

Can We Win This War?

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PREFACE

Before September 11, 2001, most Americans, if imagining a future war starting in Afghanistan, would have been satisfied to rephrase the question "Can we win this war?" to read "Can the economically, technically, and militarily strongest nation in the world be defeated by a desperately poor country occupied by miscellaneous Islamic tribes?"

After September 11, a well informed American might have tried to express his uneasiness in this way: "Can the USA, as a religiously and culturally mixed nation whose borders are porous to people and propaganda, and which is so technologically and materially advanced as to be vulnerable to disruption by one or several persons acting together, be defeated by a disaffected minority of the world's largest religion, a religion most of whose members are materially impoverished and so intensely oriented to an exclusive spiritual realm that they place little value on human life?"

What War Are We Talking About?

The question posed in the title needs to be clarified. Are we talking about a war with one or more Muslim countries, a war between Christianity and Islam, a war between haves and have-nots, a war about the enslavement of women, a war between good and evil, war arising from racial genetic differences, or a war against a group of power-hungry individuals?

The politically correct answer would seem to be that most Muslims are morally good people and we are not at war with them. We are at war with one or more coalitions of terrorists drawn from a number of Islamic countries. Their objectives are geo-political, but they present their goals as religious. This coalition proved its evil character by the actions it ordered taken on September 11, 2001.

Those actions were taken, not by individuals of a particular country or religious sect or socioeconomic status or level of education, but rather by socially diversified individuals who came originally from several countries and were motivated in all cases, so far as we know, by their devotion to Islam. How those individuals were indoctrinated, and what their relation is, or was, to the leaders who authorized the attack is unknown. What seems to be missing is an understanding of the Islamic religion and of how it can elicit what we regard as evil actions from its otherwise benign adherents.

The Scope of this essay

In this essay I shall describe some threads of the very complex problem of religious terrorism, allowing other persons with greater experience to weave them into a whole cloth.

As a non-Muslim discussing Islam, I am dependent upon the written opinions of others. Out of deference to the 1.3 billion Muslims in the world today, I shall adopt an analytical but non-judgmental attitude toward what I have learned from the literature of Islam. I shall begin by presenting, as background, my understanding of majority religion in the USA today.

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I. AMERICAN RELIGION

1. A Materialist Society

The United States has been called "religiously mixed." In addition to ordinary religions, we have two distinct kinds of atheism, "intellectual atheism" and "business atheism," as will be explained later.

The most important fact omitted from the description of the U.S. as "religiously mixed" is that we are a materialist society, not in the popular sense that we overvalue material things, but in the technical sense that our leaders have adopted and passed on to us the philosophy of materialism. America's practice of materialism is a major contribution to anti-American feeling in other countries and therefore must be considered in developing a defensive posture against religious terrorists.

Materialism is a simple philosophy. It has two principles.

Principle No. 1: There is no reality except that which can be defined in terms of the physical concepts of space and time.

Principle No. 2: As individuals, we have no obligations to other persons except for those obligations that we accept for our own pleasure. This second principle follows from the first.

As explained in my essay, "The Sovereignty of Science," materialism began in the 18th century. The leading scientists of that time suffered cognitive dissonance between the beliefs of the many religious sects which then existed and their own scientific discoveries. They relieved their discomfort by agreeing among themselves that religion was unnecessary. Unfortunately, the amorality of materialism was so attractive to lesser intellectuals, who lacked the status to question the leaders, and to business men, who could use materialism to justify exorbitant profits, that it has become a defining feature of Western culture.

2. America's Religious Beliefs

As stated above, the first principle of materialism is that there is no reality except that which can be defined in terms of the physical concepts of space and time. Not all of us accept this limited view of existence. Most of us believe that there is more to life than our bodies and that some part of us exists as an independent entity in a spiritual realm of some kind. This does not necessarily mean that there is a "God" in the popular sense of that word or that there is life after death. Most agnostics are prepared to entertain the existence of a Supreme Being as a possibility, although they do not know what its nature might be.

It is my impression that most Americans accept the reality of good and evil as distinct concepts and acknowledge an innate obligation to be good. They define being good as being kind and helpful to others where it will make a difference. They assign an equal spiritual value to male and female. They respect the efforts of people throughout the world to find a spiritual meaning in life. I believe that in this sense most Americans are morally good people. This definition of "good" follows from the fact that a civilization requires the cooperation of humans with many kinds and levels of ability, a fact that Materialism evilly ignores.

I suspect that most highly educated Americans have abandoned all specific religious beliefs. If they attend a church, they do so for spiritual or social satisfaction and not because they literally accept its doctrines. In more controversial language, although nonbelievers may mouth the words dictated by the custom of their church, it is not the meaning of the words but the ritual of the congregation of people that brings satisfaction to them. It is the spiritual and not the dogmatic nature of gathered prayer that brings a

measure of contentment to participants. I suggest that this is true of all persons who attend religious services, regardless of their varying degrees of literal belief in the language of the service. What I am proposing here in its more extreme implications will require empirical justification. That is a task for the future.

3. America's Religious Intolerance

The following news item shows the nature of intolerance among poorly educated American church-goers and is offered for comparison with Muslim belief.

The *Washington Post* (Sunday, 2 December 2001, Page A9) reported that six pastors from the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, representing 2.6 million Lutherans, had filed a petition calling for the expulsion of Rev. David Benke from the church because he had participated in a ceremony at a sports stadium with other religious and civic leaders mourning the September 11 calamity.

The 10-page petition against Benke called his participation "an egregious offense against the love of Christ" that had given "the impression that the Christian faith is just one more among many by which people may pray to God."

Leaders of this Lutheran Synod believe that they must not pray in public with anyone of another faith, not even with Lutherans of other denominations who may not interpret the Scriptures and understand God in precisely the same way that they do.

This isolation of these Lutheran Protestants accommodates the perceived religious needs of both the minister and his followers without impinging upon their neighbors. Absent is any public ritual, distinctive dress, or cross-cultural proselytizing which are found in Muslim congregations. Protestant Americans, for the most part, begin with a non-authoritarian Christian belief which they modify to meet their individual requirements. This keeps peace between denominations while the rest of us search for religious truth as it may be revealed in the future.

II. ISLAM THEN

4. The Rise of the Arabian Empire

Since the dawn of history, dozens of distinguishable empires have come and gone, leaving, in most cases, an indelible imprint upon the present. Until now, it has escaped attention that the religion of one of these past civilizations constitutes a threat to the survival of Western civilization.

The Arabian Empire originated in the Seventh Century AD in the Arabian cities of Mecca and Medina. At its maximum westward expansion a century later, the Arabian Empire had captured nearly all of Spain and had temporarily entered France after conquering North Africa.

What is remarkable, and what I shall explain in this essay, is how the features of the original Islamic religion that made the Arabian Empire's rise possible, remain today as a threat to other religions.

5. The Koran as the Basis of Islam

The religion of Islam is defined by its holy book, the Koran. Because the Koran suffered many "abrogations," "recessions," and "commentaries," while Islam was rising to power, the Koran is not a document uniquely composed by Mohammed. It is a document whose present wording was fixed by political compromise among his followers some years after his death. Its meaning in many passages remains uncertain, despite the clarifying commentaries offered before and since the final wording was frozen. Strangely enough in view of its dubious origin, the finally approved Arabic wording of the Koran is accepted as exact, unchangeable, absolute truth by today's three dominant Muslim sects.

