have continued on the African continent for scores of years, their ferocity tragically undiminished. After the colonial powers such as Britain, France and the Netherlands withdrew in the 1950s and '60s, most African countries fell into the hands of communist or fascist dictatorships. Most of these post-colonial regimes followed a policy of systematic intimidation of Muslims, and indeed are still doing so. One of the countries where war and chaos have reigned uninterrupted for many years due to such policies is Eritrea, which spent nearly two centuries under Ottoman rule from the middle of the sixteenth century.

Eritrea: Africa's Strategic Point

Eritrea lies to the north of Ethiopia, along the straits where Africa comes closest to the continent of Asia. It has been a key location for thousands of years, both commercially and militarily. As with much of Africa, this country too emerged as the result of colonialist European nations dividing it up between themselves, with no heed for the needs or wishes of the local population.

Anyone holding Eritrea controlled the southern entrance to the Red Sea, and thus all traffic between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean. Moreover, Eritrea represented a port opening onto the sea for Ethiopia.

On account of Eritrea's strategic importance, the British rented it to the Americans as a communications base during World War II, and the United States used it for the next 25 years, based on a defense agreement between itself and Ethiopia. This was one of the most important such bases in the world and played a major role in forwarding information to Washington during the Korean War. Alongside its strategic importance, its rich reserves of gold and minerals, and likely oil and gas reserves, made Eritrea even more valuable for those powers interested in the region.

Before World War II, the population of Eritrea was around 1 million. According to Western sources it is now in the area of 2.5 million, although according to resistance organizations active in the area a figure of 3.5 million would be more accurate. Most of the population consists of Muslims.

The Struggle of Eritrean Muslims

After the end of Ottoman rule Eritrea was occupied by Italy, and by a U.N. decision of 1952 it became a federal state linked to Ethiopia. However, the people refused to accept that situation, which ended in widespread public uprisings. On Nov. 14, 1962, the Emperor Haile Selassie announced that he had assimilated Eritrea, using the internal chaos in Ethiopia as an excuse. With the Selassie period, **there began a policy of oppression and torture of Muslims**. Many Muslims who opposed the Ethiopian regime were killed.

As a result of Ethiopia's campaign of violence and terror, hundreds of thousands of Eritreans were forced to leave their lands between 1967 and the early 1970s. These women, children and old people, who formed one of the largest refugee groups in history, were abandoned and left to die. **This followed the death of some 200,000 people from famine**, itself the result of wrongheaded agricultural policies.

As a result of all this, Haile Selassie's regime was overthrown by a coup in 1974. The administration was taken over by a junta with Marxist views, although this made no difference to the Muslims. A Marxist dictatorship was set up to replace a fascist one. Muslims continued to suffer oppression, torture, arrests and hardships.

Haile Selassie's successor, the Marxist Mengistu Haile Mariam, followed a policy of violence throughout his own period of rule. He did not limit himself to murdering those whose views differed from his own, but **eliminated a large part of the population at large during his 17 years in power.** The anti-Islamic line pursued in the region was continued by Mengistu, who spread terror through the whole country. During Mengistu's rule, **10,000 mosques were demolished**, and a half-a-million Muslims were forced to seek shelter in neighboring Sudan. A similar number sought asylum in Somalia. In May 1991, power again changed hands in Ethiopia, although Mengistu had left a terrible toll in his wake:

- **Sixty thousand children were left crippled and 45,000 orphaned.**
- **Some 750,000 people became refugees, of whom 500,000 are still living on the edge of hunger in Sudan.**
- **Some 80 percent of the population were living in malnourishment or near-famine, in need of food aid.**
- **There was but one doctor per 48,000 people, and the average life expectancy in the country was 46.**

Israeli Support for the Anti-Islamic Regime

One of the reasons for the endless conflict, anarchy and war in Eritrea, one of the poorest regions in the world despite its socio-economic and geo-strategic importance, is the strategy of countries that dominate regional policies there, which is based on their own interests, totally ignoring the needs and demands of the people living in this region. Israel comes first among these countries.

Previous Ethiopian and Eritrean regimes had only one thing in common with the state of Israel: their anti-Islamic line. As we saw at the beginning of this book, **Israel sees Islam as the greatest danger to its dominance over the Middle East, itself built on cruelty, violation and oppression.** That is why there is always an Israeli presence in all regions where Muslims are oppressed and face extinction, from Bosnia to the Philippines, from East Turkestan to Eritrea. In his book *The Israeli Connection: Who Arms Israel and Why?* Professor Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi of Israel's Haifa University characterizes such activities by his country all over the world over as "**Israel's world war.**" As prominent Israeli newspaper columnist Nahum Barnea has noted, "**Israel will become the Western vanguard in the war against the Islamic enemy.**"³⁸

Israel still has two exceedingly important strategic bases in Eritrea, one in the Dahlak islands, the other in the Mahel Agar mountains near the Sudanese border. Israel's close relations with Ethiopia began in the 1950s. The Israeli-Ethiopian alliance began in 1952 with civilian trade relations, and developed into a dialogue at the highest levels when an Israeli representative began meeting Emperor Haile Selassie and his most senior officials in 1956. Israel began to provide military aid, intelligence and training to the Selassie regime and its army, in order to put down radical movements in the region and Muslims who rise up and attack Christian Ethiopians. Professor Hallahmi describes the ideological basis of the Ethiopian-Israeli alliance in these terms:

The ideological basis for this alliance was the perception of the Israelis "as a brave people surrounded by hostile Muslim forces that seek to seize their historic homeland, a situation the Ethiopian Christians consider analogous to their own history in the midst of a threatening Muslim sea."³⁹

According to Hallahmi's book, the 3,100-man counter-insurgency team, known as **the "Emergency Police," set up by Selassie to put down uprisings in Eritrea was specially trained by Israeli experts.** Following a military trip to Ethiopia led by Gen. Haim Bar-Lev in 1971, Halep and Fatima two strategically important Ethiopian islands, were opened to use by the Israeli Navy.

The Eritrean Muslims were well aware of the alliance they were facing, of course. Abu Halid, leader of the Muslim Eritrean forces, discussed it during an interview in 1970 which was covered by the Turkish press:

Ethiopia and Israel have combined their destinies. **Israeli officers train the Ethiopian soldiers who cut Muslims' throats...** The war of June 5, 1967 broke out on the pretext of the closure of the Gulf of Aqaba by Egypt. Israel wants to see the port of Eilat and the gulf kept open, since they are the doors to its trade with the Eastern world. If we in Eritrea manage to achieve independence, we could close this waterway to Israel in cooperation with southern Yemen south of the Red Sea. That is why Israel is helping the Ethiopians. Six million Jews in the United States support this thesis. There are still 400 Israeli officers in the Ethiopian army. Our three great enemies are the Ethiopians, the Israelis and the United States.⁴⁰

The Israeli officers who trained the Ethiopian commandoes and anti-terrorist teams were also important in keeping Haile Selassie in power. According to Gen. Matityahu Peled, formerly the most senior official in the Israeli army, Selassie was saved from three attempted coups thanks to Israeli agents who were particularly influential in the Addis Ababa secret police.

The Israeli agents did little to intervene against the Marxist coup staged to overthrow Selassie in 1974. That was because the new regime would be one entirely in accordance with their own standards, and would continue to be anti-Islamic and to wage the war against the Eritrean Muslims. As Professor Hallahmi puts it, "The continuing ties with Israelis were explained by the common stance of the two countries against Islamic groups in the region."⁴¹

The work of the Israeli experts on Ethiopian territory continued apace under the Marxist Mengistu regime. They continued to train the Ethiopian anti-insurgency teams and to provide weapons for the regime. This alliance, founded on an enmity towards Islam, was strengthened further in 1990 when Israel sent fragmentation bombs to the regime to be used against "separatist militants."

Eritrean Independence Failed to End the Oppression

The collapse of the Eastern Bloc showed that the communist Mengistu regime in Ethiopia had also run its course. In 1991, the opposition led by such figures as Isaias Afewerki and Meles Zenawi overthrew the communist government. Zenawi took power, but was unable to stand against the Eritrean peoples' demands for independence, and as the result of a referendum on April 25, 1993, Eritrea ceased to be a part of Ethiopia and won its independence.

Afewerki emerged as the new Eritrean leader in the wake of independence, although new internal and foreign policy problems arose at the same time. Afewerki called to mind the cruel Mengistu regime as he initiated a wave of terror against believers. The pressure from Afewerki, who assumed the posts of head of state

and parliament speaker, spurred the Eritrean opposition to take up arms. Fierce conflict began between Eritrean troops and the opposition forces, particularly in mountainous areas.

The severity of the oppression, particularly of Muslims, took on terrible dimensions during the Afeworki period. Non-judicial detentions and executions followed one after the other. Islamic schools were closed down and mosques demolished. Arabic ceased to be the official language, and hundreds of thousands of people fled their homes and took shelter in Sudan. Anyone who criticized the Afeworki regime felt its wrath.

Not only did Afeworki implement oppressive policies against his own people, but he also acted hostilely towards neighboring countries. He brought Eritrea to the brink of war with its neighbors Yemen and Djibouti, and was also hostile to Sudan, another neighbor. He even adopted the same attitude towards Ethiopia, which shared many of the same political and strategic policies, and eventually occupied Ethiopian soil. Until the ceasefire of June 18, 2000, the invasion of Ethiopia resulted in hundreds of thousands of people losing their homes and land, tens of thousands of deaths, and in thousands of people living at starvation levels due to an economic embargo.

The Latest Situation in Eritrea

The border conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia that began in 1999 ended in a ceasefire a year later with the intervention of the Organization of African Unity. However, despite the fact that both sides were in terrible economic difficulties and their peoples were living on the edge of starvation, it is astonishing that they still spent millions of dollars on arms. Essential infrastructure elements such as ports, electric power stations and airports were utterly destroyed, millions of people were forced to migrate, and damage totalling millions of dollars was inflicted in the fighting. Up to a million dollars, desperately needed by the people of the region, was squandered on weapons. In this way both sides, both allies of Israel, formed a profitable market for U.S. and Israeli arms manufacturers and were able to distract the world's attention from their oppression of Muslims by turning it in the direction of the war instead.

The violence continues even today. Muslims in Eritrea are still arrested for no reason, sentenced to death by unjust courts, murdered by death squads, and all forms of opposition are prohibited. Muslims are thus unable to live freely according to their religion, their freedom of worship is restricted, the losses among the population grow day by day and policies of oppression, fear and intimidation continue unabated. Schools that might teach Muslim children about their religion are closed down, and mosques where people might pray are demolished. Tens of thousands of Muslims are forced to migrate, and the million or so refugees who have fled the persecution of the regime are trying to survive in conditions of hunger and famine.

These cruel practices call to mind the unfair and unjust measures that have been inflicted on Muslims throughout history. The Qur'an reveals that the character of cruel rulers has been the same down the ages. These, their wicked natures, and their persecution of women, children and the elderly have never changed. As the Qur'an says in the words, "**How many generations before them We destroyed who had greater force than them ...?**" (Qur'an, 50: 36), generally speaking those of the past were even worse than those of the present when it comes to cruelty. One of the cruel rulers referred to in the Qur'an is the ancient Egyptian Pharaoh:

Pharaoh exalted himself arrogantly in the land and divided its people into camps, oppressing one group of them by slaughtering their sons and letting their women live. He was one of the corrupters. (Qur'an, 28: 4)

As the verse informs us, Pharaoh oppressed and inflicted severe torments on his people. We must not forget, however, that it is revealed in the Qur'an that those who grow arrogant, who commit cruelties, will be despised in this world and face terrible suffering in the next. In the same way that they received their just deserts for their cruelty in the past, the cruel of today will also face the justice of Allah, Who reveals the fate of those Who deny Him in these words:

There are only grounds against those who wrong people and act as tyrants in the earth without any right to do so. Such people will have a painful punishment. (Qur'an, 42: 42)

CHAD

THE MUSLIMS COUNTRY THE COLONIALIST FRENCH ADMINISTRATION TRIED TO DESTROY

In the first chapter of this book, we stressed how the "plundering" of the colonialist powers had sucked dry the natural resources of all the nations of Africa and brought them to the edge of terrible poverty. Western nations, which saw the peoples of Africa as "a primitive race which had not yet completed the process of evolution" and believed they had the right to exploit those countries, were particularly repressive towards Muslim peoples. This oppression was carried out openly between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, after which it was carried on secretly in the twentieth.

Colonialist powers such as Britain and France abandoned the region when they could no longer hold onto their colonies in Africa, although they turned over the running of the state to "puppet regimes" close to them. This policy allowed the colonialist system to carry on in a new guise. Governments with close links to the former colonialist powers are running some African countries today, and the cruelty is carried out by these people. These puppet administrations are usually members of Christian or other minorities in mainly Muslim countries. With the support these minority governments receive from the West, they have been able to continue to repress Muslims. As a result of this, large-scale civil wars have erupted between Muslim majorities and minority administrations, and nations have been plunged into chaos. These conflicts are still continuing in many countries today.

Another method employed by the colonialist powers was to bring to power leaders who won public sympathy by wearing a mask of religious belief but who in reality were deeply anti-religion. No matter how much these governments may claim to be Muslim, they have nevertheless oppressed the Muslim population and prevented them from carrying out their religious obligations. The most obvious examples of this can be seen in countries such as Algeria and Tunisia.

The history of Chad is similar to that of Algeria and Tunisia. It won independence after long years of colonialism, after which there began another long period of civil war and unending chaos.

The History of Colonialism in Chad

Chad became Muslim when the King of Kanem turned to Islam in 1086, and by the sixteenth century it was one of the wealthiest and most powerful countries in the region. However, the kingdom was weakened by internal divisions in the nineteenth century, was occupied by the French in 1900, and became tied to France's other colonies.

From that moment on, colonialist French forces waged war against the Muslim people and the religion of Islam. The war witnessed the use of the full battery of inhumane practices, cruelty, oppression and violence. The first aim was to destroy the Islamic identity of the people of Chad and replace it with a more materialist and non-religious one. To that end all mosques, Qur'anic courses, centers of religious education and libraries were either closed down or demolished. The occupying French forces prevented Muslims from learning about their religion by banning Islamic education. They closed down all religious foundations and associations. Most

teachers, imams and student were convicted of crimes. Some were killed in the ongoing oppression, and others were forced to flee to the deserts or mountains. Those religious figures who were detained were either strangled or tortured to death. Only the children of French soldiers were able to study in the schools that were opened, and health and recreation centers were also established for them. Nobody was interested in the slightest in the local population's health problems.

Muslim intellectuals in Chad and those who wished to escape the persecution had to flee to various other countries. Some Muslim religious figures were paraded naked around town centers, women's honor was mocked, and they were then executed. All forms of worship and religious meetings were considered crimes against the state. In 1917, the French administration in Chad carried out an enormous massacre. Announcing that a conference was to be held to re-establish religious life in the county, the French authorities invited all the Muslim scholars remaining in Chad, many of whom turned up. However, a French commissioner had brought in and readied hundreds of killers with knives and daggers. The surrounding area had been cleared of its civilian population, and the military units were ready and in position. By the time anybody realized that there was a plot, it was too late. In the end, everywhere was covered in savagely mutilated bodies. The barracks were flowing with blood. Those who brought about the savagery were waving their cleavers and shouting war-cries, after they were done.

