

# Is Islam Misrepresented?

By: Amil Imani

Decades ago Marshall McLuhan observed, "The medium is the message." As the print and electronic media penetrate more and more every aspect of life, their influence increases greatly in shaping views and behavior of the public. The power of the media is a mixed blessing. On one hand it can serve to expose injustices, wrongdoings, and flaws. On the other it is able to propagate misinformation and outright disinformation.

Manipulation and control of the media is of critical importance to the rule of totalitarian states. Free societies, although less subject to laundered information, are still at considerable risk of being selectively informed or misinformed outright. The public can be deceived more easily by the overlords of the media when political correctness is used as subterfuge for promotion of certain ideas.

A case in point is the media's portrayal of Islam, articulated by politicians and pundits, the talking heads on television and radio, as well as the analysts who write for newspapers and magazines. Time and again we hear and read that Islam is religion of peace, in spite of the fact that Islam has been a religion of violence from its inception to the present. This mantra, "Islam is religion of peace", is repeated so often that it has become an undisputable statement of fact in the minds of many.

Even President George W. Bush on several occasions has repeated the mantra and attributed the horrific violence committed under the banner of Islam to a small band of extremists. The President's assertion is either based on ignorance of the facts about Islam or his attempt at political correctness. Perhaps the President's reticence to speak on the true nature of Islam was due to his desire to avoid inflaming the already charged feelings of many about Islam. In any event, truth is sacrificed and the public continues to cling to the false notion that Islam is a peaceful religion. People who dare to disclose the true nature of Islam run the risk of being castigated as bigots and hatemongers.

Even a cursory examination of Islam's history and Islamic texts conclusively proves the exact opposite of peacefulness. Islam was and continues to be a movement of unbridled violence.

The Arabs who sallied out of the Arabian deserts did not fan out to the outside world with the Quran in one hand and flowers in the other, preaching love and peace from street corner to street corner, thereby capturing the hearts and minds of the people. Islam was forced on every people at the point of the sword and the imposition of backbreaking jazyyeh (special taxes) levied on those who were spared death and allowed to retain their religious beliefs. In spite of paying heavy Jazyyeh, the non-Muslims were treated, at best, as second class citizens in their own homelands.

The abominable persecution of non-Muslims in Islamic countries is a standard operating procedure. In many Islamic countries non-Muslim marriages are not recognized as legal

unions and the children of the couples are stigmatized as bastards. Never mind Saudi Arabia, the cradle of barbarism, even Egypt, the more civilized Islamic country and recipient of billions of dollars in U.S. aid, treats non-Muslims as second class citizens and deprives them of their legitimate human rights.

The pundits, the analysts and the politicians are doing a great disservice to the public, each segment for its own expedient reasons, by parroting the mantra regarding the peaceful nature of Islam. As a matter of fact, the so called small band of Islamic extremists is the true face of Islam. Admittedly, from time to time and place to place, Muslims have shown a degree of tolerance for non-Muslims. This tolerance dates back to the very early years of Muhammad himself. Early on Muhammad was meek and proclaimed, "For you, your religion, and for me my religion". This assertion lasted but a few years until Muhammad's movement gathered strength and Islam became the only alternative to death or heavy taxation. The imposition of Jazyyeh was a clever ploy for filling the Islamic coffer to support its armies and to finance its further conquests.

A longstanding Islamic practice is to be meek while weak and assume despotic intolerant power as it gains strength. Recent migration of Muslims to non-Islamic lands began as a seemingly harmless, even useful, trickle of cheap needed labor. Before long, greater and greater numbers of Muslims deluged the new territories and as they gained in numbers -- by high birth rate as well as new arrivals -- Muslims began reverting to their intolerant ways by, for instance, demanding legal status for shariah (Islamic laws). The type of draconian laws that for most parts resemble those of humanity's barbaric past.

Islam is indeed misrepresented. Islam is not misrepresented by its "detractors". It is misrepresented by Islamic mercenaries: organizations and individuals generously funded by states as well as wealthy believers who are making billions of dollars pumping and selling oil at astronomical prices. Prestigious universities in the West, always looking for handouts, are tripping over one another to establish Islamic studies programs staffed by professors who sing the praise of Islam. Newspapers are routinely intimidated by Islamic associations if they dare to print the truth about Islam. Legions of lawyers, both Muslims as well as hired guns, are on the look out to intimidate and silence any voice speaking the truth about Islam. The media that fall in line may receive generous advertising and other incentives from Islamic lobbyists.

Hence, it is a fact that Islam is misrepresented. It is misrepresented very effectively by non-Muslim individuals and institutions who are generously rewarded by the modern day Islamic conquerors. This time around the Muslims are using the immense petrodollar they extract from the addicted non-Muslims. The sword is temporarily replaced by just as deadly a weapon -- the petrodollar. Before long, the Muslims aim to add a more deadly modern version of the sword -- the Islamic bomb. With the bomb in one hand and the other hand on the oil spigot, the non-Muslim world will be brought to its knees by the religion of peace and brotherhood.

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