English translations of the Koran reveal the Koran as a mixed collection of specific commands and pious obscurities. This is an impression that persists whether one goes to a translation by a convert to Islam (Marmaduke Pickthall, ed. by Watt) or to a translation by a non-Muslim scholar (J.M. Rodwell, ed. by Jones). From a comparison of these two versions one must conclude that, as written 15 centuries ago, Arabic was an imprecise language.

6. Why is Islam Attractive to the Poor?

Why is the religion of Islam attractive to the poor? The answer seems to be that this religion promises eternal reward or punishment, which are described in easily understood terms of the physical pleasures and pain experienced on this earth. In return for admission to heaven, all that is required is total belief in what the Koran says and obedience to the rules of Islam, plus the recitation of prayers at five scheduled times throughout the day, plus a month of daytime fasting each year, along with a pro forma repentance for sins, and a once-in-a-lifetime pilgrimage to Mecca, if one can afford it.

7. A Biography of Mohammed

The Islamic historical material of this essay was abstracted largely from H. G. Well's Outline of History (1940 edition); Lynn Thorndike's A Short History of Civilization (1936 edition); and The Encyclopedia Britannica, 14th (1929) edition, Vol. 4, under "Caliphate", pp 600-611, and Vol. 15, under "Mohammed", pp 646-658.

Mohammed was born in Mecca in poverty. At age 25 he married a wealthy widow, who protected him politically until she died 25 years later.

At age 40, Mohammed began quietly preaching monotheism. Up to that time he had been, to all appearances, an undistinguished man-about-town. Mecca was a trading and pilgrimage oasis, unified by the presence of the Kaaba building, the cornerstone of which is a meteorite which ruled over the 300 tribal gods of Arabia.

As the opposition of the town fathers grew against his monotheistic heresy, Mohammed pondered an offer from the Jews and Christians of Medina, 200 miles to the north, to preach monotheism there. After preliminary negotiations, he dispersed his few followers geographically for their safety. Finally, to escape immediate assassination for being a threat to the economy of Mecca, he fled at night with one remaining friend to Medina, arriving on September 20, 622 AD.

This flight, known as the Hegira, marks the beginning of the Muslim calendar. Thenceforth, all years were counted from 622 AD. The abbreviation AD is no longer used. Instead, for AD, Muslims use the abbreviation CE, standing for Common Era.

At Medina, Mohammed gathered additional Bedouin converts, with whose help he raided the caravans of Mecca. After various retaliatory skirmishes, the Meccans retreated in 627 AD in what became a decisive defeat. At that point, as a celebratory gesture to satisfy his troops' needs, Mohammed ordered the murder of 900 Jews at a settlement near Medina and enslaved their wives (Some of the Jews and Christians at Medina had dared to ridicule Mohammed's version of monotheism.) After negotiation, Mohammed signed a truce with Mecca, under which Mecca became, and has remained, the pilgrimage center for Mohammed's monotheism, while Medina remained its organizational center.

From Medina, Mohammed extended his power by battles, treacheries, and massacres, as was the fashion of that day, until, by the time of his death, he was the master of all Arabia.

During this period he was simultaneously married to multiple wives and enjoyed the company of other women, as explained in the Koran. One of his wives was a Jewess,

Safiyya, whom he took to his tent on the evening of the battle in which her husband had been captured and executed.

A year before his death in 632, Mohammed made his last pilgrimage to Mecca, where he gave a benevolent sermon to his people, in which, according to the tradition accepted today, he summarized all of the more kindly teachings of Islam as they might apply within a peaceful Muslim community.

8. The First Four Caliphs of Islam

The Caliphs, or political successors to Mohammed, were analogous to the Popes of Roman Catholicism. Like the early Popes, the Caliphs were a mixed lot in terms of effectiveness and morals. Only the first two who succeeded Mohammed adhered to his ambitions and carried out his plans.

The first Caliph was Abu Bekr, Mohammed's companion on his night-time flight from Mecca to Medina. In the next two years before his death in 634, he prevented a split between Mecca and Medina, beat down a Bedouin revolt against taxation, carried out a plundering raid against Syria that had been previously planned by Mohammed, and set about subjugating the world as Mohammed had planned in 628.

The second Caliph, Omar-I, was Mohammed's brother-in-law. He took charge after Bekr's death and reigned for ten years until his death in 644. With the help of brilliant generals, he conquered Syria in 636 and Persia in 637. Jerusalem surrendered without a siege in 638.

The third Caliph was Othman, a well regarded Meccan, whose interest was directed to advancing his family and Mecca rather than toward the expansion of Islam. In 656, at the age of 80, Othman was pelted with stones on the streets of Medina and then murdered in his home.

The fourth Caliph, Ali, a very ordinary man, was the nephew and son-in-law of Mohammed. Jealousies within the Mohammed harem, which had surfaced at this point, led to the schism of Islam between the Shiites and the Sunnis. Ali was murdered in 661 and the days of glory for Mohammed's dream were ended.

9. The Military Strategy of Mohammed

It is a lesson of history that, if a new religion is to spread rapidly, it must have military support. By the carnal nature of the marital discipline imposed upon all males by the Koran and by Mohammed's emphasis upon conquest as their *raison d'etre*, he ensured that Muslim men were more unified and motivated to fight than their opponents.

The military creation of the Islamic Empire was achieved, country by country, in a two-step process. The first step was to defeat a defending army, which usually consisted of mercenaries or conscripts from a decadent culture. Such armies were often easily defeated simply because their military morale was low, while Islam's was high.

Before the first step, the enemy sometimes surrendered and converted to Islam without a fight when they learned of the Muslim reputation. Or, as the second step, after defeat in battle, the enemy usually converted to Islam and become part of the Islamic army to avoid execution. The Islamic army then moved on, gaining booty and numbers as it went.

Mohammed's religious grand strategy was well suited to his ambitions in the Seventh Century. It makes no sense in the 21st Century.

10. The Early History of Islam

In the ensuing years, the lucrative political control of Islam by its Caliphs shifted from family to family and from Damascus to Baghdad, but as a religion, Islam was spiritually enfeebled. Medina and Mecca became mere centers of pilgrim devotion.

Military expansion continued, supported by organizational momentum and by the wealth obtained through conquest, but with very little dependence on the initiative of the Caliphs.

As the Arabian empire grew, many centers of science and learning arose. Brilliant contributions were made in chemistry, medicine, mathematics, metal working, agriculture, paper making, architecture, philosophy, and literature. Contributions in painting were conspicuously absent, however, because depiction of the human form is forbidden by the Koran. Students came from all over Christendom. As history is taught today in the U.S. and Europe, the technical achievements of the Arabian Empire are ignored as a basis for the rise of Western science after the Renaissance.

As the centers of intellectual excellence in the Arabian Empire grew and prospered, supported by the spoils of military conquest, there were many attempts at liberalization of the Islamic religion. None of these survived because they did not engage the interest of ordinary Muslims anywhere, or the interest of the caliphs then in power.

One Caliph of historical interest is Haroun-al-Raschid, who reigned in Baghdad. His memory is preserved in the novel, *Arabian Nights*. After his death in 809, his empire fell into civil war and confusion until the Muslim Turks poured south from Turkistan in the Eleventh Century and conquered both Persia and Asia Minor. This led to the Christian Crusades to recover Jerusalem. With time, the claims to the Caliphate multiplied and the title became meaningless.