The conflict between the local population and French troops went on for years. Chad finally gained independence as a result, in 1960. However, just like in other African countries, independence did not mean peace and security for the population. That is because a Christian from the Progressive party, with close links to the former colonialist power France, was brought in to lead the country with its Muslim majority.

He followed the French line in terms of cruelty and oppression. There was a huge outcry from the Muslim population to François Tombalbaye being made both president and prime minister, and when Chadian intellectuals who voiced that protest were killed, there were uprisings all over the country. Following that, a harsh crackdown began, again aimed at Chad's Muslims. Iraqi writer Imaduddin Khalil describes the events in his book *Afrika Dramu* (The Drama of Africa):

On March 22, 1963, the Chad Cabinet was restructured, with all Muslims being removed from their posts, and non-Muslims were brought in to replace them. The former foreign minister was exiled, and that same day the president gave the order for the arrest of the chief justice, the minister of justice, the head of the Motherland Association and many other prominent figures. They were brought before the courts 35 days later. The court decided that the chief justice should be removed from his post and exiled on the pretext that he was not a citizen of the country. His goods were also to be seized. The other detainees were to be kept in prison. **The president then began to use force and repression against the Islamic movement. That in turn gave rise to a popular revolt in which a thousand people were killed and many thousands injured.** So-called special courts were then established, and leaders of the Islamic movement and former ministers were tried by these. Sentences ranging between 15 years to life in prison were handed down. This atmosphere of unrest and intolerance in Chad has survived down to the present day.⁴²

Israel's Anti-Islamic Role in Chad's Civil War

Political instability in the country grew when François Tombalbaye, the head of state, fell victim to a military coup in 1975, and the civil war that began in 1980 took on ever more serious dimensions. There were

two sides in the conflict: the Muslims in the north of the country, and Christians and other tribes with their own local religions in the Bantu area to the south. As in most Third World countries, however, this was not actually a "civil" war at all. Foreign powers actively supported the combatants. Israel, always opposed to Islam, headed the list of these foreign powers by backing the Bantus in the south.

The leader of the northern Muslims was Goukouni Oueddei. The interesting thing though is that at the head of the southern Christian-animist alliance was a so-called Muslim, or rather a man of Muslim origins, Hissène Habré .

Israel, together with the CIA, supported Habré's forces and gave them Soviet-manufactured weapons. In 1983 it emerged from a number of sources that Israel had military advisors in Chad, and that they had gone there in August of that year together with 2,500 Zairois troops to support Habré's forces. Ariel Sharon, the "Butcher of Lebanon" and one of the main players in the oppression of the Palestinians, played an important role in the war in Chad as well. He had paid a visit to Chad in January 1983 just prior to leaving his post at the Ministry of Defense. According to Hallahmi's account, this visit by Sharon was an indication that Israel was ready to play a greater role in Chad.

As we have seen, Israel was again trying to prevent the emergence of a Muslim state, and tried all it could in terms of military and political support to prevent Muslims from growing stronger.

There was still no peace and security in Chad after the civil war. External intervention by France and Israel increased the violence of the clashes every day, and Chad turned into a nation of military coups. The government left thousands of dead and tens of thousands of refugees behind in its killing spree to eliminate the opposition.

The situation in Chad today is one of the clearest examples of what anti-Islamic forces can do to a country. All its wealth has been destroyed, stability is but a dream, a population which lived together peacefully for many years is now riven by hostility, and Chad has become a by-word for poverty.

What we must not forget, however, is that this is still no cause for despair. There is a very easy solution to that negative picture. That consists of the practice of undiluted Islamic morality. When this happens, all those problems that have proved insoluble for centuries will be resolved one by one, and peace and security will replace war and conflict. In an environment where Islamic morality prevails, unfairness and injustice will have no place.

All the cruelty witnessed in Chad reveals once again the wrongs suffered by the Islamic world, together with the urgency and importance of a war of ideas to rectify the situation. Muslims in a country of Africa are suffering oppression simply because they are Muslims, and that is something that concerns every Muslim worldwide.

We must realize that that the unbelieving leaders who have oppressed Muslims down through the years, and their supporters, have actually gained nothing. Even if they die at the helm of great world powers, they will suffer eternal torment in the hereafter. Allah's infinite justice will be visited on them, and each individual will be called on to account for his deeds. That is a promise Allah has made to believers, and is at the same time the most wondrous news. He says in the Qur'an:

Those who persecute men and women of the believers, and then do not repent, will have the punishment of Hell, will have the punishment of the Burning. (Qur'an, 85: 10)

If every self that did wrong possessed everything on earth, it would offer it as a ransom. They will show remorse when they see the punishment. Everything will be decided between them justly. They will not be wronged. (Qur'an, 10: 54)

SOMALIA

A POOR NATION IN THE MIDST OF CIVIL WARS

Whenever Somalia is mentioned, most people think of a familiar list of terrible calamities gleaned from newspapers or television reports: famines suffered by millions, epidemics such as cholera, drought, civil conflict, tribal wars, political instability – all these ills are part of the daily lives of the Somali people. Aid from humanitarian organizations is far from resolving the terrible situation facing the people of the country, and only offers short-term relief. The political interventions made on the pretext of re-establishing peace and security actually only serve to increase the chaos and conflict.

The fundamental cause of the chaos in Somalia goes back to the days of colonialism. Somalia first encountered Islam when Muslims migrated to Abyssinia in order to be protected from the idolaters in Mecca. It was colonized by the British in the nineteenth century. After that period the Somalis were condemned to never-ending wars, conflict, famine and disease. In 1884, the British occupied northern Somalia, and the Italians the south in 1887, and as in so many other Muslim countries, this ushered in a period of great cruelty and oppression.

Following a long period of colonialism, Somalia became independent in 1960, and Aden Abdullah was made president. However, the establishment of a just and stable administration in Somalia was not permitted. Gen. Mohammed Siad Barre took over the country in a military coup in 1969, and all political parties were closed down. Barre saw Islam as the major obstacle to the socialist order he hoped to impose, and so **he banned all Islamic books, magazines and newspapers. Numerous Muslim intellectuals and scholars who opposed this policy were executed on his orders.**

Barre fled the country when fighting broke out in the country in 1991, and **there followed a huge civil war. One million or so mainly Muslim Somalis were forced to migrate to a number of other African countries.**

Under a 1992 United Nations General Assembly resolution, 30,000 U. N. troops under United States command set up a base in the country. The United Nations came in for intense popular protest from the native population, and had to withdraw from the country in 1994. They left more than 7,000 dead behind them, and an even worse state of chaos in Somalia.

Today, the civil war between various domestic tribes continues by a number of means, and people are still dying every day. The worst problem facing this country of some 8 million people is hunger and poverty. According to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) report for 2000, 75 percent of Somalis are malnourished, and the endless floods affecting the country are bringing it to the brink of a terrible famine.

It must not be forgotten that contrary to general world opinion, the problem of hunger is not an insuperable one. A fair distribution of world resources, the technological resources of wealthy nations being placed at the service of the whole world, and preventing wasteful use of surplus production to instead use it for aid purposes are only a few of the things that could be done. However, what lies behind the failure to find a solution to problems such as hunger and disease in our day is again moral deficiencies such as selfishness, overbearing personal interests, greed and apathy.

The atheist culture that dominates the world today drives people towards selfishness instead of sacrifice and striving to help others. This culture produces excessive poverty and excessive wealth in both individual societies and in the world in general. The Qur'an describes the kind of people who do not feed the hungry and needy in these terms:

Have you seen him who denies the religion? He is the one who harshly rebuffs the orphan and does not urge the feeding of the poor. (Qur'an, 107: 1-3)

For that reason, the salvation of the world lies not in those who deny religion, but in government by people who sincerely believe in religion and rule accordingly. If Islam can grow stronger and come to prevail in the world, this will be the salvation not just of oppressed Muslims, but of all oppressed people in the world.

DJIBOUTI

OPPRESSION IN AFRICA'S SMALLEST COUNTRY

Djibouti is a small though little-known country lying between Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea. Wars and massacres have gone on there for hundreds of years, and the Muslim population have been condemned to conflict from the colonialist period right up to the present day.

Islam came to what is now Djibouti in the seventh and eighth centuries. Until the beginning of the sixteenth century, Muslims were the sole power in the region, which then came under the sphere of influence of Portugal, a major commercial and political power at that time. When Egypt came under Ottoman rule, the Horn of Africa where Djibouti lies also became part of the Ottoman Empire.

The bloody history of Djibouti actually began when the Suez Canal was opened to international maritime traffic and European states began competing to colonize Asian and African countries and dominate them economically, politically, militarily and religiously. As the major powers in the nineteenth century, Great Britain and France engaged in a great race to colonize and expand. Britain entered Aden in 1839 and Somalia in 1869, and was thus able to establish control of the Red Sea trade route. Djibouti acquired considerable importance at this time with its strategic position from the point of view of the Suez Canal. In order to compensate for Britain's advantageous position, France built a wharf on the Djibouti coast. By 1884 it had dominated the whole area by means of agreements and treaties.

The years that followed were dark times for the people of Djibouti. There was a wide difference of opinion on the future of the country among the Muslim population. The Isas of Somali descent felt it should join with the Republic of Somalia. The second major ethnic community, the Afars, supported dependence on France. Between these two views and French encouragement, the fighting grew fiercer. Although the Muslims who supported unification with Somalia were numerically greater, a referendum in the country on March 16, 1967 decided that it should remain a French dependency. However, there was intense conflict after the referendum as a result of French pressure and electoral fraud. French troops then **occupied the country, on the pretext of intervening in the bloody incidents between the two ethnic groups in the country; the majority of the natives were killed and hundreds of thousands were exiled.** The Isas were weakened during the operation, and the Afars took over the running of the country.

Djibouti became independent in 1977, with 97 percent of the population voting in favor. It has since become a nation of military coups. Between 1977 and 1991, 2,000 Muslims were subjected to inhumane and humiliating treatment. Amnesty International reports describe terrible forms of torture and degradation inflicted on people in Djibouti. Some 7,000 people were arrested for no reason and tortured by forces of the state.⁴³

Some 3,500 French troops are still based in Djibouti, which remains under French economic and military domination.⁴⁴ Djibouti has no national army of its own and has bowed its head to the French military presence. France has been responsible for internal security for many years since the nominal establishment of independence. There are also many French advisors and officials in the administration. The government is at the edge of bankruptcy, kept on its feet only by the support of European states.

In addition to this longstanding colonial rule, Djibouti now faces very real poverty. Droughts have led to the losses of large numbers of livestock, and many people have perished from malnutrition.

SUDAN

A COUNTRY TRYING TO ESCAPE FIGHTING AND CIVIL WAR

Sudan, a country located just south of Egypt, also makes anti-Islamic forces in the region uneasy on account of its Muslim identity. One of the country's most important problems is the longstanding conflict between its north and south. This conflict is both religious and ethnic in nature. Muslim Arabs live in the north, whereas Christian Africans form the majority in the south. This ethnic and religious split is a legacy of the British colonial administration that drew up the frontiers of the country. The legacy is a bloody one. Ever since the 1960s, the southern Christians have been in a state of organized rebellion against the Khartoum administration run by the Muslim Arabs in the north. This rebellion is organized by a Christian organization calling itself the "Anya-Nya."

In 1989, the rebellion in the south gathered momentum with the establishment of a Muslim regime in the country. That is because "some people" constantly incite rebellion against the administration in Khartoum.

As can be imagined, Israel heads the list of those backing the Anya-Nya uprising. In his book *The Israeli Connection*, Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi reveals that **Israel has supported the southern rebels since the 1960s**. Ever since that time, Israel has given the Anya-Nya movement arms and military training. Israeli intelligence organization the Mossad established links with the southern rebels via its stations in Uganda, Chad, Ethiopia and the Congo, and some 30 Anya-Nya guerrillas were given special training at Mossad headquarters in the city of Torit. In 1970 Israel reached an agreement with Uganda, to the south of Sudan, thus expanding its ability to use the Uganda-Sudan border and to support Anya-Nya. According to the mercenary Rolf Steiner, who fought with the Anya-Nya, Israel was the southern rebels' most important backer.⁴⁵

Sudan went through a period of political upheaval until 1989, when the Muslim Brotherhood organization led by Hasan al-Turabi took over the administration. Since then, there has been an Islamic state in the country, led by al-Turabi. Following the introduction of Islamic laws by the Sudanese Parliament, the Anya-Nya began a new uprising, under the name of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). Before sitting down to negotiate with the administration, SPLA leader John Garang laid down as a precondition the revocation of Islamic laws. When the parliament refused to accept this, the violence increased. This uprising against the Islamic regime was supported by a number of countries.

Once again, the most important of these was Israel. Dr. Ahmed Abdel-Halim, the Sudanese ambassador to Egypt told the Egyptian *Al-Ahram Weekly* that, "**The (SPLA) gains on the battlefield are primarily due to Israeli and Eritrean military assistance.**"⁴⁶ Facts that emerged over time revealed that Israel was the real source of the Christian rebels' arms, smuggled in by the Protestant and Catholic churches hidden in coffins.

The Hunger Ploy and "Terrorist State" Deception

There is currently a war raging against the Islamic regime in the Sudan. This war has two separate dimensions: One is the hunger ploy, and the other the concept of "terrorist states."

From the point of view of its natural resources, Sudan is actually a quite wealthy nation. There are uranium, gold and oil reserves, and the land is very fertile. Yet because of the civil war of recent years, Sudan is currently very impoverished.

Despite all its troubles, however, Sudan took a serious step in the direction of redevelopment with the coming to power of an Islamic regime in 1989. That administration, led by Sorbonne graduate Hasan al-Turabi with the slogan "Religion is the true engine of progress," made thousands of hectares of agricultural land arable again. Two major dam projects on the river Nile were initiated to use Sudan's rich water resources for the irrigation of 1.5 million acres along its banks and to make Sudan a major electricity-producing country. However, the country was unable to sell what it produced as a result of these efforts because it was branded a "terrorist nation" as well as the subsequent economic embargo placed on it.

In this way, the development in Sudan was and is still being prevented. On the other hand, the Western press frequently carries news reports of starvation in Sudan. The only region of the country experiencing hunger is in fact certain parts of the south, itself in revolt against the central authority.