III. ISLAM NOW

11. The Political Form of Islam Today

Now that the once widespread Arabian Empire with its magnificent intellectual achievements and many attempted religious reforms has faded into history, all that remains of Islam politically is the sexually primitive religion of the common people, as frozen in the Koran and practiced today by three major sects, Sunnis, Shiites, and Wahhabi. These sects are distributed primarily among Islamic countries and seem capable of unified action only if called to a holy war (Jihad). Those countries where Islam is the only religion seem determined to keep out all other religions.

12. Muslim Membership Requirements

With the assistance of his apostles, Mohammed created in the Seventh Century the following system of psychological involvement. To attract and hold believers, this new religion established certain belief and behavioral obligations. Because they are tied inviolably to the Koran, they have never been changed. As a Muslim today,

- One must believe that Allah is the only God and that Mohammed is His final prophet.
- One must believe that the Koran as written in Arabic contains exact, unchangeable, and absolute truth. There is only one version of the Koran, although there are differences of opinion as to its meaning, which are stoutly held among the three major sects. This claim to unity despite diversity somehow seems to lend authority to each of the sects.
- One must engage in public ritual in the form of daily prayer, praising Allah and asking forgiveness. This must be performed at fixed times while prostrated, if possible, toward Mecca. This ritual provides mutual assurance to Muslims of the importance of their mission. Public prayer operates on the psychological principle that when a brain is busy expressing one idea, other, differing thoughts cannot easily enter.

- One must wear distinctive clothing. The turban for men keeps the visual brain channel active with assurance that there are many others who agree that Muslims are doing the right thing and allows each Muslim to know who his co-religionists are.
- One must engage in public self-discipline in the form of daytime fasting from food, drink, and sexual intercourse, with prayers and alms-giving throughout a fixed month each year. This group psychotherapy allows Muslims to feel virtuous and free of guilt.
- One must make a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in a lifetime if one can afford it. This helps unify Islam as a world-wide religion and raises the individual's self esteem..
- One is encouraged to engage in proselytizing to ensure growth of the religion. This provides a service opportunity for those followers who might prefer to serve Allah by the power of persuasion rather than by force.
- One must believe that it is Islam's role, as revealed in the Koran, to conquer or convert the entire world and to exclude all non-believers by converting or killing them as soon as power to do so is attained in any country. Historically, in its military expansion, Islam bypassed strong religious centers, temporarily requiring only allegiance and a tax from them. In Muslim military conversions, "belief" was defined by enforceable behavior, i.e., by what one did and said, but not by what one thought.
- One must believe in inescapable eternal reward or punishment which will be decided on the final day of judgment, with no possibility of purgatory or limbo. This binary outcome is a powerful disciplinary device. Repeatedly, the Koran says that those who reject Islam, including all infidels, will be damned. The message of Islam is that "you are either with us or against us." There is no willingness to compromise. Islam will remain a belligerent religion until it has conquered the world. Its finality of judgment is the ultimate threat.
- One learns that Allah is "all merciful." Any sin will be forgiven if one confesses and begs forgiveness. But who can know whether a lapse in ritual will be judged to be mortal or venial? Thus, the need for last-minute forgiveness for all possible sins, ties tightly to Islam all sinners, both great and small, quite aside from the other social and psychological bonds enumerated above. The uncertainty of one's fate results in constant fear if one has an inclination to think independent thoughts.

Because of Islam's emphasis on the religious aspect of life, the daily work one is employed to do to earn a living tends to become of lesser importance than religious protocol. Since Islam offers no direct reward for diligence on the job, indolence may be a temptation for devout Muslims, and may explain, in part, its popularity among the poor.

These behavioral requirements supplement one another. Because they are public, they are also psychologically coercive. Individually, they cannot be ignored without encountering social pressure from friends and the expectation of eternal damnation. They are an inseparable package.

The fact that its membership requirements include the idea of a deity makes Islam a religion, but are its objectives "religious" as the term is used by other religions? Islam might be better described as a plan for the military discipline of its membership, rather than as a search for understanding of one's self and the universe.

13. Islam's Exclusionary Aim

Islam, by the unalterable word of the Koran, calls for the pre-emptive killing of infidels (all those with another religion) lest their beliefs seduce the Islamic faithful. Moreover, in the absence of any likely reward in this world, this poor-man's religion has promised a reward in heaven for the killing of infidels, thus leading to suicidal attacks.

As shown by the attack of September 11, 2001, some strong part of today's Islamic leadership approves the killing of individual infidels who are living peacefully in their own homeland. It is significant that, while the "loss of life" was widely regretted by Muslims who were not personally involved in that killing, the attack itself was not condemned by Muslims in general. This would suggest that the killing of infidels who are not engaged in physical attack upon, or a military invasion of, an Islamic country, but who are perceived as anti-Islamic, is still a part of popular Islamic doctrine. Among Islam's leaders, the war that was declared on September 11 is but a resumption by modern techniques of the drive to world conquest that was declared by Mohammed in the Seventh Century.

It seems unlikely that the idea of killing the infidel can be selectively eliminated as an element of the Islamic belief system, even though it is suppressed in the thinking of most Muslims where their living is comfortable, e.g. in the USA. The logical unity of the Islamic behavioral system renders it immune to piecemeal change. The rigidity of Islamic rituals and laws, as frozen in the Koran, makes them vulnerable to attack by both science and ridicule, and therefore in psychological need of the strong affirming threat of eternal damnation to ensure their acceptance. This is the key to Islam's strength.

14. Modern Professional Muslim Proselytizing

The nature of present-day orthodox Muslim professional proselytizing is illustrated by the following incident, which was reported to me by a friend whom I have known for many years. The incident took place prior to September 11, 2001.

My friend is middle-aged and the wife of a mechanical engineer. She is unusual, in that her life is largely devoted to physically caring for, and mentally comforting, persons who are less fortunate than she. She belongs to no church and has no specific religious beliefs. In this account I shall call her B.

One evening in a small hospital near Pittsburgh, B was standing by the bed of a patient, praying silently with her hands stretched over the patient. A doctor came in to check the condition of the patient. He spoke approximately as follows. "I saw you praying. Do you have a moment? I would like to talk with you if you don't mind." They stepped into the visitors' waiting room. It was late in the evening and no one was there. He asked, "What do you believe?" To which B replied.

"I don't believe in a God with a white beard. I believe that there is something more to us than a body. I do not believe in the Bible word-for-word, because it has been revised many times, but I accept it as a source of holy thoughts. I pray for guidance in what I do."

The doctor said: "It is my duty to talk with you about the prophet Mohammed. There is only one God, Allah. Mohammed is his prophet and the Koran is his holy book. Would you like to see the Koran? May I take you down to the chapel and show you the Koran?"

Being both good-natured and inveterately curious, B went along to the chapel. The doctor showed her the Koran and read to her several passages, first in Arabic and then in English. There were similarities to the Bible, upon which B commented. The doctor pointed to the east and said that one must face that way when praying. The doctor explained that if you are praying for a sick person to get well, or for any other favor, you must say a particular one-sentence prayer in Arabic five times and then state your request. He had her practice the prayer in Arabic.

My friend's proselytizing doctor gave her another doctor's name and telephone number and said she should say to him that she had been sent by the doctor to whom she was now talking. She was told that the doctor to whom she was referred would give her a copy of the Koran and be glad to answer all her questions.