The main aim behind these reports is this: Firstly to portray the government as responsible by engaging in propaganda about "famine in the Sudan," and then to try to gain influence in the country by saying that humanitarian aid is being supplied to the starving people of the country. Of course the sending of humanitarian aid to the people of Sudan is an important humane duty, and one which should be supported. Yet events generally show that such aid does not reach its intended destination or that such initiatives are not being taken with help in mind. The fact that the aid sent is of poor quality and unfitted to the task at hand is an important indication of this. Those who have seen this aid in its original place say that the food is of such poor quality that it is fit only for animals. One observer reported the following:

I saw with my own eyes the wheat that was sent to Sudan as food aid. The Sudanese government decided to feed its livestock with this wheat both because it was past its expiration date and was of very poor quality besides. I wonder what ...would be done with this wheat had it not been sent to Sudan? I believe they would have either destroyed it or fed it to their own animals. This is the truth behind the aid sent by the ... other Western countries, aid which is constantly used as fodder for propaganda. Sudan's new government is no longer knocking on the door of the oppressive countries and asking them for food aid.⁴⁷

On the other hand, propaganda to the effect that Sudan is a "terrorist state" and supports terrorism still goes on. This is certainly a serious accusation that needs to be investigated. It is entirely natural that great sensitivity should be shown in matters such as terrorism that concern peoples' security. Yet no measure must be taken in the name of preventing terrorism that could lead to people who have nothing to do with terrorism being harmed in any way. The measures taken can only succeed to the extent to which they establish peace and justice. So there must be no departure from the dictates of good conscience.

As has frequently been stressed throughout this book, the sole cause of what is occurring in Sudan is the country's powerful Islamic identity. However, in fact the government of Omar Hassan al-Bashir, which came to power after al-Turabi, is making major concessions on the country's strong Islamic line and taking certain steps in line with the wishes of the West. The fact that Al-Bashir, who is accused of importing Arab nationalism into the Sudan, wishes to arrest a figure like al-Turabi who enjoyed the support of all Muslim countries is a sign that unwelcome developments are taking place in the country.

UZBEKISTAN

FORMER COMMUNISTS CONTINUE TO OPPRESS MUSLIMS

The Caucasus has recently turned into one of the frontlines of the Islamic world. The Muslim Turkic republics that began to gain their independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union soon found themselves up against Russian expansionism. Russia was still being run by people from communist times who retained the same old mentality, and the country continued to regard Central Asia as its own "back yard." In order to "tidy" that back yard up, it elected to form alliances with anti-Islamic administrations in the region.

Today, Muslims in both the Caucasus and Central Asia are living under the threat of both Russian expansionism and their own administrations, which are actively collaborating with Moscow. While the war in Chechnya continues, the Russian Federation is actively engaged in a policy of pressure and intimidation against the Muslim populations of some of those republics with a Muslim majority. This policy is sometimes openly carried forward by the Russians, and sometimes by the hand of pro-Russian local administrations. Following Azerbaijan, Dagestan, Chechnya and Tadjikistan, another country where tensions have been experienced is Uzbekistan.

Anti-Islamic Pressure in Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan has been struggling with domestic problems for years. The country's economy is in a serious recession and the public are facing grave shortages. The Kerimov administration, which refuses to allow even the most moderate opposition breathing space, is following the path of increasing these problems instead of settling them.⁴⁸

If Islam Kerimov follows a moderate policy of allowing differing opinions to be expressed in the country, there is no doubt that this will be right road, not only for the Uzbek people but also for his own rule. Yet he has preferred to go for harsh measures. The country's prisons currently hold more than 50,000 people as a result of his oppressive policies. After bombs exploded in city centers, the Uzbek administration had thousands of people arrested nationwide, identified everyone with religious sympathies as a terrorist, and established an administration that completely ignores human rights and freedoms. Yet this policy of oppression actually encouraged fighting instead of preventing it, and ended up strengthening the opposition. In order for Uzbekistan to enjoy peace and stability, it is essential for dialogue to be established between the Kerimov administration and the opposition, and for the opposition to pursue a moderate policy to that end.

Russia Uneasy Over the Islamic Revival in Central Asia

The religious re-awakening that began in the Turkic states in the 1980s alarmed the Kremlin. The Mikhail Gorbachev administration in particular was greatly concerned at the growth in religious feeling. That was something frequently reflected in the newspapers of the time, and all the measures to be taken by the Kremlin were set out. According to the Uzbek daily *Pravda Vostoka*, in a speech Gorbachev gave to local party officials he called for a "firm and uncompromising struggle against religious phenomena." Then he said, "We must

be strict above all with Communist and senior officials, particularly those who say they defend our morality and ideals but in fact help promote backward views and themselves take part in religious ceremonies."⁴⁹

On Gorbachev's firm stand against faith, *Time* reports:

Indeed, it is rare for a Soviet General Secretary to attack religion so directly; that is usually left to underlings. Beyond that, the critique suggested that Kremlin is concerned that the state's struggle against religion has not been going well. Finally, the fact that Gorbachev chose Tashkent as the place to attack religion indicated that **the Soviet leadership is specifically fearful about the currents ...sweeping the Islamic world, which might eventually infect the fast-growing Muslim nationalities of Soviet Central Asia.**

[Since 1918], the regime has placed rigid limits upon churches, synagogues and mosques and waged a campaign of oppression against believers. The training of religious leaders is tightly restricted, and **religious education of children under the age of 18 is illegal. At the same time, all schoolchildren are indoctrinated in atheism.**

Islam has become a special problem, and a special concern. Soviet Muslims are concentrated in the U.S.S.R.'s strategic southern border regions and maintain ties with Islamic people in neighbouring countries... There are no reliable statistics on how many Soviet Muslims practice their faith. But a political report adopted last year by the 16th Congress of the Kazakhstan Communist Party noted that Islam is "still strong and growing." ...[I]nformal gatherings suggest that the number of believers far exceeds the capacity of the country's 300 to 500 legally registered mosques (there were 24,000 before the Communist takeover).⁵⁰

Sadly, this mentality, left over from the Soviet period, is still influential, both in one section of the Russian bureaucracy and in some bodies in the Turkic Republics. Tension is developing between devout sections of society and central authority. The fact that one out of every 500 people in Uzbekistan is in prison because of his religious identity is one of the most striking examples of this.

The tension in Uzbekistan is rising every day, showing that unless a moderate policy is adopted the chaos will continue for a long time yet. When we consider such phenomena as terror, water shortages, internal chaos, economic difficulties, extra legalities and violations of human rights as a whole, it is clear the situation can only be put right by radical changes. At the head of this radical change come giving the opposition in the country the right of free expression, putting an end to political detentions and imprisonment, and lowering the tension in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance.

The Cause of the Oppression: The Move Away from Islamic Values in the Administration

Where religious morality is absent, there can be no safety or peace. In many Islamic countries, however, administrations of an allegedly Islamic nature ignore how turning away from Qur'anic morality leads their nations into terrible chaos. That is why some Central Asian countries, which every day face a worse danger of turning from their own religious identities, are unable to find any well-being. In a society where empty communist and materialist ideologies are propagated rather than the blessings of religion, the end result can only be collapse, as we have seen from past examples. That is because in an environment lacking religious morality, rulers prefer their own private interests, advantage, selfishness and an oppressive regime over justice, peace and a philosophy of mutual aid. The Qur'an draws attention to the danger represented by people following such a misguided path:

Whenever he holds the upperhand, he goes about the earth corrupting it, destroying (people's) crops and animals. Allah does not love corruption. (Qur'an, 2: 205)

As we have seen, such people as mentioned in the above verse will continue to exist so long as Allah's book is not put into practice. Whereas a country run by people who fear Allah will see cooperation, justice, and great mutual assistance. No one will be permitted to perpetrate injustice against another, everyone's needs will be met, and new services and solutions will spring forth. Every possibility will be mobilized for the peace and well-being of the people. People living in accordance with Islamic morality will provide all kinds of service with no expectation of any worldly reward, but for the good pleasure of Allah and the rewards in the hereafter.

The very best example of this is the messengers that Allah has sent down to mankind throughout history. Allah reveals in His verses how those messengers reminded his people to worship Allah and live according to religion:

My people! I do not ask you for any wage for it. My wage is the responsibility of Him who brought me into being. So will you not use your intellect? (Qur'an, 11: 51)

AFGHANISTAN

ENDLESS CIVIL WARS DUE TO COMMUNIST SAVAGERY

Ninety-nine percent of the population of Afghanistan is Muslim. The country encountered Islam during the caliphate of Osman. It fell into the hands of the Samanids during the second half of the ninth century, then came to be ruled by the Ghaznavids in the tenth. Afghan territory was then occupied by India's Moghuls, and then frequently changed hands until the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Nadir Shah, who ascended to the Iranian throne in 1736, added Afghanistan to his territories within a few years. After he was killed in an uprising, the state that he had established was quickly torn apart by internal conflict. Guard commander Ahmad Abdali was then chosen as shah by a number of tribes, and eventually managed to get the whole country to accept his rule under the name Ahmad Shah Durrani. His territories extended from Kashmir to Delhi and the Amu Darya (Oxus) River to Oman, and were so extensive that the Afghan Empire was the second-largest Islamic state in the world in the second half of the eighteenth century, after the Ottomans.

The empire did not last long though, and was soon drawn into a great civil war. British forces took advantage of the confusion to occupy Afghanistan. For a long time afterwards the country was unable to form a long-lasting government due to outside interventions by Britain and Russia, and suffered periodic internal conflicts. Muhammad Nadir Khan, who came to power in 1929, was able to provide a brief period of stability, yet Russia still continued to interfere in Afghanistan's internal affairs and tried to dominate the administrations that came to power. Their relationship was so close that Afghanistan was the first country to recognize Russia's communist Bolshevik regime.

In 1973, the Soviet Union brought about a coup in Afghanistan. The pro-Western Zahir Shah was overthrown and Daoud Khan (Muhammad Daoud) came to power in his place. After that, Marxist officials and officers began to be influential in the Afghan administration and were appointed to key posts. Daoud Khan wished to be free of Russian influence and to draw closer to Islamic nations. The agreements he reached with Pakistan caused the increasingly powerful domestic communist organizations to join forces. It was already clear that this policy of drawing closer to Islamic nations would provoke a Russian reaction. In 1978, Marxist generals in the army and a number of communist civilians staged a Russian-backed coup. All of Daoud Khan's family and close associates were slaughtered. The organizers of the coup announced that they would run the country with a communist regime, and they also began a fierce war against religion. *The Black Book of Communism* describes the communist regime's hatred of religion:

Shortly afterward **the government began an antireligious crusade. The Koran was burned in public, and imams and other religious leaders were arrested and killed.** On the night of 6 January 1979 all 130 men in the Mojaddedi clan, a leading Shiite group, were massacred. All religious practices were banned.⁵¹

The Afghan communists were purely and simply the hired tools of the Soviet Union. They operated in accordance with the directives of "advisors" from Moscow, and carried out massacres of their own people, as these figures showed them. In the short time they stayed in power they wreaked frightful terror:

[Afghanistan scholar] Michael Barry describes one such incident: "In March 1979... **1.700 adults and children, the entire male population of the village [of Kerala], were all assembled in the town square and machine-gunned at point-blank range.** The dead and dying were thrown into three mass graves and buried with a bulldozer. For a while afterward the women could still see the earth move slightly as the wounded struggled to escape, but soon all movement stopped. All women fled to Pakistan..." At the same time, terror reigned in Kabul. The Pol-e-Charki prison, on the eastern outskirts of the city, became a concentration camp. As Sayyed Abdullah, the director of the prison, explained to the prisoners: "**You're here to be turned into a heap of rubbish.**"⁵²

In his book *Le Résistance Afghane* (The Afghan Resistance), Michael Barry describes other practices of the prison governor:

Torture was common; the worst form entailed live burial in the latrines. Hundreds of prisoners were killed every night, and the dead and dying were buried by bulldozers. Stalin's method of punishing entire ethnic groups for the actions of some of its members was adopted, leading to the arrest on 15 August 1979 of 300 people from the Hazaras ethnic group who were suspected of supporting the resistance. "One hundred fifty of them **were buried alive by the bulldozers, and the rest were doused with gasoline and burned alive.**" In September 1979 the prison authorities admitted that 12.000 prisoners had been eliminated. The director of Pol-e-Charki told anyone who would listen: "**We'll leave only 1 million Afghans alive – that's all we need to build socialism.**"⁵³

All of these practices were directed from Moscow. In fact, all the chaos in Afghanistan had been planned beforehand by the Soviet Union. The Soviet regime had decided to have the communists in Afghanistan stage a coup and then occupy the whole country under the pretext of defending that so-called "democratic" regime. As many historians now agree, it was the fact that the communists saw the rapid rise of Islam at the time as a threat which prompted Moscow to take those measures.

Finally, on Dec. 27, 1979, the Red Army used the resistance by the Muslim mujahadeen to the communist regime in Afghanistan as a pretext to occupy the country. The savagery meted out to the people of Afghanistan grew in scope still further.

The Red Army remained in the country as an occupying power for exactly 10 years. It tried to put down the entirely justified resistance of the mujahadeen groups by employing the most ruthless and savage methods imaginable. One Afghan fighter describes the methods employed by the Red Army:

The Soviets attacked every single house, looting and raping the women. The barbarism was worse than instinctive, and appeared to have been planned. They know that in carrying out such acts they were destroying the very foundation of our society.⁵⁴

The Soviet Army used the most cowardly methods possible against the Muslim Afghans: mines were made in the shape of toys to encourage unwitting Afghan children to pick them up, captured guerrillas were horribly tortured, and civilians deliberately bombed. Instead of pursuing individuals one by one, they preferred to massacre entire villages at a time.

In an interview, Felix Ermacora, special rapporteur for Afghanistan for the U.N. Human Rights Commission, maintained that the United Nations was covering up the Russian savagery in Afghanistan. By referring to the Laghman massacre committed by the Russian administration, Ermacora stated that all the villages of this pretty city to the northeast of Kabul were wiped off the face of the map. Almost the entire

population was wiped out. In the Karga district alone 1,500 people were killed, mainly women and children. All the animals there were killed too, right down to the dogs. All the houses were pillaged, and the tea and sugar stolen right out of the kitchens. Red Army soldiers drove over homes in their tanks, knowing full well there were women and children taking refuge within. Parts of bodies were visible between the tank tracks.⁵⁵

By the end of the decade-long Soviet occupation, tens of thousands of people had been killed, and as many again crippled. Afghanistan today imports more artificial limbs than any other country on earth. Red Army landmines robbed tens of thousands of Afghans of their arms and legs.

After the Soviets finally withdrew, Afghanistan collapsed into chaos and a bloody civil war began.

The Taliban administration which seized power in 1998 actually increased the social tension and poverty in the country by implementing a very strict regime. We hope that the new regime established after the collapse of the Taliban can put an end to the violence and poverty that rose to terrible heights with Moscow's provocations in the 1970s followed by the Soviet occupation.

IRAQ

MIDDLE EAST FASCISM SADDAM HUSSEIN

Various religious sects and ethnic groups make up Iraq's population of 25 million. Some 95 percent are Muslims, and they have experienced oppression, torture and fear for many years. The most important factor in the killing and poverty inflicted on the Muslim population has been Saddam Hussein's "fascist" dictatorship.

Saddam Hussein took power in 1979, and ever since he has refused to allow religious circles to enjoy any kind of political or social activity. Saddam was the architect of the massacre of 5,000 Muslim Kurds by chemical weapons at Halabja, inflicted terrible suffering on his own people and those of their neighbor by starting the Iran-Iraq war, and tried to conquer Kuwait in 1990. Although he has sometimes spoken in religious terms in order to try and win Muslim support, that is nothing but a hypocritical policy.

A brief look at Saddam's past will let us see the foundations of the regime he established.

The events that brought Saddam to power in Iraq began with a coup. In February 1963, a group of army officers and street activists calling themselves the Baath (Resurgence) Party overthrew General Abdul Karim Kassem, who was in power at the time. Among these militants one man, a member of a six-man team charged with killing Kassem, stood out: Saddam Hussein al-Takriti, in other words Saddam Hussein from Takrit. Although not a soldier, Saddam was seen frequently in uniform and immediately after the coup, **he was brought in by the Baath regime and tasked with committing acts of terror and murder.** His first action was to develop effective new torture methods with which to interrogate those opposed to the coup. This Baath administration which began with a palace coup came to an end in November of the same year. Saddam's **torture center then came to light, full of pain-inflicting devices of his own invention.**

The Baath administration of less than 10 months' duration had also been ended by a coup. However, the party staged another coup on July 17, 1968, and this time it was to last. The deputy leader of this second coup was none other than torture specialist Saddam Hussein himself. By appointing his own relatives to key posts and doing away with his political rivals, he soon held all political power in his own hands. The pitiless torturer had become dictator of Iraq.

Despite all his ruthlessness and cruelty, one of the main factors which allowed Saddam to stay in power was the support he received from outside the country. The most fascinating alliances were established to keep Saddam in power. Heading the list of these was the alliance he formed with Mossad, one of the darkest intelligence organizations in the world. Mossad regarded Saddam as an important pawn in Israel's Middle East strategy and occasionally used Saddam in the directing of the course of events which might turn out in Israel's interests.

In his second book, written after the Gulf War, the former Mossad agent Victor Ostrovsky would write in describing this interesting view of Saddam in Israel that that country wished the Iraqi dictator to remain in power because he was totally irrational in terms of international policy and was likely to engage in useful stupidity which might be able to be used by Israel.

This provides most important information about the true face of Saddam Hussein. Saddam has never followed a policy aimed at the good of Muslims and attempting to defend the people's interests. All the

measures he has taken up until today, directed by certain circles opposed to religion, have been aimed at harming Muslims and his people. The fact that throughout Saddam's administration the lives of the Iraqi people have been full of war and conflicts, and that most of these were aimed at other Muslim countries, is an important indication of this fact.

After securing power, Saddam constantly sought out war and conflict. In 1980 he suddenly invaded Iran for no reason, thus starting a war that over the next eight years took the lives of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis and Iranians alike. Two years after the war finally ended, he then invaded Kuwait without cause and thus brought about the 1991 Gulf War. Yet Saddam's terror was not only aimed at neighboring countries but at his own people, too. Throughout his reign those seen as opponents of the regime and various political and ethnic groups have been subjected to all kinds of savagery. In 1990, *Newsweek* carried the following description of Saddam's fascist character:

His detractors call him **a bloodthirsty tyrant - the Butcher of Baghdad.** Saddam Hussein rules Iraq with an iron side a steel glove, backed by a million-man Army and a legion of informers, assassins and torturers. Saddam, as he is known throughout the Middle East, is utterly ruthless in the pursuit of glory for himself and his country. He has not hesitated to use poison gas on enemies both foreign and domestic.⁵⁶

Saddam has shed the blood of many Iraqis. **By the end of the war with Iran, 1 million out of a population of 17 million Iraqis had been killed or wounded.** More than a million people fled the country for political or economic reasons. Washington-based human rights organization Middle East Watch states that **forced exile, arrest and punishment for no crime as well as torture and "mystery" killings are some of the methods frequently employed.** According to Amnesty International, torture, even of children includes such methods as roasting victims over flames, amputating noses, limbs, breasts and sexual organs, and hammering nails into bodies.⁵⁷

Saddam demonstrated his fascist attitude towards people of different ethnic origins with the 1988 Halabja massacre. Nerve gas was used against the civilian Kurdish population, and many innocent people died in agony, with no distinction made between infants, the elderly, men and women. Amnesty International reported that **5,000 Kurds died in that massacre, and several thousand more in similar attacks elsewhere in the country.**⁵⁸

The tortures inflicted on political detainees by the fascist regime in Iraq are even more terrible. A doctor who fled the country describes them in these terms:

I was an intern in a hospital in the south. Only doctors could see those people brought in from prison. Most of them were just lumps of flesh and soon died. Not one political detainee lived through the torture. I fled when I realized I was going to be arrested.⁵⁹

Even Saddam's own family and close colleagues have not been spared his cruelty. Saddam's stepbrother Barzan Takriti and his son Uday fled to the United Arab Emirates out of fear he might have them killed. Two of his sons-in-law, Hussein and Saddam Kamel, fled to Jordan in 1995 out of similar fears. Saddam then guaranteed that their lives would not be threatened and asked them to return. When the two brothers returned to Baghdad, however, they were immediately put to death, along with their father. Their mother's savaged body was found later.

The Iraqi leader intimidates opponents of his regime who flee the country using the most terrible methods. For instance, General Najib Salihi fled to Jordan in 1995. He revealed that videotapes of his family and friends being raped had been sent to him, and that this had happened to many other opposition figures.

As we clearly see from these examples, Saddam's power over the people of Iraq is entirely based on intimidation, terror, oppression and torture. The population is poor and unemployed due to the hostile, aggressive foreign policy pursued by Saddam just to satisfy his own ego. Babies die from hunger and lack of medicines, and despite its natural wealth the whole nation is being dragged towards death and extinction.

At this point, however, it needs to be stressed that violence must never be the way to protect the innocent people of Iraq from Saddam's savagery. In the event that such a policy were followed, the innocent Iraqi people would suffer much more than Saddam. There is no doubt that innocent civilians (children, women, the elderly, the sick) would be the ones to suffer most in any war or conflict. Those who maintain that violence is necessary to rid the Iraqi people of Saddam must carefully avoid falling into a similar error with Saddam himself, in other words they must avoid any methods which would ruin the whole country and cost the lives of thousands of innocent people.

Saddam's Hypocritical Appeals to Religion

The most important feature of the mass hypnotism Saddam has cast over the people of Iraq is that it operates under a false religious mask. Saddam always employs a religious style, aimed at the people, in his domestic and foreign policies, and engages in actions designed to pull the wool over their eyes. That is why he sometimes resorts to portraying himself as the defender of the Islamic world, and tries to take advantage of the people's religious sensitivities, as when the words "Allahu Akbar" were added to the Iraqi flag during the Gulf War.

Looking at all the cruelty that is inflicted makes it quite clear that this has nothing whatsoever to do with the religion of Islam or the values of the Qur'an. Allah reveals the situation of such people in a verse:

They swear by Allah that they are from among you while they are not from among you... (Qur'an, 9: 56)

Obviously, Saddam is nothing like a true Islamic leader. It is clear that his actions are forbidden in the Qur'an, and strongly condemned. For instance, racism plays a strong role in Saddam's actions within the country. Many innocent people have been savagely slain, just because of their ethnic origins. With the Halabja massacre, Saddam went down in history as the murderer of 5,000 people. Like many other racist leaders, Saddam claims that his own ethnic roots are superior. The Qur'an, however, makes it clear that superiority lies not in race, color or any other such feature, but rather in godliness or closeness to Allah, faith and morality. Racism, on the other hand, is described in these words in the Qur'an:

Those who are disbelievers filled their hearts with fanatical rage – the fanatical rage of the Time of Ignorance – and Allah sent down serenity to His Messenger and to the believers, and bound them to the expression of heedfulness which they had most right to and were most entitled to. Allah has knowledge of all things. (Qur'an, 48: 26)

Allah has created people with different races and colors. Man is a helpless creature, fully dependent on Allah, so nobody has any right to claim to be superior to any other person or nation. At the moment of death, on the Day of Judgment or in the hereafter, such things as race will be of no importance. On that day, nobody will be able to hold anyone else to account for their race or origins. Those who are now behaving savagely because of their race, killing people and even burning them alive, will on that day realize how helpless and needy they are, no matter their race. One verse has the following to say about the Day of Judgment:

Then when the Trumpet is blown, that Day there will be no family ties between them; they will not be able to question one another. (Qur'an, 23: 101)

In addition to racism, Saddam also believes in fascism. He inflicts fascist repression on his own people, and just like Hitler and Mussolini, he believes that war is a sacred virtue. Whereas apart from certain causes set out in the Qur'an, starting wars is in the eyes of the Qur'an a great evil and a grave sin. What Allah says about the unbelieving sons of Israel applies to all wicked people: "... **Each time they kindle the fire of war, Allah extinguishes it. They rush about the earth corrupting it. Allah does not love corrupters.**" (Qur'an, 5: 64)

In short, since the 1970s, the Muslims of Iraq have been subjected to the cruelty of a dictator who is far removed from the morality set out in the Qur'an, but one who believes instead in racial and tribal bigotry, has no hesitation about killing hundreds of thousands of innocent people to satisfy his own desires, and who takes great pleasure in cruelty and torture. Furthermore, many of them do not even realize what is truly happening, due to the propaganda they are constantly subjected to. The salvation of Iraqi Muslims from Saddam, or from any other dictator who might rule from Baghdad after him, depends on the ideological and material strengthening of the Islamic world, a total embrace of the Qur'an, and the destruction of a fascist ideology trying to operate under an Islamic mask.

SYRIA

THE TERRIBLE HISTORY OF OPPRESSION HIDDEN FROM THE WORLD

The Muslim population of Syria, a country since 1963 governed by the Arab nationalist Baath Party, has suffered great wrongs and oppression since the 1920s.

Syria, with its 75 percent Muslim, 11 percent Nusayri, and 9 percent Christian population, has a long Islamic past and a deep-rooted cultural heritage. Many Islamic scholars have come from this land.

Syria was conquered during the time of Khalif Omar, and came to be ruled in turn by Umayyads, Abbasids, Seljuks and Ayyubids. The lands of Syria became part of the Ottoman Empire in 1517, and they lived in peace and security until the first part of the nineteenth century. In 1831 Syria fell into the hands of Muhammad Ali Pasha, who rebelled against the Ottomans and set up his own government. Syria then returned to Ottoman rule until it was occupied by French forces in 1920. The French occupation was the beginning of a time of chaos and violence for the Syrian people. The French tore Syria from Lebanon, which the latter had historically been a part of, and made it into a separate state.

The 26-year policy of oppression that lasted until independence in 1946 was similar to those inflicted by the French government in Algeria, Tunisia and many other Muslim countries. The Syrian people began an important campaign of resistance in the wake of occupation. The French savagely killed tens of thousands of people and bombed large cities. The uprising was put down violently, but France realized that its days in Syria were numbered.

The French had to withdraw from Syria after World War II, and they accepted Syrian independence in 1946. The Syria that they left behind them, however, was a most unstable one, wide open to conflict. The French mandate imposed on Syria after the end of World War I benefited the Nusayris more than any other group (Nusayrism is a system of belief based on the divinity of Ali, in a fashion similar to Christianity's deification of the Prophet Jesus, peace be upon him). The French administration placed minority Nusayris in key state posts, creating great unease among the majority Sunni Muslims and planting the seeds of an artificial enmity between the two communities. Many experts on the Middle East believe that the Nusayris' climb to the country's highest political and military levels actually began with Syria's declaration of independence in 1946. Following independence, the most important event was the Nusayris' taking over the country's administration, displacing the long-established Sunni families who were in the forefront of the political and economic spheres. Artificial conflicts such as this dragged the newly independent Syria into chaos.

Following independence, Syria became a nation of coups. They began in 1949 and continued until 1970 with the one carried out by the dictatorial Hafez Al-Assad. His regime put an end to the coups but brought with it a repressive administration. The Baath government ushered in a difficult time for Syrian Muslims. The country fell into the hands of the Nusayri minority, who represented only 11 percent of the population, and all other sects were removed from positions of influence. In a very short time the Assad regime, which described itself as a "Socialist People's Democracy," imposed despotic rule on the country. All political parties were closed down, and it was forbidden to support any other political view than the socialist ideology favored by the

Baath Party. Restrictions were imposed on all Islamic movements. The leaders of those movements were arrested and savagely tortured to the point of death. International human rights organization reports described how Syrian Muslims were subjected to great oppression and suffering during the Assad era, and how Muslim women were raped and unimaginable tortures inflicted on the men.

Cruelty and Oppression, Hallmarks of the Assad Era

The first aim of the Baath regime was to eliminate the country's Islamic identity. To that end, tens of thousands of Muslims were arrested without cause and tortured. Most were then executed, and others simply disappeared. The Assad regime employed such measures as raping women, beating them to death and hanging them by their heels. It also attempted to wear down the Muslim population by raiding houses, attacking mosques, and inflicting insults and endless harassment, and indeed it enjoyed considerable success in doing so.

The worst example of the savagery of the Assad regime was the massacre carried out in the city of Hama. The sole reason for the destruction of that city was that Islamic movements were particularly powerful there. Rifaat Assad, the brother of Hafez and chief of the General Staff, directed a land and air attack on Hama one February night in 1982. The majority of those soldiers who declined to take part in the attack were killed on the spot. The city was left in ruins. As a result of 27 days of slaughter, some 40,000 Muslims lost their lives.

There were many other massacres and killings during Assad's three decades of dictatorship. Many Syrian Muslims who fled the Assad killings are still living abroad as refugees. There are approximately 1 million Syrian Muslims in Saudi Arabia alone.

As on other subjects, the policies of Bashar Assad, who took over the running of the state after the death of his father, are sending rather positive signals of his attitude to religious communities in the countries. We hope these signals give rise to positive results and that Syria becomes a free, peaceful and just country where nobody is oppressed because of his beliefs or ethnic origins.

We must not forget, however, that none of the social problems in the Middle East and in other regions of the Islamic world are insoluble. At first sight, the problems in these regions may appear so complex as to be completely intractable. However, the solution has been sought for hundreds of years in the wrong places. The solution lies in living by the values of the Qur'an which Allah has revealed to humanity. Being helpless in the face of events is an unacceptable situation for any Muslim. That is because Allah, the Creator of all, has created a system wherein humanity can live in peace, well-being and security, and has revealed this to humankind by means of the Qur'an. The Qur'an shows us the true way in all matters, as is revealed in this verse, "... **We have sent down the Book to you making all things clear and as guidance and mercy and good news for the Muslims.**" (Qur'an, 16: 89)

If the superior morality described in the Qur'an is understood and followed, then all the problems currently facing the world can begin to be solved with great ease. Since the solution lies in living by Qur'anic morality, then all people of good conscience have a large and important responsibility to explain the Qur'an to others. In the Qur'an, the ambassadors sent down by Allah speak of their own responsibility in this manner:

We are only responsible for clear transmission. (Qur'an, 36: 17)

THE OPPRESSION OF MUSLIM MINORITIES

Muslims Trying to Live by Their Religion

In the previous chapters of this book we have considered countries with majority Muslim populations, and have examined the suffering inflicted on them by occupying powers or the oppressive administrations placed over them. However, there are also many countries in the world with minority Muslim populations. Many millions of Muslims are also suffering in such places as Myanmar, the Philippines, Cambodia and Thailand.