The entire interview in which B had the doctor's exclusive attention in the chapel took about an hour. They amiably discussed many topics. B thanked the doctor for his

kindness. She never contacted the second doctor, for, as she explained to me, she would have been in trouble at once because she knew that Muslims demean women, and that is where she would have begun the discussion. Also, she knew she would disagree because she does not believe in eternal damnation, which, she had learned, is an article of Islamic faith.

Most Muslims come to the U.S. to escape poverty in their homeland, and they bring with them their religion. They are not likely to have technical skills, but their training in word manipulation often leads them to seek positions using memory and linguistic skill. Many end up as hospital residents where they can practice medicine depending on book learning. The pay is good, the position is respected, no previous clinical experience is required, and there are many opportunities for proselytizing. Those proselytizers who occupy professional positions are above average in intelligence and should not be confused in this respect with the typical U.S. Muslim.

Moreover, professional proselytizing, as described above, should not be confused with the more insidious and persistent proselytizing that takes place between two friends when, typically, a Muslim's conscience is bothered by believing that her Christian co-worker must go to hell despite the fact that she is a morally good person. For this situation there can be no escape if the Christian prefers her own religion.

15. The Tragedy of Islam

Being raised in an orthodox Islamic country today limits the future prospects of children. They can become Islamic priests who rule on questions not covered clearly in the Koran and on questions arising outside the Koran, or they can become docile believers, or political leaders. Their choice depends upon their intelligence and other personality traits. In many of the Islamic countries children cannot become scientists or engineers because the basics of such careers are not taught in the children's schools.

Mohammed could not have foreseen the coming of science and, with it, world overpopulation. Without science and technology, Islam remains committed to poverty and violence in those countries where Islam is the only religion. The tragic aspect of today's Islam is that, while its political leaders are intelligent and recognize terrorism as a powerful weapon that might destroy the technological West as a finely tuned economic machine, these leaders evidently do not foresee that Islam has too few technologists to maintain the technological productivity in food and everything else, to which the world is now committed for its survival because of present population density.

16. Christianity and Islam Compared

Christianity was founded by peaceful persuasion by Jesus and his disciples. (Because of his unprecedented ability to perform psychic miracles, he was regarded by himself and his disciples as the "Son of God", i.e., as having some special relation to God.) Islam, on the other hand, was founded by military conquest by Mohammed, who declared himself to be God's final prophet, with Jesus being merely a recent Jewish prophet, and all Christians being infidels who are doomed to hell unless converted to Islam.

Mohammed believed that his God was singular. Christians believe there is only one God but that he has three personalities, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. It now appears that Islam's gravest deficiency is its lack of a feminine principle, which is supplied in Christianity by the doctrine of the Trinity, with Mary as the mother of the Son of God. Without feminine love, Islam remains a religion fostering male aggression and military conquest as planned by Mohammed.

Christ's Gospels are four differing accounts of His life, written by His apostles from memory some years after His death. On the other hand, the Koran was sent as orders from heaven to Mohammed by the angel Gabriel, one chapter at a time while Mohammed

was in a trance state, and then altered before and after Mohammed's death, and argued about ever since.

An important feature of Christianity was that it matured to a stage where it allowed the nurturing of science and, with some reluctance, accepting it. Orthodox Islam, today, still refuses to accept natural science as a reality to be dealt with.

While comparing Christianity with Islam, it should be mentioned that Islam has no musical tradition (Answer 580 from "www.ask-imam.com") "Music is expressly prohibited in many Ahaadith. Among the dominant purposes of our beloved prophet (Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam) was to destroy musical instruments. (Mushkat vol. 2). and Allah Ta'ala Knows Best." The composition of music is generally regarded as the second great achievement of European Civilization.

Christianity took its rules of morality from the Ten Commandments as revealed to Moses, which, on the whole, appear to be rather admirable. All rules of Christian behavior flow from these few precepts and from Christ's purported behavior.

Islam tried a wholly different approach. In order to prevent the escape of its converts, Islam instituted a system of social constraints as described in Section 12. These, in turn, required detailed instructions for behavior in every possible action-demanding situation. However, the Koran and its interpreters could not foresee the future, and Moslem priests have been kept busy offering advice ever since. See below under Section 18 "Selected Questions From Today's Muslims."

17. Essential Islamic Prayers

If scheduled praying five times a day is a good idea, why not add prayers for the in-between activities of the day? Acting on this idea, eminent Imams began writing what they called "Essential Prayers" for special occasions, thereby adding to their own glory as well as to that of Allah. Here are the English translations of three such prayers found with their Arabic originals on the Web site "www.islam.tc." The existence of such prayers may come as a surprise to American Christians.

- After sneezing:
"Thanks and all praise to Allah under all conditions."
- Reply to a Muslim who sneezes:
"May Allah have mercy on you."
- When a non-Muslim sneezes:
"May Allah give you guidance and make your children pious."

The list of situations for which special prayers have been developed continues as follows:

- When greeting another Muslim.
- When conveying the greetings from another Muslim.
- Before a meal.
- After a meal.
- Before washing one's self.
- After washing one's self.
- Before entering a mosque.
- When visiting the sick.
- For a newly converted Muslim.
- When entering the toilet.
- When leaving the toilet.

- Upon reaching the top of an incline.
- Upon awakening.
- When undertaking a journey.
- etc., etc.

At first glance, these occasions for prayer and the prayers that go with them are amusing. Upon reflection, they are seen to have another importance.

What kind of an anthropomorphic deity would want the people He had created by His almighty power to spend their days effusively praising Him in such trivial ways? In early Islam the leaders' answer to this question might have been as follows:

"Having found the true religion, let us not take a chance that our people might think wrong thoughts. We must keep them busy thinking about the true religion so that their minds cannot wander dangerously. After all, there is not much else for them to think about."

In the Twenty-first Century, in the United States, this answer does not suffice. The Christian religion in various versions is everywhere, waiting to be compared to Islam. The country is immersed in a technological civilization which praises change and new ideas. We all see television and the World Wide Web. We are not isolated individuals in the Seventh Century. Examples of fraud in leadership are everywhere. Any thoughtful Muslim must have asked himself "Why might Allah want us to spend time saying these childlike prayers when there are so many useful things that need to be done to help people?" One purpose that might be served by these prayers is to fill the mind of the one praying so that he has no time to think for himself. Guided prayer is soothing to a lazy brain.

18. Selected Questions From Today's Muslims

Today, information about Islam is widely available in bookstores and on the World Wide Web. Under the URL "www.ask-imam.com," I have found an information center which serves Muslims exclusively. This web site is under the direction of an Islamic priest, Mufti Ebrahim Desai located in Capetown, South Africa. Mufti Desai publishes answers in English to Islamic religious questions. His English vocabulary is strong but his grammar is occasionally faulty. English is evidently not his native tongue.

Within the two-year period preceding January 2002, Mufti Ebrahim Desai has placed on the "www.ask-imam.com" web site, answers to over 4,000 questions. For ease of reference, he has grouped the questions with their answers into 41 categories, of which the first eight are shown here as examples:

- Basic Tenets of Faith
- Beliefs and Practices
- Business Matters
- Character, Morals
- Charity, Obligatory
- Charity, Ramadhan
- Child Upbringing
- Divorce
- etc.

Since the questions come by email, their source countries are probably weighted by the availability of access to the Internet. Most of the questions evidently come from the U.S., Europe, and the Near East.