The cruelty that goes on in these countries is generally even more bloody and savage than that in other places. These people are unable to make their voices heard to the outside world, and are trying to survive despite the fact that in many cases they have lost all their means and had their land and goods stolen from them. Great efforts are being exerted to stop them from living by their religion, and the authorities are trying to assimilate them by means of pressure and despotism.

This chapter will provide details of the suffering inflicted in some of these countries, and will try to help these Muslims as they cry out for help.

MYANMAR

A People Facing Buddhist Violence

Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) has a population of 48 million, 15 percent of whom are Muslims. Most of the rest are Buddhists. The Muslims live in the Arakan region of the country.

Arakan is the country's richest region in terms of oil and natural gas deposits, and its people first came to Islam by means of Arab merchants. This turning towards Islam culminated with the establishment of an Islamic state in 1430. This state survived for 350 years, until the Buddhists put an end to it by conquering Arakan.

Immediately after the Muslims lost political power in 1783, **the Burmese Buddhists embarked on a policy of oppressing and even physically eliminating them.** The country was then colonized by the British towards the end of the nineteenth century.

The anti-Muslim campaign waged by the Buddhists gained momentum in the twentieth century, and there was a terrible massacre in Arakan in 1942 which resulted in the deaths of 100,000 Muslims, and left hundreds of thousands either crippled or forced to flee their land.

Burma gained independence in 1948 with the end of British rule. Yet, the new rulers made life even more intolerable for Muslims. The communist general Ne Win, who came to power in a military coup in 1948, mobilized all the forces of the state to wipe out the Muslims. The "Burmese Socialist Party Program" aimed at using all possible means to turn Muslims away from their religion.

This meant Muslims being stripped of all their political rights. All Islamic educational facilities, mosques and similar places were also closed down. **Mosques were turned into places of entertainment or Buddhist temples. Going on the pilgrimage (hajj), sacrificing animals, group prayer and other such forms of**

religious observance were all banned. On account of all this pressure, some of the Muslim population had to flee the country. Yet despite this emigration, the majority of the population of Arakan was still Muslim. Gen. Ne Win therefore stepped up the pressure, and turned to illegal arrests and torture towards this end. As a result of these ruthless practices, more than a million Muslims were obliged to leave Burma. In order to conceal the savagery that was being carried out, the Burmese government for many years refused to allow in foreign journalists and even tourists.

According to reports from international human rights organizations, **some 20,000 Arakan Muslims were killed by this repressive regime between 1962 and 1984. Hundreds of women were raped and all the Muslims' belongings were confiscated. State communications were used to spread lies and slander about Islam. In 1978, the ravages of the army led to more than 200,000 Muslims having to flee to Bangladesh under the most difficult conditions. They returned under U.N. protection in 1979.**⁶⁰

Following the resignation of Ne Win in 1988, various military and civilian administrations came and went, and more than 3,000 people were killed in the uprisings that broke out during this period. In 1992 it emerged that 700 members of the Muslim minority living by the border with Bangladesh had been drowned. More than 1,000 people were the victims of extra-judicial killings in 1994.

The rape and torture inflicted on Muslim women in Myanmar still appear in human rights reports every year. Yet for some reason, the West's response is one of silent indifference.

One of the greatest problems facing the defenseless Muslim population in Myanmar is that they are unable to communicate with the outside world to make known what is being done to them. That is because the government forbids anyone to enter the country by land, and even though one can enter it by air, many regions are closed to foreigners. It is a most difficult task to establish the details of the suffering being inflicted on the Muslims of Myanmar.

Another wave of mistreatment took place in the 1990s, during which another 200,000 people had to flee to Bangladesh.⁶¹ Refugees fleeing the oppression in Myanmar find themselves facing terrible human dramas. Bangladesh is a very poor Muslim nation, and finds it difficult to feed and shelter refugees from Myanmar, although it does let them in.

All Muslims must hear the cries for help rising up from Myanmar and Bangladesh. In the Qur'an, Allah commands people to help the poor, those who are driven from their homes and those in need. It is the duty of all Muslims to prepare an environment in which those forced from their countries can be made comfortable, to make sacrifices in order to help them, and to show them support and love. Examples of this are given in the Qur'an, which reveals the proper attitude to be adopted by Muslims towards those driven from their homes:

It is for the poor of the emigrants who were driven from their homes and wealth desiring the favor and the pleasure of Allah and supporting Allah and His Messenger. Such people are the truly sincere. (Qur'an, 59: 8)

Those who were already settled in the abode, and in belief, before they came, love those who emigrated to them and do not find in their hearts any need for what they have been given and prefer them to themselves even if they themselves are needy. It is the people who are safe-guarded from the avarice of their own selves who are successful. (Qur'an, 59: 9)

As the Qur'an reveals, believers are those who offer the hand of friendship to those whom they love. When this praiseworthy morality comes to be widely practiced throughout the world, then the poverty and other problems facing the refugees will all be solved.

THE PHILIPPINES

The Muslims of Bangsa Moro and Marcos' Cannibals

Most people may not be aware that the Philippines have a large Muslim population, and that these people have been fighting oppression, torture and inhumane policies for many years. Yet Muslims in the Philippines have been savagely slaughtered for years, and are waiting for help from the Muslims of the world to allow them to survive.

Some 90 percent of Filipinos are Catholic, although the situation is very different in the southern islands, where the population is 70 percent Catholic and 30 percent Muslim. The latter consist of the Moros of the island on Mindanao and the Muslims on the island of Sulu. Muslims make up 97 percent of the people of Sulu.⁶²

The origins of the conflict in the Philippines go back to 1946, when the country gained independence after years of U.S. rule. Unlike the Muslims on Mindanao and Sulu, the majority Christian population of the Philippines offered no resistance to the colonialist American administration and accepted the governors imposed on them. The Americans educated Filipino leaders in order to establish a pro-U.S. administration. When the United States finally withdrew, it therefore left power in the hands of the Filipinos, and accepted Mindanao and Sulu as parts of a single unitary state. So the Muslims on those islands were subjected to Filipino rule.

The Filipinos embarked of a policy of reinforcing their supremacy, and in particular of taking away the lands of the Muslim Moros. A new law allowed a Filipino to take over 24 hectares of land, but this was limited to 10 hectares in the case of the Moros. The result was a wave of Filipino migration towards land populated by Muslims. That in turn had the effect of reducing the size of the Muslim majority. **In the decade between 1966 and 1976, 3.5 million Filipino immigrants settled in Muslim lands.**

On May 1, 1968, Cotabato Governor Datu Udtog Matalam set up the "Muslim Independence Movement" (MIM), which sought to compromise with the central authority under President Ferdinand Marcos. However, it failed to gather much support, and soon faded from the scene. The central government did not underestimate the importance of this development, and saw it as an opportunity to increase the pace of its anti-Moro policies. At the same time, Marcos declared himself head of the Philippines' Armed Forces. A short while later he announced martial law, justifying this by citing the terrorist movement set up by communists in the country, together with the Muslim resistance. He then suspended the Constitution, and finally become dictator over the whole country.

From that moment on, Marcos initiated mass killings against the Muslims, who had begun a struggle for independence. **Some 50,000 Muslims were slaughtered, including perhaps 10,000 women and children.** The Muslim resistance to Marcos was organized by a number of young people who had received training in the Middle East in the 1960s. The sudden and widespread emergence of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) under the leadership of Nur Misuari took the Marcos regime by surprise. There followed bloody fighting between government forces and members of the MNLF.

Marcos set up specially trained terror teams to put an end to the popular support for the opposition in the country, particularly that of the MNLF. These teams, the most ruthless of which was called Ilaga, resorted to the most terrible methods. Turkish magazine Nokta had the following to say in an article entitled "Marcos' Cannibals":

They were stamping on Mrs Kassam's husband. **Bits of brain were spurting out from his skull. Other armed militiamen were falling over themselves to grab the bits. Members of Ilaga think that drinking the blood and eating the flesh of their enemies makes them invincible.** What a terrible invincibility!.. The members of Ilaga, which was set up in the 1970s during the Muslim uprisings, **tortured thousands of Muslims to death during that time.** They believed that they acquired supernatural powers by drinking the blood or eating the flesh of those they killed ... They would raid villages and slaughter people. The attacks then just turned into looting and pillaging. **A bottle full of human ears was recently found in a village on Mindanao, the owners of which have yet to be identified.**⁶³

Muslim villages were burned during these raids, and the Moros' belongings plundered. Yet very little changed for the Muslims when Marcos was overthrown in a popular revolt in 1986. His successor, Corazon Aquino, planned to intimidate and eliminate them by other means. During Aquino's rule, the insurgents and military operations were intensified and the administration openly declared war against the Muslim movement. A "total war policy" was adopted by President Aquino, resulting to a displacement of more than a million Filipinos. School buildings and churches were used as venues for the fleeing families.⁶⁴

The oppression of the Muslims continued after Aquino. Relations then improved for a short while, before growing tense again when mosques were bombed in 1994. On the other hand, the fact that a radical, pro-terror organization put down roots among Muslims at the same time worsened the problem. A solution to the problems in the Philippines will only be possible if the Manila administration abandons its decades-old policies of oppression and recognizes the rights of the Muslims in the south, and if the terrorist movements which have emerged claiming to represent the Muslims but which actually only do them harm are stopped.

CAMBODIA

Years-old Hatred of Islam

The tiny, impoverished country of Cambodia lies in Asia, between India and China, in a region known as Indochina. Most of the country's people are illiterate and have for centuries relied on agriculture to survive. The most important element of that agriculture is the rice paddies stretching from one end of the country to the other.

By far the greater part of the population consists of Khmers, the oldest ethnic group in the area, with substantial Chinese and Buddhist minorities. Muslims form yet another minority.

Islam came to Cambodia by sea, carried by Muslim merchants and travelers. Most of the Muslims in Cambodia are of Thai origin, from a kingdom which was destroyed in wars and uprisings. Although, until 1975, there were still some 75 historic mosques.

We have already examined communism's hatred of religion and the terrible slaughter communists have wreaked on Islamic lands. The fiercely Maoist Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia, which came to power with

Chinese support, was one example of this. During the regime's days in power, there was an attempt to break all the Muslims' links with Islam.

The Khmer Rouge was a communist group formed and led by a Maoist called Pol Pot. They spent years in the jungles of Cambodia dreaming of coming to power, and in 1975 it finally happened. After taking over the country, they set up a cruel and totalitarian regime, the like of which had never before been seen. The Khmer Rouge regime decided that the sole national duty of a communist was to work to death in the rice paddies, and so began to force the whole population of the country to labor in them. Tens of thousands of people living in the cities – politicians, civil servants, teachers and intellectuals – were sent off to villages and made to work in collectives under truly terrible conditions.

Stopping to rest during working hours, eating even a tiny part of what was harvested without permission, or practicing any form of religion at all were all considered "activities against the state," and thus the killing began. Between 1975 and 1979, the rice paddies turned into the infamous "killing fields." Some 3 million people out of the total population of 9 million were killed by being shot, or axed in the head, or suffocated, or else left to starve.

As in all communist countries, a savage policy of repression was implemented against the Muslim population. War was declared on the people's religious values, and the regime resorted to violence in an effort to turn people away from their religion. Hundreds of thousands of Muslims were killed. The figures speak for themselves: Some 200,000 Muslims live in Cambodia today. The figure was more than 800,000 before the communist revolution, when Muslims represented 7 percent of the population.

The Black Book of Communism describes the savagery the Khmer Rouge employed against the Muslim Cham people:

In 1973, **mosques were destroyed and prayers banned** in the liberated zones. Such measures became more widespread after May 1975. **Korans were collected and burned, and mosques were either transformed into other buildings or razed.** Thirteen Muslim dignitaries were executed in June, some for having gone to pray rather than attending a political rally, others for having campaigned for the right to religious wedding ceremonies... The more fervent were all but wiped out: of the 1,000 who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca, only 30 survived these years. Unlike other Cambodians, the Cham frequently rebelled, and large numbers of them died in the massacres and reprisals that followed these uprisings. After mid-1978 the Khmer Rouge began systematically exterminating a number of Cham communities, including women and children... Ben Kiernan calculates that the overall mortality rate among the Cham was 50 percent.⁶⁵

Some 70 percent of the Muslims living in the capital, Phnom Penh, abandoned the country because of the terrible savagery of the Khmer Rouge and were forced to seek shelter in neighboring countries such as Thailand, Malaysia and Laos. When the Vietnamese occupied Cambodia in 1979, the Khmer Rouge regime came to an end, although the repression of Muslims continued unabated. The Vietnamese government, supported by the Soviets, carried on with the cruelty of the Khmer Rouge. They employed the most repressive policies in order to eliminate Islam entirely. The few places of worship left to the innocent Muslims subjected to Vietnamese assaults were torn down, and religious figures were killed. Most of them were horribly tortured in prison and used as forced labor.

Even today, it is still forbidden to spread Islam or to communicate with Cambodians in other countries. Like many other features of Islamic religious life, group worship is banned. The Vietnamese also destroyed all the historic artifacts they came across. There are currently only 20 small mosques still standing in Cambodia.

Tens of thousands of human bones and skulls of people killed by the Khmer Rouge, including Muslims, are now on display in a museum in Phnom Penh. Just as with Chechnya and East Turkestan, the events in Cambodia expose to the world the true face of communist savagery.

TANZANIA

Pressure Cannot Halt the Rise of Islamic Consciousness

Muslims came to the central-southeastern African country of Tanzania from the Indian subcontinent. As a result of their missionary activities, the local population abandoned paganism and accepted Islam. There are Muslims in all 120 tribes in Tanzania.

Although more than half the population is Muslim (some 55 percent), Muslims are still treated as a minority. Christians form a minority of the population but hold the reins of power. Only six out of 23 government ministries are held by Muslims. Muslims may represent more than half of the population, but the country is still described as half Christian and half "local religions." The 9 million Muslims are also facing a systematic policy of Christianization. Students who fail to abide by Christian rules in middle schools are expelled. In the same way that Islamic bodies and organizations are forbidden, so too is spreading Islam. The government has also banned the learning of Arabic and going on the hajj. Despite this policy of the Tanzanian government, however, the number of Muslims in the country is growing every day.

One of the government's policies aimed at Christianizing the population is the attempt to establish a mixed Islamic/Christian belief system under the name of the Islamic Renewal Movement. The people are tools, and as part of this policy they are told that there is no need to carry out many of the basic tenets of Islam. Those who oppose these twisted beliefs are either thrown into prison, or killed, or made to leave the country.

SRI LANKA

Terrorism Aimed at Muslims

Sri Lanka is an island nation in the Indian Ocean with a Muslim population of some 2.6 million Muslims. The Tamil guerillas waging war against the administration sometimes also attack Muslim villages and kill innocent civilians. One recent massacre took place in the village of Mawanella, which was completely destroyed on May, 3, 2001. The Sri Lankan Muslims have prepared a website to try to have their voices heard by the outside world, and in it they describe the suffering they are subjected to in these terms:

... We Muslims are, basically, a trading and business community, with a recent incursion to the various professions in many fields. Our contribution to the development and progress of Sri Lanka have always been positive and we have, since ancient times, maintained a very cordial and friendly relationship with all of the other communities amongst whom we live.

The Tamil Tiger separatist issue has brought about much hardship and torment to many Muslims living in the affected areas of the North and the East. Of late a small sector of the Sinhalese community has also taken up arms against Muslims, attacking our businesses, mosques, and personal lives.

We are a minority community that seeks to live and let live and maintain a peaceful co-existence between all other communities, ensuring that we are allowed to practice our religion and maintain our social standing in the way it has been throughout history... We are not a community that is interested in separatism and terrorism like the Tamils. We do not seek to antagonize and shower hatred between the various communities... **All we seek is a decent life where we can live peacefully and comfortably, continue our worship of the Almighty, carry out our businesses and professions, and educate and raise our children honorably.** ⁶⁶

The above extracts are a statement of the strong Islamic awareness of the Sri Lankan Muslims. Yet for many years they have been unable to find the peace and security they have sought. In the latest attacks, for instance, racist Sri Lankan Buddhists gathered up copies of the Qur'an and other Islamic writings, including a number of rare, centuries-old texts, and burned them all in front of a mosque. Two mosques were burned down and more than 90 Muslim-owned buildings were destroyed.

Ali Sahir Moulana, a Muslim opposition parliamentarian, says that three mosques, 60 houses, 80 shops and two gas stations all belonging to Muslims were burned by the mobs. He also claims that the attacks were carried out in order to inflict economic damage on the Muslims of Mawanella.

PATANI

Inhumane Violence Meted Out to Muslims by the Thai Government

The mountainous and forested region of Patani is the richest in Thailand, and the origin of fully 35 percent of the country's exports. Patani's Muslims, however, who make up 10 percent of the nation's total population of 55 million, have been oppressed for the last 200 years, and now face a policy of genocide.

The suffering of the Patani Muslims first began in 1782 when the Rama Dynasty came to power in Patani. The dynasty moved its capital to Bangkok and set up a modern administrative system. At just that time, fighting broke out between the Patani Muslims and local people known as the Siamese, and it continued for several days. Many Patani cities were burned, its military headquarters was destroyed, and some 4,000 Patani Muslims were taken prisoner by the Siamese during the course of the fighting.

The Siamese savagely tortured those prisoners, bringing them to Bangkok bound to each other with rope threaded through their ears and legs with a needle, and putting them to work digging a canal with no tools or equipment.⁶⁷ Patani's sultan was also brutally killed by the Siamese. Thailand was divided into seven regions after the war, and Patani made to pay taxes, spending the next 70 years under Siamese rule. The Patani Muslims claim that they are not of the Siamese race, and that they are not Thai but rather Indonesian and Malaysian. In fact they speak Malay, the language of the Malaysian Muslims. Although that language has been written in the Arabic alphabet for hundreds of years, they have been obliged to use Roman letters by the Thai government.

In 1909, the Siamese granted Patani so-called independence, although the repressive policies of the Thai government continued without change. The Muslims of Patani rose up to demand true independence many times, but were always brutally put down, resulting in a wave of migration to Malaysia.

The Thai rulers followed a policy of repression and assimilation aimed at doing away with Patani's Islamic identity. The first such measure came in 1932, when Muslim educational organizations were banned from carrying out any activities. A wide-ranging policy of extermination was initiated in 1944, and leading Patani Muslims and their families were brutally murdered by Buddhists. It was forbidden to abide by the tenets of Islam, and Buddhism began to be imposed on the people. The teaching of Buddhism became compulsory in schools, and Muslim students were even forced to behave according to Buddhist teachings.

Over the years Thai rulers have perpetrated terrible massacres of the Patani Muslims. In 1944, 125 Muslim families were burned alive in the village of Belukar Samak alone. The assimilation policies imposed by the Thais were seen and felt in all aspects of daily life. Many minarets were torn down in Patani.

As part of this policy of assimilation, the demographic balance in the Patani region was also changed as Buddhists were encouraged to migrate there. **The largest Buddhist statue in Thailand was erected in Patani, and Muslims were forced to worship it. Those who refused were killed or thrown into the Kota River.**

During that same time, Patani freedom fighters' shelters were destroyed by the Thais and thousands of innocent Patanis were tortured. Prominent Muslim scholars died under suspicious circumstances in health centers set up by the Thai administration, and unsolved killings and disappearances became part of everyday life.

The struggle for independence of the Patani Muslims, who have experienced such great suffering, began after World War II and continues to this day.

CONCLUSION

THE SPRING TO COME; THE GOLDEN AGE

In earlier chapters of this book we have discussed the internal disarray in Islamic lands all over the world and the ever-increasing conflict. We have seen how defenseless people try to survive in the shadow of armed clashes, the suffering experienced in the refugee camps, and the suffering of those who are denied religious freedom. The general impression emerging from all of this may at first sight strike the reader as being rather like a chill, gloomy winter. A person who fails to think deeply enough about the matter may commit the error of believing that it will be very difficult to find a solution, and that whatever is done will probably fail to produce any concrete results. Yet, to the contrary, the picture actually points to great good news, and every single detail is **a sign of the coming of that holy period announced by the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, in other words the End Times.**

Events In Muslim Lands Are a Sign of the End Times

The concept of the "End Times," may not be familiar to many people, so it will be useful to offer a brief explanation. Islamic sources describe the End Times as being a time close to the Day of Judgement, a time when the morality of the Qur'an will rule over the entire world. All the necessary conditions will be satisfied to allow people to live in peace and security. Bountifulness, growth and justice will replace all the problems that have been faced in earlier periods. All forms of immorality, deceit and degeneracy will disappear. This will be a joyous time, one longed for so long, when Qur'anic morality predominates.

Hadiths (sayings) of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, contain detailed explanations of what the End Times will be like. Many prominent Islamic scholars have also made valuable statements on the subject. These indicate that the world will first go through a period of terrible confusion and tribulation, to be followed by a time when it is saved by turning to the true religion, a time of plenty, when the benefits of technology can be enjoyed by all, a time of great medical and scientific advances, a time of superior art.

In the early days of the End Times, there will be a general degeneration caused by a number of philosophical systems that deny the existence of Allah. People will turn away from the true purpose behind their creation, which will lead to a spiritual and psychological collapse. Terrible disasters, such as wars, conflict and famine, will follow one after another, and people will cry out, desperate to be saved from them. The same thing applies to the conflicts taking place in Islamic lands. Muslims who seek to live freely by their religion and abide by its tenets are trying to survive in the face of great oppression, and women, children and the elderly are being ruthlessly murdered. Anti-Islamic forces which are terrorizing Muslims and trying to prevent the unification of the Islamic world are increasing their levels of violence with every day. However, this period of war and conflict will not last for long. **Allah has promised to free people from this terrible chaos of the End Times and lead them to a happier time.**

This new age will begin with the return of the Prophet Jesus, peace be upon him, and will mean the end of winter for Muslims and the coming of spring. This age is referred to as the time when "guns will fall silent"

in hadiths, and when peace will rule. Some of the hadiths of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, concerning the great good news of the new age are:

... Grudge and mutual hatred will be lifted (removed)... The earth will be filled with peace just as a vessel is filled with water. (*Sunan Ibn-i Majah*)

The battle would put down its weapons. (*Sunan Ibn-i Majah*)

As the hadiths reveal, in the Golden Age there will be great fellowship between different peoples, especially those who had previously been in conflict, and friendship and love will replace all forms of conflict.

Muslims Have Experienced Similar Difficulties in the Past

Throughout this book we have seen many detailed descriptions of the suffering inflicted in Muslim countries, including the bombing of maternity hospitals in Chechnya, the savage killing of pregnant women in Bosnia, and the slaughter of little children by Israeli soldiers in Palestine. Yet it must not be forgotten that similar and even worse examples of cruelty have been suffered by many Muslim societies in the past as well. Atheist rulers or prominent members of various nations have tortured prophets and communities of the faithful, exiled defenseless people from their lands and continually repressed them. One of the most clear-cut examples of this was the Pharaoh. While he enjoyed a life of great plenty and wealth, this ancient Egyptian ruler inflicted great suffering on the Muslims of the time, in other words the children of Israel. Allah describes the suffering of the children of Israel in these terms:

Remember when We rescued you from the people of Pharaoh. They were inflicting an evil punishment on you – slaughtering your sons and letting your women live. In that there was a terrible trial for you from your Lord. (Qur'an, 2: 49)

One very important secret is indicated in this verse: Pharaoh's cruelty was a means of testing the faithful. In the same way, Allah tests the Muslims who are subjected to similar cruelty all over the world today. These tests regarding a Muslim's efforts to win Allah's pleasure in this world and gain the infinite blessings of His paradise all serve the purpose of building up a rich store in the hereafter. The infinite blessings in paradise are a recompense for what believers go through during the short life of this world. Many Muslim communities have experienced similar difficulties in the past, and that is now a criterion for believers of today. Allah announces the following:

Or did you suppose that you would enter the Garden without facing the same as those who came before you? Poverty and illness afflicted them and they were shaken to the point that the Messenger and those who believed with him said, "When is Allah's help coming?" Be assured that Allah's help is very near. (Qur'an, 2: 214)

As we see in that verse, believers have always been tested by difficulties and problems, yet Allah has always assisted His servants. Furthermore, as the verse says, that help has always been swift.

When Islamic Morality Holds Sway Over All the World, Cruelty Will Come to an End

There are a number of verses in the Qur'an referring to the dominion of Islamic morality over the world. There are many parallels between these and our Prophet's revelations of the Golden Age. Since such a thing has not come about in our time, it is obvious that the wide-ranging dominion mentioned in the Qur'an refers to the End Times announced by the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. Here are a few of the verses concerning the gift of strength and power to those who follow Qur'anic morality:

Allah has promised those of you who believe and do right actions that He will make them successors in the land as He made those before them successors, and will firmly establish for them their religion with which He is pleased and give them, in place of their fear, security. "They worship Me, not associating anything with Me." Any who disbelieve after that, such people are deviators. (Qur'an, 24: 55)

Allah has written, "I will be victorious, I and My Messengers." Allah is Most Strong, Almighty. (Qur'an, 58: 21)

They desire to extinguish Allah's Light with their mouths but Allah will perfect His Light, though the disbelievers hate it. It is He Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the Religion of Truth to exalt it over every other religion, though the idolators hate it. (Qur'an, 61: 8-9)

It is also a divine law, revealed in the Qur'an, that those who truly believe that there is no other god than Allah will inherit the earth:

We wrote down in the Psalms, after the Reminder came: "It is My honorable servants who will inherit the earth." (Qur'an, 21: 105)

We will leave you the land to live in after them. That is the reward of those who fear My station and fear My threat. They asked for Allah's victory, and every obdurate tyrant failed. (Qur'an, 14: 14-15)

Rather We hurl the truth against falsehood and it cuts right through it and it vanishes clean away! Woe without end for you for what you portray! (Qur'an, 21: 18)

There Will be Hitherto Unseen Plenty in the Golden Age

As well as peace and security, the Golden Age will be a time of great plenty in terms of products and goods. Everyone will enjoy much more than he needs, and there will be no hunger or poverty. Believers, and those who serve the way of Allah, will receive all kinds of just recompense for what they have done, both in this world and in the hereafter. The plenty that will be experienced at every moment will be a beauty that Allah gives to those faithful who live by Qur'anic morality. Each of their good deeds will be returned to them as great

wealth. In one verse, Allah describes the plenty that will be enjoyed by those believers who sacrifice their own goods in His service:

The metaphor of those who spend their wealth in the Way of Allah is that of a grain which produces seven ears; in every ear there are a hundred grains. Allah gives such multiplied increase to whoever He wills. Allah is All-Encompassing, All-Knowing. (Qur'an, 2: 261)

Many hadiths also describe how at that time there will be such a plentiful supply of goods and products that they will be able to be handed out to those who want them with no need even to count them:

During this (period), my ummah (people) would lead such a comfortable and carefree life which they never led like that. (The land) would bring forth its yield and would not hold back anything and the property at that time would be a stack. (Sunan Ibn-i Majah)

... The dwellers of the heavens and the earth will be pleased. The earth will bring forth all that grows, and the heavens will pour down rains in abundance. From all the good that Allah will bestow on the inhabitants of the earth, the living will wish that the dead would come to life again. (Mukhtasar Tazkirah Qurtubi, p. 437)

The earth would turn like the silver tray growing vegetation... (Sunan Ibn-i Majah)

When Qur'anic morality prevails, all sections of society will enjoy an environment full of true justice, peace and security. As a result, people will turn away from falsehoods, evil, deception and sin. Hadiths speak of the days full of justice at this time in these terms:

The earth will be filled with equity and justice as it was previously filled with oppression and tyranny. (Abu Dawud)

Justice will prevail to such an extent that every possession taken by force will be returned to his owner; furthermore, some other person's thing, even if it rests within one's teeth, will be given back to its owner... Security will permeate all over Earth and even a few ladies will be able to fulfil their hajj without the company of men. (Ibn Hajar al-Haythami, Al-Qawl al-Mukhtasar, p. 23)

The Good News of the Golden Age

This age will, as revealed by the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, be a small version of paradise, a blessing from Allah to the faithful. This age, with its plenty and comforts of all kind, longed for by all Muslims, will be a wonderful reward in this world for all those following the path of Allah. It will of course be a great honor for all Muslims to spread the good news of this wonderful time.

Yet a responsibility goes hand-in-hand with that honor. Since this is the End Times, all Muslims need to have the necessary maturity and determination to wage a war of ideas in the extraordinary conditions that accompany it. The situation of suffering Muslims reminds of that fact each and every day. It is impossible to turn away when the innocent and defenseless, who have limited means at their disposal, are the targets for the bullets of wild-eyed assassins, when millions are condemned to live in hunger and poverty in refugee camps, when large numbers of Muslims are subjected to torture and ill-treatment.

It is wrong to say, "There is nothing I can do about it." It must not be forgotten that at the bottom of the wickedness in the world today lies atheism, and everybody is able to help in the war of ideas being waged

against it. Telling people of the existence of Allah, learning to fear Him, reminding people what will happen on the Day of Judgement and communicating the purpose behind our existence in this world are all important steps that can be taken to put an end to all that wickedness. If justice, cooperation, compassion, love, sacrifice and forgiveness all come to prevail in the world, then it is natural that a world full of justice, peace and security will follow. That can never come about, however, unless all people of good conscience act together.