From the content of his web site, one gets the impression that Mufti Desai is trying to answer questions of two types:

1. By referring to the Koran and to the writings of early eminent Imams, this mufti web master is trying to answer questions concerning what is, or is not, part of Islamic doctrine. Unfortunately, his explanations usually involve one or more Islamic words, upon the translation of which the explanation may depend. Also, to the confusion of non-Islamic readers, Islamic names are used for dozens of Islamic occasions and concepts, which are not listed in the furnished glossary. This, no doubt, adds an air of legitimacy to whatever is being claimed in Allah's name. It would help to de-mystify and de-glamorize Islam if all Islamic words used in an explanatory English sentence were followed immediately by an English translation in parentheses.
2. Within the constraints of the Koran, Mufti Desai is trying to give practical advice to Muslim people about personal problems not dreamed of in the Seventh Century.

As might be expected, with the passing of centuries, these two objectives have often led to nonsensical advice. It is painfully evident that many, or most, of the questions come from people with a limited education. I believe that, in this regard, these questions typify Islam today worldwide, and give a correct feeling for the reality that we must face. These are not questions from wealthy Muslims who, within their homes enjoy sophisticated Western gadgetry and flout the veil, and who are interviewed by Western reporters as representing the world's hope for a benign resolution of "the Muslim problem."

From the questions posted on this web site, I have selected a few (1) to illustrate and discuss some of the better known behavioral restrictions self-imposed upon Muslims, (2) to illustrate the Jesuitical ratiocination to which Islam seems addicted, and (3) to illuminate Islam's dealings with sex, because sex seems to be the area of greatest conflict between the mores of Islam and Christianity. Occasionally, I have corrected a word in the questions or added a comment in square brackets to assist understanding. Parentheses are used wherever they occur in the original. All of the answers were signed by Mufti Ebrahim Desai and may be presumed to represent one man's thinking.

Under the category **Jurisprudence** there are 122 questions. Here are three and their answers.

Q. (Question 2630) Is it permissible to purchase, sell, and/or consume Easter eggs and bunnies?

A. It is not permissible to purchase, sell, and/or consume Easter eggs or bunnies. The proceeds from the sales of Easter eggs will be Haraam. The same ruling applies to hot cross buns. And Allah Ta'ala Knows Best.

Q. (Question 1796) I know that angels do not enter a house with pictures in them, but what is the ruling for looking at pictures, say of animals or of my family or spouse?

A. It is not permissible to take and keep pictures of your spouse and family. And Allah Ta'ala Knows Best. [Islam allows no pictures or images of animals or people in its art or elsewhere.]

Q. (Question 1711) I believe I have bought a leather jacket of pig skin. How can I clean myself and also my clothes and anything else that I touched and don't remember?

A. The leather jacket of pig-skin does not make anything (clothes, etc.) impure. However, it is not permissible to use the jacket. And Allah Ta'ala Knows Best.

Under the category **Marriage** there are 327 questions. Here are nine.

Q. (Question 4531) Is it permissible for a wife to masturbate her husband especially when she is menstruating? [See also under category "Character, Morals," Question 908 and under category "Unknown," Question 1823.]

A. Yes, it is permissible for a wife to masturbate her husband. And Allah Ta'ala Knows Best.

Q. (Question 4455) Is it necessary to place a sheet between a husband and wife during sexual intercourse?

A. It is advisable [for the sake of modesty] for the spouses to place a sheet above them (not between them) to cover themselves during intercourse. And Allah Ta'ala Knows Best. [Further explanation from Question 3884:] Complete nudity should be avoided. Both parties should undress under a sheet and at least keep it over them throughout the intercourse.

Q. (Question 3715) If Christians and Jews are going to hell, why then did Allah allow Muslim men to marry them? Why didn't Allah allow men to marry Hindu women who are also going to hell?

A. It is not permissible for a Muslim female to marry a non-Muslim male. However, a Muslim male may marry a Christian or Jewish female. It is not permissible for a Muslim male to marry any other non-Muslim female. This is the law of Allah Ta'ala.

[The argument is continued as follows in somewhat shortened form.] "The reason it is permissible for the Muslim male to marry a non-Muslim female is that he would be able to easily convince the Christian or Jewish wife into accepting Islam as she believes in a heaven. This is not so for a Hindu [who will believe in re-incarnation] or an adherent of any other religion. [On the other hand,] there is a possibility of a non-Muslim male convincing a Muslim wife into abandoning Islam. Therefore Islam has considered the feminine nature and protected her correct beliefs from being a victim of abuse from the male dominance."

Q. (Question 3257) I don't know what to do. My husband is messing around with other girls as well as with my sister. What would be the Islamic way for me to act? Please help me. I also have two kids. I am 25 years old.

A. Without being biased or allowing your emotions to control you, you will accept that ...your husband ...has certain rights over you.... Womanizing doesn't give you the certificate to disobey him and stop fulfilling his rights. Being his wife, you still have to obey him as long as his request is not in conflict with the Shari'ah. As for his womanizing, it is a sin like any other sin. Therefore you should treat him as though he were involved in any other sin. Never confront him regarding his sin, if you feel that it may lead to the destruction of the marriage. Rather say prayers for his guidance and reformation.... And Allah Ta'ala Knows Best.

Q. (Question 2603) Can a man ask a woman to remove her scarf in order to see what she looks like when he goes to see her for the prospect of marriage?

A. If the boy's choice of marriage is based on seeing a girl's hair, he may request to see her hair. In doing so, he should be conscious of the girl's feelings. It is not permissible to 'use' the occasion simply to 'enjoy' the beauty of the girl. And Allah Ta'ala Knows Best.

Q. (Question 1307) In Islam, contact between unwed male and female is prohibited. However, technically, at what point of contact is a woman's purity (virginity) lost? I am an 18 year old Muslim male. Unfortunately, I had an unislamic relationship with a 19 year old Muslim female for 3 years. We were extremely close and planned on getting married Islamically once we were financially able to. Recently both sets of our parents found out about this and made us stop seeing each other. Both of us sincerely feel guilty about our actions and are repenting to Allah (swt). However this puts us in a difficult situation. My question has two parts. One, since a man is supposed to be married to a pure girl, Islamically should she marry me or another man whom she had no haraam relations with? My other question is at what point in Islam is a woman's virginity lost?

Unfortunately, we committed physical sins and came very close to having intercourse (astaghfurullah). At some point though, our conscience and guilt prevented us from completing the action, yet there was still contact between both of our private parts. Are we still considered as virgins Islamically? Please answer this question as best you can. Thank you

A. It is permissible for a man to marry a girl even if she lost her virginity. However, in the referred case, the virginity is maintained. And Allah Ta'ala Knows Best.

Q. (Question 806) Is working as a life insurance agent permissible in Islam? I've got a daughter who is nearing 30 in age. Though she is a very nice girl, we were facing problems for her marriage. Now we have found a very good proposal who is appropriate in all matters, but he is working as a LIC agent (life insurance). Is his earning halaal? Should we accept his proposal? Please help. [Insurance is a form of gambling and therefore forbidden.]

A. If you are satisfied after having investigated the boy's character and made Istikhara [prayer asking Allah's approval] as well, then you should accept the proposal. Probably, the person could be advised to change his employment if possible. Was Salaam.

Q. (Question 747) If you have to cover your face, body, hair, and everything, then how is a male supposed to get married? Isn't he supposed to know what the female looks like?

A. If the male has identified a person to marry, he may look at her face. And Allah Ta'ala Knows Best.

Q. (Question 631) Is it a sin for the husband and wife to see each others private areas?

A. It is immodest for the husband and wife to see the private area of one another. And Allah Ta'ala Knows Best.

Under the heading **Women** there are 212 questions. Here are five.

Q. (Question 4397) What is the awra of a woman in front of her mahrams? What is the least she needs to cover?

A. A female may leave her hair, face, forearms, hands, and feet uncovered in front of her mahrams [males prohibited in marriage because of blood relationship]. And Allah Ta'ala Knows Best.

Q. (Question 4312) Respected Imam sahib, I know that it is prohibited in Islam to trim hair for women, but I like my wife in short hair. Is it permissible?

A. Brother. You are correct that it is prohibited for a female to cut or trim her hair. An exemption to a prohibited act is granted only in specific situations. Your reason does not qualify for that exemption. And Allah Ta'Ala Knows Best.

Q. (Question 4054) In one of the questions you have answered you said that living with a brother-in-law is very bad and you quoted a hadith, too. If parents want everyone to live together and there is a financial situation, then what?

A. If circumstances force a woman to live in the same house with her brother-in-law, or any other Ghayr Mahram, then too she has to observe Hijaab [be fully covered] for him. This Hijaab is compulsory at all times.

It is best that, within this home an area be demarcated where no one will enter without your permission. You are then free to move about in this area without Hijaab. This requires the respect and co-operation of all members of the household. It is best that all males eat in one room, all females in another. The kitchen should be reserved for females only. If there is a good understanding and mutual respect, then it is not difficult

to implement a system of Hijaab within a joint family system. And Allah Ta'ala Knows Best.

Q. (Question 1461) Is it permissible for a married Muslim woman to visit a relative's grave?

A. [After discussing the matter in a dozen paragraphs and reviewing the opinions of eminent Imams of the ancient past, the answer was given, in part, as follows] If a female visits the grave to remember death and soften [mourn] without crying,...there is nothing wrong if they are old. It is Makrooh (forbidden) if they are young [and likely to show sorrow and thus be attractive to men who are nearby]. And Allah Ta'ala Knows Best.

Q. (Question 1341) Is it true that women who go to heaven will have one husband whom they will have to share amongst 70 other wives? This is certainly not fair nor is it justice. I'm sure Allah loves us all and women will be treated equally amongst men, because we are all humans like them and do the same deeds as they, so why should women have to share their husbands? I'm not saying that women should have more than one husband, but sharing with 70 others is certainly outrageous. If a man were to share one wife among 70 other men, he would think the same.

A. It appears that your concern devolves around women's feelings. Obviously, our hearts and its feelings are in the control of Allah and He has promised every dweller of Jennah peace and contentment. And Allah Ta'ala Knows Best.

Under the heading **Character, Morals** there are 39 questions, of which the following has clinical interest.

Q. (Question 908) For some reason I thought masturbation was allowed in Islam. I have tried it only a few times. Will I be punished as I did not know? I do not do it now. [This is about a woman masturbating herself.]

A. If you sincerely repent and do not repeat the sin, it is hoped that Allah will forgive as He is Most Merciful and Most Forgiving. Was salaam.

Under the heading **Unknown** there are 45 questions, of which the following has clinical interest. To avoid misunderstanding, the answer is reproduced below with no changes except that it has been shortened by deletion where indicated by ellipsis.

Q. (Question 1823) I am 19 male, masturbating [for] 4 years. I want to stop it. But unable. Is there any ayat or duva which can help me.

A. Respected brother-in-Islam....

Masturbation is a spiritual malady that cannot be cured merely by reciting some Du'aa....Du'aa [prayers] may assist in this effort, but it is not the actual remedy.

Just as in the case of a physical ailment, one is required to receive medical [?] attention, and together with this make Du'aa for cure. Similarly one is required to adopt a programme of Mujaahadah and together with this make Du'aa for release from this spiritual evil. The Du'aa will create Barakah (blessings) in one's effort. Regarding the remedies for masturbation, a few are mentioned below:

Nikah [marriage]:

Allah Ta'ala has created man with innate carnal desires, and has made Nikah a lawful and dignified avenue to discharge these desires.

Under normal circumstances, Nikah is Sunnah. If a man's sexual desires reach a stage where there is strong fear that he will be involved in Zina (fornication), it will then be Waajob (compulsory) to him to make Nikah. At this juncture, shyness is no excuse. The

man will have to approach his elders and request them to make arrangements for his Nikah.

Nikah should not be delayed or avoided for fear of poverty and want. In the Ahaadith, we are told that Nikah creates Barakah in one's sustenance. Allah Ta'ala has taken it upon himself to assist the person who performs Nikah to protect his chastity. Nikah is a simple and inexpensive affair in Islam. The errant customs have made it difficult for others. The solution is to abandon all such customs and conduct the Nikah strictly according to the Sunnah. Nikah, then will not be a burden, rather it will release one from a burden.

Masturbation:

The person involved in [self-]masturbation is almost certainly a victim of evil gazes. It is thus imperative to strictly guard the gaze. Where it is practical, avoid all such situations where one's gaze may fall on Ghayr Mahram females (women not prohibited in Nikah). TV, books, magazines, internet, newspapers, should be shunned.

Should one's gaze accidentally fall on some woman, immediately lower the gaze. This is not difficult. It only requires some courage and training....

By maintaining the gaze, one is in fact moving to the depths of Jahannum (hell). And by lowering the gaze, one is ascending to the highest ranks of Jannah [heaven]....

Consider the reality of the woman at whom one is gazing. If she does not groom herself or apply perfume for one day, she will look dreadful and stink. For a number of days every month she has impurity pouring out of her. If one had to just go near such impurity, one will wish to flee. Imagine if she went to the toilet and forgot to flush and, if you had to enter the toilet, will you still have the desire to gaze on her? If this woman does not have Deen, then by raising her arms and exposing her unsightly arm pits, she will give out the smell of a skunk. These are some thoughts (although undignified) which will assist one in taming the evil desire to look at women....

Try as far as possible to remain in the state of Wudhu. In the Hadith we are informed that Wudhu is the weapon of Mu'min. With this weapon it is much easier for him to thwart the onslaughts of Shaytaan....

Try to remain in the company of the true friends of Allah Ta'ala. The true friends are those that, when you sit with them they remind you of Allah Ta'ala and their company produces a desire for the Akhirah (hereafter). The company of such people is extremely efficacious in imbuing the obedience of Allah Ta'ala, and in cultivating an abhorrence of sin....

May Allah Ta'ala save you and every Ummati from this evil, Aameen.

And Allah Ta'ala Knows Best.

IV. PERSONAL PERSPECTIVES

19. The Use of the Veil, Then and Now

A key to the resolution of Islam's unrest lies with its women and their willingness to be veiled. The first challenge of September 11 is to send our imaginations back 15 centuries to reconstruct reality, when gathering the bare essentials of life was a full-time job, when violence was inescapable, when, for nomadic life, male slavery was impossible, and female slavery was necessary. Having the father choose the husband for his daughter and meanwhile keeping the daughter hidden was probably the only system that could have worked to breed a spectrum of intelligence and managerial talent needed for Mohammed's military ambitions. What we have today in Islam is a Seventh Century military culture dedicated to a world conquest that it cannot achieve.

For educated women living in the USA today, there are better ways of locating a prospective mate than turning the job over to father. For non-Muslim woman who must live or travel in orthodox Islamic areas, a veil might still be useful.

20. Speculations About Love

These speculations on the nature of love are offered for the light they may throw on Islamic customs and for the need they may show for scientific research on love.