Every effort made to help do away with the destructive effects of atheism and replace these with positive ones will at the same time help the Muslims of the present day. This struggle, based on peace, compromise and love, will spur people's consciences into action and prevent the innocent from suffering. Allah reveals the end result of such a struggle:

**Rather We hurl the truth against falsehood and it cuts right through it and it vanishes clean away!
Woe without end for you for what you portray! (Qur'an, 21: 18)**

Another important point which must be stressed is that among those countries we have been discussing that are now suffering so much, the great majority of these in the past enjoyed peace and stability under the banner of Muslim empires. Just as in the past, Muslims will play a crucial role in establishing the peace and security for which all the people of the world are longing, and the next age will be one of great enlightenment for all people.

By the will of Allah, the long-awaited spring is at hand.

APPENDIX

THE EVOLUTION MISCONCEPTION

Every detail in this universe points to a superior creation. By contrast, materialism, which seeks to deny the fact of creation in the universe, is nothing but an unscientific fallacy.

Once materialism is invalidated, all other theories based on this philosophy are rendered baseless. Foremost of them is Darwinism, that is, the theory of evolution. This theory, which argues that life originated from inanimate matter through coincidences, has been demolished with the recognition that Allah created the universe. American astrophysicist Hugh Ross explains this as follows:

Atheism, Darwinism, and virtually all the "isms" emanating from the eighteenth to the twentieth century philosophies are built upon the assumption, the incorrect assumption, that the universe is infinite. The singularity has brought us face to face with the cause – or causer – beyond/behind/before the universe and all that it contains, including life itself.⁶⁸

It is Allah Who created the universe and Who designed it down to its smallest detail. Therefore, it is impossible for the theory of evolution, which holds that living things are but products of chance, to be true.

Unsurprisingly, when we look at the theory of evolution, we see that this theory is denounced by scientific findings. The design in life is extremely complex and striking. In the inanimate world, for instance, we can explore how sensitive are the balances which atoms rest upon, and further, in the animate world, we can observe in what complex designs these atoms were brought together, and how extraordinary are the mechanisms and structures such as proteins, enzymes, and cells, which are manufactured with them.

This extraordinary design in life invalidated Darwinism at the end of the 20th century.

We have dealt with this subject in great detail in some of our other studies, and shall continue to do so. However, we think that, considering its importance, it will be helpful to make a short summary here as well.

The Scientific Collapse of Darwinism

Although a doctrine going back as far as ancient Greece, the theory of evolution was advanced extensively in the 19th century. The most important development that made the theory the top topic of the world of science was the book by Charles Darwin titled *The Origin of Species* published in 1859. In this book, Darwin denied that Allah created different living species on the earth separately. According to Darwin, all living beings had a common ancestor and they diversified over time through small changes.

Darwin's theory was not based on any concrete scientific finding; as he also accepted, it was just an "assumption." Moreover, as Darwin confessed in the long chapter of his book titled "Difficulties of the Theory," the theory was failing in the face of many critical questions.

Darwin invested all his hopes in new scientific discoveries, which he expected to solve the "Difficulties of the Theory." However, contrary to his expectations, scientific findings expanded the dimensions of these difficulties.

The defeat of Darwinism against science can be reviewed under three basic topics:

1) The theory can by no means explain how life originated on the earth.

2) There is no scientific finding showing that the "evolutionary mechanisms" proposed by the theory have any power to evolve at all.

3) The fossil record proves completely the contrary of the suggestions of the theory of evolution.

In this section, we will examine these three basic points in general outlines:

The First Insurmountable Step: The Origin of Life

The theory of evolution posits that all living species evolved from a single living cell that emerged on the primitive earth 3.8 billion years ago. How a single cell could generate millions of complex living species and, if such an evolution really occurred, why traces of it cannot be observed in the fossil record are some of the questions the theory cannot answer. However, first and foremost, of the first step of the alleged evolutionary process it has to be inquired: How did this "first cell" originate?

Since the theory of evolution denies creation and does not accept any kind of supernatural intervention, it maintains that the "first cell" originated coincidentally within the laws of nature, without any design, plan, or arrangement. According to the theory, inanimate matter must have produced a living cell as a result of coincidences. This, however, is a claim inconsistent with even the most unassailable rules of biology.

"Life Comes from Life"

In his book, Darwin never referred to the origin of life. The primitive understanding of science in his time rested on the assumption that living beings had a very simple structure. Since medieval times, spontaneous generation, the theory asserting that non-living materials came together to form living organisms, had been widely accepted. It was commonly believed that insects came into being from food leftovers, and mice from wheat. Interesting experiments were conducted to prove this theory. Some wheat was placed on a dirty piece of cloth, and it was believed that mice would originate from it after a while.

Similarly, worms developing in meat was assumed to be evidence of spontaneous generation. However, only some time later was it understood that worms did not appear on meat spontaneously, but were carried there by flies in the form of larvae, invisible to the naked eye.

Even in the period when Darwin wrote *The Origin of Species*, the belief that bacteria could come into existence from non-living matter was widely accepted in the world of science.

However, five years after the publication of Darwin's book, Louis Pasteur announced his results after long studies and experiments, which disproved spontaneous generation, a cornerstone of Darwin's theory. In his triumphal lecture at the Sorbonne in 1864, Pasteur said, "*Never will the doctrine of spontaneous generation recover from the mortal blow struck by this simple experiment.*"⁶⁹

Advocates of the theory of evolution resisted the findings of Pasteur for a long time. However, as the development of science unraveled the complex structure of the cell of a living being, the idea that life could come into being coincidentally faced an even greater impasse.

Inconclusive Efforts in the Twentieth Century

The first evolutionist who took up the subject of the origin of life in the twentieth century was the renowned Russian biologist Alexander Oparin. With various theses he advanced in the 1930's, he tried to prove that the cell of a living being could originate by coincidence. These studies, however, were doomed to failure,

and Oparin had to make the following confession: "Unfortunately, however, the problem of the origin of the cell is perhaps the most obscure point in the whole study of the evolution of organisms."⁷⁰

Evolutionist followers of Oparin tried to carry out experiments to solve the problem of the origin of life. The best known of these experiments was carried out by American chemist Stanley Miller in 1953. Combining the gases he alleged to have existed in the primordial earth's atmosphere in an experiment set-up, and adding energy to the mixture, Miller synthesized several organic molecules (amino acids) present in the structure of proteins.

Barely a few years had passed before it was revealed that this experiment, which was then presented as an important step in the name of evolution, was invalid, the atmosphere used in the experiment having been very different from real earth conditions.⁷¹

After a long silence, Miller confessed that the atmosphere medium he used was unrealistic.⁷²

All the evolutionist efforts put forth throughout the twentieth century to explain the origin of life ended with failure. The geochemist Jeffrey Bada from San Diego Scripps Institute accepts this fact in an article published in *Earth Magazine* in 1998:

Today as we leave the twentieth century, we still face the biggest unsolved problem that we had when we entered the twentieth century: How did life originate on Earth?⁷³

The Complex Structure of Life

The primary reason why the theory of evolution ended up in such a big impasse about the origin of life is that even the living organisms deemed the simplest have incredibly complex structures. The cell of a living being is more complex than all of the technological products produced by man. Today, even in the most developed laboratories of the world, a living cell cannot be produced by bringing organic chemicals together.

The conditions required for the formation of a cell are too great in quantity to be explained away by coincidences. The probability of proteins, the building blocks of cell, being synthesized coincidentally, is 1 in 10^{950} for an average protein made up of 500 amino acids. In mathematics, a probability smaller than 1 over 10^{50} is practically considered to be impossible.

The DNA molecule, which is located in the nucleus of the cell and which stores genetic information, is an incredible databank. It is calculated that if the information coded in DNA were written down, this would make a giant library consisting of 900 volumes of encyclopaedias of 500 pages each.

A very interesting dilemma emerges at this point: the DNA can only replicate with the help of some specialized proteins (enzymes). However, the synthesis of these enzymes can only be realized by the information coded in DNA. As they both depend on each other, they have to exist at the same time for replication. This brings the scenario that life originated by itself to a deadlock. Prof. Leslie Orgel, an evolutionist of repute from the University of San Diego, California, confesses this fact in the September 1994 issue of the *Scientific American* magazine:

It is extremely improbable that proteins and nucleic acids, both of which are structurally complex, arose spontaneously in the same place at the same time. Yet it also seems impossible to have one without the other. And so, at first glance, one might have to conclude that life could never, in fact, have originated by chemical means.⁷⁴

No doubt, if it is impossible for life to have originated from natural causes, then it has to be accepted that life was "created" in a supernatural way. This fact explicitly invalidates the theory of evolution, whose main purpose is to deny creation.

Imaginary Mechanisms of Evolution

The second important point that negates Darwin's theory is that both concepts put forward by the theory as "evolutionary mechanisms" were understood to have, in reality, no evolutionary power.

Darwin based his evolution allegation entirely on the mechanism of "natural selection". The importance he placed on this mechanism was evident in the name of his book: *The Origin of Species, By Means Of Natural Selection...*

Natural selection holds that those living things that are stronger and more suited to the natural conditions of their habitats will survive in the struggle for life. For example, in a deer herd under the threat of attack by wild animals, those that can run faster will survive. Therefore, the deer herd will be comprised of faster and stronger individuals. However, unquestionably, this mechanism will not cause deer to evolve and transform themselves into another living species, for instance, horses.

Therefore, the mechanism of natural selection has no evolutionary power. Darwin was also aware of this fact and had to state this in his book *The Origin of Species*:

Natural selection can do nothing until favourable individual differences or variations occur.⁷⁵

Lamarck's Impact

So, how could these "favourable variations" occur? Darwin tried to answer this question from the standpoint of the primitive understanding of science in his age. According to the French biologist Lamarck, who lived before Darwin, living creatures passed on the traits they acquired during their lifetime to the next generation and these traits, accumulating from one generation to another, caused new species to be formed. For instance, according to Lamarck, giraffes evolved from antelopes; as they struggled to eat the leaves of high trees, their necks were extended from generation to generation.

Darwin also gave similar examples, and in his book *The Origin of Species*, for instance, said that some bears going into water to find food transformed themselves into whales over time.⁷⁶

However, the laws of inheritance discovered by Mendel and verified by the science of genetics that flourished in the 20th century, utterly demolished the legend that acquired traits were passed on to subsequent generations. Thus, natural selection fell out of favour as an evolutionary mechanism.

Neo-Darwinism and Mutations

In order to find a solution, Darwinists advanced the "Modern Synthetic Theory", or as it is more commonly known, Neo-Darwinism, at the end of the 1930's. Neo-Darwinism added mutations, which are distortions formed in the genes of living beings because of external factors such as radiation or replication errors, as the "cause of favourable variations" in addition to natural mutation.

Today, the model that stands for evolution in the world is Neo-Darwinism. The theory maintains that millions of living beings present on the earth formed as a result of a process whereby numerous complex organs of these organisms such as the ears, eyes, lungs, and wings, underwent "mutations," that is, genetic disorders.

Yet, there is an outright scientific fact that totally undermines this theory: Mutations do not cause living beings to develop; on the contrary, they always cause harm to them.

The reason for this is very simple: the DNA has a very complex structure and random effects can only cause harm to it. American geneticist B.G. Ranganathan explains this as follows:

First, genuine mutations are very rare in nature. Secondly, most mutations are harmful since they are random, rather than orderly changes in the structure of genes; any random change in a highly ordered system will be for the worse, not for the better. For example, if an earthquake were to shake a highly ordered structure such as a building, there would be a random change in the framework of the building which, in all probability, would not be an improvement.⁷⁷

Not surprisingly, no mutation example, which is useful, that is, which is observed to develop the genetic code, has been observed so far. All mutations have proved to be harmful. It was understood that mutation, which is presented as an "evolutionary mechanism," is actually a genetic occurrence that harms living beings, and leaves them disabled. (The most common effect of mutation on human beings is cancer). No doubt, a destructive mechanism cannot be an "evolutionary mechanism." Natural selection, on the other hand, "can do nothing by itself" as Darwin also accepted. This fact shows us that there is no "evolutionary mechanism" in nature. Since no evolutionary mechanism exists, neither could any imaginary process called evolution have taken place.

The Fossil Record: No Sign of Intermediate Forms

The clearest evidence that the scenario suggested by the theory of evolution did not take place is the fossil record.

According to the theory of evolution, every living species has sprung from a predecessor. A previously existing species turned into something else in time and all species have come into being in this way. According to the theory, this transformation proceeds gradually over millions of years.

Had this been the case, then numerous intermediary species should have existed and lived within this long transformation period.

For instance, some half-fish/half-reptiles should have lived in the past which had acquired some reptilian traits in addition to the fish traits they already had. Or there should have existed some reptile-birds, which acquired some bird traits in addition to the reptilian traits they already had. Since these would be in a transitional phase, they should be disabled, defective, crippled living beings. Evolutionists refer to these imaginary creatures, which they believe to have lived in the past, as "transitional forms."

If such animals had really existed, there should be millions and even billions of them in number and variety. More importantly, the remains of these strange creatures should be present in the fossil record. In *The Origin of Species*, Darwin explained:

If my theory be true, numberless intermediate varieties, linking most closely all of the species of the same group together must assuredly have existed... Consequently, evidence of their former existence could be found only amongst fossil remains.⁷⁸

Darwin's Hopes Shattered

However, although evolutionists have been making strenuous efforts to find fossils since the middle of the 19th century all over the world, no transitional forms have yet been uncovered. All the fossils unearthed in excavations showed that, contrary to the expectations of evolutionists, life appeared on earth all of a sudden and fully-formed.

A famous British paleontologist, Derek V. Ager, admits this fact, even though he is an evolutionist:

The point emerges that if we examine the fossil record in detail, whether at the level of orders or of species, we find - over and over again - not gradual evolution, but the sudden explosion of one group at the expense of another.⁷⁹

This means that in the fossil record, all living species suddenly emerge as fully formed, without any intermediate forms in between. This is just the opposite of Darwin's assumptions. Also, it is very strong evidence that living beings are created. The only explanation of a living species emerging suddenly and complete in every detail without any evolutionary ancestor can be that this species was created. This fact is admitted also by the widely known evolutionist biologist Douglas Futuyma:

Creation and evolution, between them, exhaust the possible explanations for the origin of living things. Organisms either appeared on the earth fully developed or they did not. If they did not, they must have developed from pre-existing species by some process of modification. If they did appear in a fully developed state, they must indeed have been created by some omnipotent intelligence.⁸⁰

Fossils show that living beings emerged fully developed and in a perfect state on the earth. That means that "the origin of species" is, contrary to Darwin's supposition, not evolution but creation.

The Tale of Human Evolution

The subject most often brought up by the advocates of the theory of evolution is the subject of the origin of man. The Darwinist claim holds that the modern men of today evolved from some kind of ape-like creatures. During this alleged evolutionary process, which is supposed to have started 4-5 million years ago, it is claimed that there existed some "transitional forms" between modern man and his ancestors. According to this completely imaginary scenario, four basic "categories" are listed:

1. Australopithecus
2. Homo habilis
3. Homo erectus
4. Homo sapiens

Evolutionists call the so-called first ape-like ancestors of men "*Australopithecus*" which means "South African ape." These living beings are actually nothing but an old ape species that has become extinct. Extensive research done on various Australopithecus specimens by two world famous anatomists from England and the USA, namely, Lord Solly Zuckerman and Prof. Charles Oxnard, has shown that these belonged to an ordinary ape species that became extinct and bore no resemblance to humans.⁸¹

Evolutionists classify the next stage of human evolution as "homo," that is "man." According to the evolutionist claim, the living beings in the Homo series are more developed than Australopithecus. Evolutionists devise a fanciful evolution scheme by arranging different fossils of these creatures in a particular order. This scheme is imaginary because it has never been proved that there is an evolutionary relation between these different classes. Ernst Mayr, one of the most important proponents of the theory of evolution in the

twentieth century, contends in his book *One Long Argument* that "particularly historical [puzzles] such as the origin of life or of *Homo sapiens*, are extremely difficult and may even resist a final, satisfying explanation."⁸²

By outlining the link chain as "*Australopithecus* > *Homo habilis* > *Homo erectus* > *Homo sapiens*," evolutionists imply that each of these species is one another's ancestor. However, recent findings of paleoanthropologists have revealed that *Australopithecus*, *Homo habilis* and *Homo erectus* lived at different parts of the world at the same time.⁸³

Moreover, a certain segment of humans classified as *Homo erectus* have lived up until very modern times. *Homo sapiens neanderthalensis* and *Homo sapiens sapiens* (modern man) co-existed in the same region.⁸⁴

This situation apparently indicates the invalidity of the claim that they are ancestors of one another. A paleontologist from Harvard University, Stephen Jay Gould, explains this deadlock of the theory of evolution although he is an evolutionist himself:

What has become of our ladder if there are three coexisting lineages of hominids (*A. africanus*, the robust australopithecines, and *H. habilis*), none clearly derived from another? Moreover, none of the three display any evolutionary trends during their tenure on earth.⁸⁵

Put briefly, the scenario of human evolution, which is sought to be upheld with the help of various drawings of some "half ape, half human" creatures appearing in the media and course books, that is, frankly, by means of propaganda, is nothing but a tale with no scientific ground.

Lord Solly Zuckerman, one of the most famous and respected scientists in the U.K., who carried out research on this subject for years, and particularly studied *Australopithecus* fossils for 15 years, finally concluded, despite being an evolutionist himself, that there is, in fact, no such family tree branching out from ape-like creatures to man.

Zuckerman also made an interesting "spectrum of science." He formed a spectrum of sciences ranging from those he considered scientific to those he considered unscientific. According to Zuckerman's spectrum, the most "scientific" – that is, depending on concrete data – fields of science are chemistry and physics. After them come the biological sciences and then the social sciences. At the far end of the spectrum, which is the part considered to be most "unscientific," are "extra-sensory perception" – concepts such as telepathy and sixth sense – and finally "human evolution." Zuckerman explains his reasoning:

We then move right off the register of objective truth into those fields of presumed biological science, like extrasensory perception or the interpretation of man's fossil history, where to the faithful [evolutionist] anything is possible - and where the ardent believer [in evolution] is sometimes able to believe several contradictory things at the same time.⁸⁶

The tale of human evolution boils down to nothing but the prejudiced interpretations of some fossils unearthed by certain people, who blindly adhere to their theory.

Technology In The Eye and The Ear

Another subject that remains unanswered by evolutionary theory is the excellent quality of perception in the eye and the ear.

Before passing on to the subject of the eye, let us briefly answer the question of "how we see". Light rays coming from an object fall oppositely on the retina of the eye. Here, these light rays are transmitted into electric signals by cells and they reach a tiny spot at the back of the brain called the centre of vision. These electric

signals are perceived in this centre of the brain as an image after a series of processes. With this technical background, let us do some thinking.

The brain is insulated from light. That means that the inside of the brain is solid dark, and light does not reach the location where the brain is situated. The place called the centre of vision is a solid dark place where no light ever reaches; it may even be the darkest place you have ever known. However, you observe a luminous, bright world in this pitch darkness.

The image formed in the eye is so sharp and distinct that even the technology of the 20th century has not been able to attain it. For instance, look at the book you read, your hands with which you hold it, then lift your head and look around you. Have you ever seen such a sharp and distinct image as this one at any other place? Even the most developed television screen produced by the greatest television producer in the world cannot provide such a sharp image for you. This is a three-dimensional, colored, and extremely sharp image. For more than 100 years, thousands of engineers have been trying to achieve this sharpness. Factories, huge premises were established, much research has been done, plans and designs have been made for this purpose. Again, look at a TV screen and the book you hold in your hands. You will see that there is a big difference in sharpness and distinction. Moreover, the TV screen shows you a two-dimensional image, whereas with your eyes, you watch a three-dimensional perspective having depth.

For many years, tens of thousands of engineers have tried to make a three-dimensional TV, and reach the vision quality of the eye. Yes, they have made a three-dimensional television system but it is not possible to watch it without putting on glasses; moreover, it is only an artificial three-dimension. The background is more blurred, the foreground appears like a paper setting. Never has it been possible to produce a sharp and distinct vision like that of the eye. In both the camera and the television, there is a loss of image quality.

Evolutionists claim that the mechanism producing this sharp and distinct image has been formed by chance. Now, if somebody told you that the television in your room was formed as a result of chance, that all its atoms just happened to come together and make up this device that produces an image, what would you think? How can atoms do what thousands of people cannot?

If a device producing a more primitive image than the eye could not have been formed by chance, then it is very evident that the eye and the image seen by the eye could not have been formed by chance. The same situation applies to the ear. The outer ear picks up the available sounds by the auricle and directs them to the middle ear; the middle ear transmits the sound vibrations by intensifying them; the inner ear sends these vibrations to the brain by translating them into electric signals. Just as with the eye, the act of hearing finalises in the centre of hearing in the brain.

The situation in the eye is also true for the ear. That is, the brain is insulated from sound just like it is from light: it does not let any sound in. Therefore, no matter how noisy is the outside, the inside of the brain is completely silent. Nevertheless, the sharpest sounds are perceived in the brain. In your brain, which is insulated from sound, you listen to the symphonies of an orchestra, and hear all the noises in a crowded place. However, if the sound level in your brain was measured by a precise device at that moment, it would be seen that a complete silence is prevailing there.

As is the case with imagery, decades of effort have been spent in trying to generate and reproduce sound that is faithful to the original. The results of these efforts are sound recorders, high-fidelity systems, and systems for sensing sound. Despite all this technology and the thousands of engineers and experts who have been

working on this endeavour, no sound has yet been obtained that has the same sharpness and clarity as the sound perceived by the ear. Think of the highest-quality HI-FI systems produced by the biggest company in the music industry. Even in these devices, when sound is recorded some of it is lost; or when you turn on a HI-FI you always hear a hissing sound before the music starts. However, the sounds that are the products of the technology of the human body are extremely sharp and clear. A human ear never perceives a sound accompanied by a hissing sound or with atmospherics as does HI-FI; it perceives sound exactly as it is, sharp and clear. This is the way it has been since the creation of man.

So far, no visual or recording apparatus produced by man has been as sensitive and successful in perceiving sensory data as are the eye and the ear.

However, as far as seeing and hearing are concerned, a far greater fact lies beyond all this.

To Whom Does the Consciousness that Sees and Hears Within the Brain Belong?

Who is it that watches an alluring world in its brain, listens to symphonies and the twittering of birds, and smells the rose?

The stimulations coming from the eyes, ears, and nose of a human being travel to the brain as electro-chemical nervous impulses. In biology, physiology, and biochemistry books, you can find many details about how this image forms in the brain. However, you will never come across the most important fact about this subject: Who is it that perceives these electro-chemical nervous impulses as images, sounds, odours and sensory events in the brain? There is a consciousness in the brain that perceives all this without feeling any need for eye, ear, and nose. To whom does this consciousness belong? There is no doubt that this consciousness does not belong to the nerves, the fat layer and neurons comprising the brain. This is why Darwinist-materialists, who believe that everything is comprised of matter, cannot give any answer to these questions.

For this consciousness is the spirit Allah created. The spirit needs neither the eye to watch the images, nor the ear to hear the sounds. Furthermore, nor does it need the brain to think.

Everyone who reads this explicit and scientific fact should ponder on Almighty Allah, should fear Him and seek refuge in Him, He Who squeezes the entire universe in a pitch-dark place of a few cubic centimetres in a three-dimensional, colored, shadowy, and luminous form.

A Materialist Faith

The information we have presented so far shows us that the theory of evolution is a claim evidently at variance with scientific findings. The theory's claim on the origin of life is inconsistent with science, the evolutionary mechanisms it proposes have no evolutionary power, and fossils demonstrate that the intermediate forms required by the theory never existed. So, it certainly follows that the theory of evolution should be pushed aside as an unscientific idea. This is how many ideas such as the earth-centered universe model have been taken out of the agenda of science throughout history.

However, the theory of evolution is pressingly kept on the agenda of science. Some people even try to represent criticisms directed against the theory as an "attack on science." Why?

The reason is that the theory of evolution is an indispensable dogmatic belief for some circles. These circles are blindly devoted to materialist philosophy and adopt Darwinism because it is the only materialist explanation that can be put forward for the workings of nature.

Interestingly enough, they also confess this fact from time to time. A well known geneticist and an outspoken evolutionist, Richard C. Lewontin from Harvard University, confesses that he is "first and foremost a materialist and then a scientist":

It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, so we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door. ⁸⁷

These are explicit statements that Darwinism is a dogma kept alive just for the sake of adherence to the materialist philosophy. This dogma maintains that there is no being save matter. Therefore, it argues that inanimate, unconscious matter created life. It insists that millions of different living species; for instance, birds, fish, giraffes, tigers, insects, trees, flowers, whales and human beings originated as a result of the interactions between matter such as the pouring rain, the lightning flash, etc., out of inanimate matter. This is a precept contrary both to reason and science. Yet Darwinists continue to defend it just so as "not to allow a Divine Foot in the door."

Anyone who does not look at the origin of living beings with a materialist prejudice will see this evident truth: All living beings are works of a Creator, Who is All-Powerful, All-Wise and All-Knowing. This Creator is Allah, Who created the whole universe from non-existence, designed it in the most perfect form, and fashioned all living beings.

The Theory of Evolution is the Most Potent Spell in the World

It needs to be made clear that anyone free of prejudice and the influence of any particular ideology, who uses only his reason and logic, will clearly understand that belief in the theory of evolution, which brings to mind the superstitions of societies with no knowledge of science or civilization, is quite impossible.

As has been explained above, those who believe in the theory of evolution think that a few atoms and molecules thrown into a huge vat could produce thinking, reasoning professors, university students, scientists such as Einstein and Galileo, artists such as Humphrey Bogart, Frank Sinatra and Pavarotti, as well as antelopes, lemon trees and carnations. Moreover, the scientists and professors who believe in this nonsense are educated people. That is why it is quite justifiable to speak of the theory of evolution as "the most potent spell in history." Never before has any other belief or idea so taken away peoples' powers of reason, refused to allow them to think intelligently and logically and hidden the truth from them as if they had been blindfolded. This is an even worse and unbelievable blindness than the Egyptians worshipping the Sun God Ra, totem worship in some parts of Africa, the people of Saba worshipping the Sun, the tribe of the Prophet Ibrahim worshipping idols they had made with their own hands or the people of the Prophet Musa worshipping the Golden Calf.

In fact, this situation is a lack of reason Allah pointed to in the Qur'an. He reveals in many verses that some peoples' minds will be closed and that they will be powerless to see the truth. Some of these verses are as follows:

As for those who disbelieve, it makes no difference to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe. Allah has sealed up their hearts and hearing and over their eyes is a blindfold. They will have a terrible punishment. (Qur'an, 2: 6-7)

...They have hearts they do not understand with. They have eyes they do not see with. They have ears they do not hear with. Such people are like cattle. No, they are even further astray! They are the unaware. (Qur'an, 7: 179)

Even if We opened up to them a door into heaven, and they spent the day ascending through it, they would only say, "Our eyesight is befuddled! Or rather we have been put under a spell!" (Qur'an, 15: 14-15)

Words cannot express just how astonishing it is that this spell should hold such a wide community in thrall, keep people from the truth, and not be broken for 150 years. It is understandable that one or a few people might believe in impossible scenarios and claims full of stupidity and illogicality. However, "magic" is the only possible explanation for people from all over the world believing that unconscious and lifeless atoms suddenly decided to come together and form a universe that functions with a flawless system of organization, discipline, reason and consciousness, the planet Earth with all its features so perfectly suited to life, and living things full of countless complex systems.

In fact, Allah reveals in the Qur'an in the incident of the Prophet Musa and Pharaoh that some people who support atheistic philosophies actually influence others by magic. When Pharaoh was told about the true religion, he told the Prophet Musa to meet with his own magicians. When the Prophet Musa did so, he told them to demonstrate their abilities first. The verses continue:

He said, "You throw." And when they threw, they cast a spell on the people's eyes and caused them to feel great fear of them. They produced an extremely powerful magic. (Qur'an, 7: 116)

As we have seen, Pharaoh's magicians were able to deceive everyone, apart from the Prophet Musa and those who believed in him. However, the evidence put forward by the Prophet Musa broke that spell, or "swallowed up what they had forged" as the verse puts it.

We revealed to Musa, "Throw down your staff." And it immediately swallowed up what they had forged. So the Truth took place and what they did was shown to be false. (Qur'an, 7: 117-119)

As we can see from that verse, when it was realized that what these people who had first cast a spell over others had done was just an illusion, they lost all credibility. In the present day too, unless those who under the influence of a similar spell believe in these ridiculous claims under their scientific disguise and spend their lives

defending them abandon them, they too will be humiliated when the full truth emerges and the spell is broken. In fact, world-renowned British writer and philosopher Malcolm Muggeridge also stated this:

I myself am convinced that the theory of evolution, especially the extent to which it's been applied, will be one of the great jokes in the history books in the future. Posterity will marvel that so very flimsy and dubious an hypothesis could be accepted with the incredible credulity that it has.⁸⁸

That future is not far off: On the contrary, people will soon see that "chance" is not a god, and will look back on the theory of evolution as the worst deceit and the most terrible spell in the world. That spell is already rapidly beginning to be lifted from the shoulders of people all over the world. Many people who see the true face of the theory of evolution are wondering with amazement how it was that they were ever taken in by it.

**They said "Glory be to You!
We have no knowledge except what
You have taught us.
You are the All-Knowing,
the All-Wise."
(Qur'an, 2: 32)**

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