It is generally accepted that the desire for sexual intercourse in the human male and female accompanies a biological process called sexual arousal. Susceptibility to sexual arousal is determined by past experience, by genetic endowment, and by current body chemistry.

It is likewise generally accepted that sexual intercourse between loving, consenting adults is not inherently evil. Sexual love by itself is juvenile. A healthy conjugal love will usually include sexual intercourse as a way of giving pleasure to one's self and one's spouse.

"Falling in love" is the popular expression for any kind of love bonding which expresses itself as a desire to be close to the loved one. Love bonding involves an intimate interaction between A and B. B may bond to A when A sends to B, perhaps unintentionally, an intimate, self-revelatory signal. A dog, for example, generally bonds to its owner when petted. Exchanging childhood memories is a mature form of courtship.

Love of B for A may take many forms which, for discussion purposes, might be tentatively classified as parental, offspring, sexual, intellectual, sibling, spiritual, and unrequited.

Sexual love includes a desire for sexual intercourse. Intellectual love includes a shared interest in topics other than sex.

Sibling love is the aggregation of related bonds acquired by companionship without sexual interest throughout a childhood spent together. It is mutually shared and cannot be simulated if childhoods were not shared to some extent. It may have a genetic component.

The religious ecstasy of St. Theresa of Avila is a spiritual love that may be experienced in a milder form by one who attends a religious service, possibly without regard to his belief in the doctrine of the service. This form of ecstasy may also be experienced by one human for another as a normal human love. Spiritual love is non-possessive, non-exclusionary, and finds its highest selfish pleasure in giving pleasure to its mate.

Couples planning marriage might consider, in advance, matters of "marriage etiquette" to be jointly agreed upon. Total nudity in each other's presence might be avoided in the hope of preserving the flash reaction of sexual love and, with it, sexual virility. To promote spousal, parental, and infant bonding, the husband's hand-holding presence should ideally be required at all child births.

Other topics needing more research are: The successive stages of parental-offspring bonding. (Infant-parental bonding is the first. In the last, the adolescent asserts his adulthood.) Animals' love for their offspring and for their masters. Differences among animals and among humans in the psychophysiology of sexual arousal. Social intercourse, self-masturbation before dating, and other methods of controlling sexual arousal.

V. AMERICAN MATERIALISM

21. Intellectual Atheism and The God Problem Among Scientists

In Section 1 of this essay, materialism was defined, its origin was placed in the 18th Century, and it was said to inspire two kinds of atheism, "intellectual atheism" and "business atheism."

Intellectual atheism is the common stance of leaders in the natural sciences. When lesser scientists are asked about scientific evidence for God, they often refer the question to physicists. As a physicist who has studied scientists' beliefs, I have found that most physicists at the top of their profession prefer to believe in materialism, even though (because one cannot logically prove its negative assumption) there is no evidence to support it. One possible reason for this mass negative belief is that it absolves physicists, as well as all other humans, of any moral responsibility for the well-being of fellow humans.

If physicists are asked why they believe that there is nothing outside of physics, they will tell you that, beginning several generations ago, the most competent physicists have examined and rejected the possibility that there might be more. When asked why they disregard the contrary opinion of many people, they point to the irrational behavior of exuberant Christian evangelists and say that such foolishness proves that there is no truth in religion. When asked to explain the numerous seriously intended accounts of psychic premonitions and distant visions, by eminent people of the past and ordinary people of today, physicists say that any experience not repeatable upon demand is only hearsay evidence. When asked to explain why they will not look at the laboratory evidence for ESP, physicists say that they have a friend who looked into ESP and found the experiments riddled with uncertainties.

As summarized in the above paragraph, as illustrated in the essay "An Atheist Tells Why He Rejects ESP", and as documented at length in my book, *God.org Are You There?*, the position taken explicitly by some eminent scientists today against the possible existence of a nonphysical realm is indefensible. Indeed, the only eminent opposition to the reality of psychic phenomena, for example, comes from a few aging biologists and physicists who are bent upon verifying Max Planck's biographical complaint concerning his discovery of the quantum nature of light. ("a new scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light but rather because its opponents eventually die and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it").

Opposition to ESP also comes from psychologists who know, at least subconsciously, that, as explained elsewhere, (*God.org Are You There?*, p. 22), "Experimental psychology as now practiced will be destroyed as a scientific enterprise" by the acceptance of psychic phenomena.

The "God Problem Among Scientists" cannot be solved until there are competent scientists willing to discuss it publicly before a scientific audience under impeccably neutral auspices. There are competent scientists who admit privately that they accept ESP or consider its occurrence to be likely but who cannot take the time to become sufficiently familiar with the field to discuss it with a hostile audience. Those other few who have conscientiously informed themselves and then declared publicly their conviction of the reality of psychic phenomena are belittled or ignored, but their reasoning is not discussed. This is a strange situation.

22. Business Atheism and the Globalization of the Economy

On the one hand, atheism is taboo as a subject for discussion in American society. On the other, atheism is an unspoken conceit among scientists, a truism among intellectuals, and an absurdity among those who believe in God. Its corollary, namely, that one has no

obligation for the well being of fellow humans except as assumed for one's own satisfaction, is overlooked by most people, but is axiomatic for those at the top.

How, despite its taboo status, atheism became the policy of business, acting through the façade of the corporation, is an interesting story.

History of the Public Corporation

To obtain capital to start a business, one might form a corporation to sell stock certificates that promise a share of future profits, if any. The stockholder is called an "owner" but, as a rule, has little to say about the operation of the corporation. The chief executive officer and his board of directors operate the business, setting their own salaries and special incentives (e.g., stock shares, stock options, performance bonuses, and severance pay) with little or no interference from the owners. This is the situation as it has existed until today. It is legally right by the doctrine of materialism, but, as we shall see, it is morally wrong because of its consequences for civilization.

A century ago, except for a few natural monopolies that were geographically spread out or that needed large minimum capitalization (e.g., oil, railroads, steel), most corporations were small and were restricted in their behavior by competitive pricing from other, local or distant firms. Indeed, until World War II, the industrial development of the nation had proceeded rapidly and efficiently, while retail prices, generally, remained under the control of competition.

The gravest end result of that past era is that it legitimized the principle of unlimited corporate greed, subject only to some minimal governmental restrictions that were adequate at the time. Under today's different conditions, the principle of unlimited corporate greed is destroying Western Civilization.

The Effects of Science and Technology

The main areas of technical and scientific advance since World War II were the following:

- Chemical and biological knowledge.
- Medical knowledge and technology.
- Information theory.
- Microwave technology, including radar.
- Solid-state technology, starting with the transistor.
- Satellite technology.
- Robotics and production-line technology.
- Just-in-time inventory.
- The analog-to-digital transition.
- The personal computer.
- The Internet.
- Efficient air travel and shipment.
- Television.

The dominant feature of the sci-tech advances since World War II is that, taken together, they have collapsed the world to the size of a city. The movement of information, people, and freight has become faster and cheaper, causing an order-of-magnitude increase in the speed and efficiency with which things can happen.

Because of the new communication advances, it has become technically feasible for profit-hungry corporations to buy and manage from afar other corporations, either to create a monopoly position or simply to control the assets of a corporation that is undervalued in terms of the market's current price/earnings ratio.

The Public Corporation Principle

As conceived today, the public corporation has only one purpose, namely, to grow. This might be called its "growth principle" or "greed principle."

The CEO and his directors are considered successful and are rewarded only if the stock price this year, as supported by profits or the prospect of profits, is greater than last year.

Nothing can grow forever. That is true of any single corporation and of the sum of all corporations. An innocent layman might suppose that it would be wise to ask when a growing economy will reach its maximum, but that is exactly what every corporation and all of our economic planners refuse to do. Their inaction sounds contrary to common sense, and so it is. What happens instead, is the following.

In the media, in good times and bad, a stock market rise is always "good" and a price fall is "bad." While a stock bubble is growing, the media report, with approval, high employment, luxurious living, and business expansions, as one might expect. When the bubble bursts, the news media focus on bankruptcies, layoffs, and personal misfortune, again as one might expect. But they focus also upon the maneuvers, both legal and illegal, by which financiers personally profit from, or in spite of, the economic downturn. The financiers are, in effect, blamed for the bubble burst. Meanwhile, the public is assured that the bubble will reform and continue to grow if they, the public, will have faith and will begin spending their remaining savings, or go more deeply into debt, as the case may be.

The foolish activities described in the preceding paragraph are what the news media feed to the public, but it is all a combination of what is either totally untrue or irrelevant. For example, the fact that billions were stolen by criminals or financiers either directly from, or through the auspices of, specific corporations, and that much suffering has been imposed upon innocent people, is irrelevant to understanding the economic process.

What is not explained to the public by the news media is that bankruptcies are made by financiers who have more money than they need and who will profit from transactions by squeezing a purchased operation in situ, or by moving it to a place where the workers are paid less for doing the same job. What we are not told is: "Who made money by this transaction and what did he, or they, do with the money?"

The point is soon reached in this Ponzi-scheme process where, to make a profit, the financiers become globalists in their ambitions and operations. For this to happen, Congress must be willing to yield U.S. sovereignty to the financiers. This is done by passing free-trade laws that allow Third World countries to compete with the USA and by passing immigration laws to allow Third World immigrants to underbid the workers in the rest of the USA.

Congress accommodates the Globalists because elections in the USA require enormous sums of money, which are available only from "business interests."

From the popular press one might infer that "globalization" means only the illicit accumulation of billions of dollars by a few people. Its other damning features are its impoverishment of the middle and lower classes, its requirement of unlimited population growth and free migration, its waste of irreplaceable natural resources, its destruction of stable native cultures and the creation of associated social unrest, its pollution of the environment, and its refusal, generally, to look to the future and ultimately to the collapse of the world economy implied by its trade policies.¹

¹ The globalist's past impregnable political position derived from the fact that globalization and related population issues have been concealed from public discussion by the press and the

23. Crash of the World Economy

It appears probable that the world economy will crash within three years under the economic stress of Islamic terrorism and corporate capitalism's unlimited greed. The latter is rationalized by denying two realities: (1) Civilization is a cooperative enterprise requiring a balanced population ranging upward from some minimum level of ability, i.e., we are logically obligated to care for the well being of all needed members of society. (2) Earth has already exceeded its sustainable human carrying capacity.

It is difficult to imagine an orderly economic recovery unless materialism's intellectual elitism is formally abandoned in favor of some kind of philosophic dualism for three purposes: (1) to end the economic and moral monstrosity of unfettered capitalism, (2) to accommodate the spiritual needs of both Muslims and Christians, and (3) to conform to the empirical realities of parapsychology.

VI. ISLAM IN PERSPECTIVE

24. Who Will Feed the Muslims?

According to *The World of Islam* (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, Copyright 2001, ISBN 0-7922-6894-6), there are now 1.3 billion Muslims (North Africa: 299 million. Near East: 213 million. Indonesia: 181 million. Pakistan: 141 million. India: 124 million. USA: 6 million). The Muslim religion has always encouraged large families. These numbers are growing.

Environmentalists have generally agreed that the world's most urgent long-range problem is overpopulation. Environmentalists have hoped that, except in sub-Saharan Africa, by education and appeals to an area's self-interest, population growth might be halted. That hope is unjustified among Muslims.

25. The Promotion of Islam Today

There are many persons and organizations promoting Islam today in the USA. Some are interacting with Muslim believers on a commercial basis by selling prayers and personal services. Others, such as the Institute of Islamic Information and Education (www.islam.org), provide information about Islamic belief in the hope of making converts.

On that web site we are led to think that Islam is simply more sincere and more intense than other religions, and that it will therefore bring peace and happiness. The mentally capturing character of Islam is not hinted at, nor is the distasteful personal behavior of Mohammed. Popular promoters of Islam have nothing to say about the important ways in which modern Christianity excels over modern Islam, and they mention the fact that Christians believe in the Trinity, while Muslims do not, as though that difference were favorable to Islam. Islamic promoters make it sound unpatriotic and bigoted to be opposed to Islam. They ignore the events of September 11 as though they never happened.

politicians. It is not widely known that information on these taboo subjects is readily available. Dr. John H. Tanton publishes *The Social Contract*, a journal devoted primarily to most aspects of Globalization while scarcely mentioning that word. [445 East Mitchell Street, Petoskey, Michigan 49770-2623 and "www.thesocialcontract.com".] Dr. J. Philippe Rushton, the world's foremost authority on racial differences of all kinds, has escaped censorship by republishing in a six-dollar abridged edition his momentous *Race, Evolution, and Behavior* [ISBN: 0-9656836-2-1. Charles Darwin Research Institute, P.O. Box 611305, Port Huron, Michigan 48061-1305]. My book, *Joyride to Infinity: A Scientific Study of the Doomsday Literature* [ISBN: 1-878465-35-X], reviews, pro and con, about 140 recent doomsday books.

Persons who are enthusiastic about Islam cannot be expected, for example, to reveal the curious fact that owning pictures of people or animals is forbidden in Islam, or that today there are three powerful Islamic sects, each jealously guarding its own territory.

26. Summary of Key Points About Islam

Doctrinal Elements

1. The Koran represents complete, permanent and absolute truth. (Different Islamic sects accept the Koran but adopt minor differences in interpretation, which explain their separation as centers of political power.)
2. All mankind divides into two classes, Muslims and infidels. (An infidel is anyone who is not a Muslim. Children under puberty are exempt from classification.)
3. On the day of final judgment by Allah each person who ever lived will go either to heaven or to hell for all eternity. (There is no limbo or purgatory.)
4. All infidels go to hell. Muslims may go to heaven or to hell (All sins by Muslims are forgiven if they have been confessed and abjured.)

Islamic Behavioral Duties

1. Make a statement of belief, accepting Allah as God and Mohammed as his prophet and specifically rejecting Christianity and all other religions. (This statement is binding even when said only once and alone, but normally it is repeated daily and in the presence of other Muslims.)
2. Say prayers at five fixed times each day while facing toward Mecca. (Praying is obligatory even if it must be done alone, but normally it is done in the presence of other Muslims who are recognized by their wearing of a turban or a veil.)
3. Give as charity for the poor through your local mosque 2.5% annually of your net worth.
4. Fast from sunup to sundown, from food, drink, and sexual intercourse for one designated month each year, called Ramadan. (This is part of a major social celebration by Muslims, which is centered in their mosques.)
5. Make a pilgrimage to Mecca once in a lifetime, if able.
6. It is customary, i.e., socially required, to pray each Friday at the mosque.
7. Obey many special rules as specified in the *Koran*. (Examples: Eat no pork (because it could not be safely cooked 15 centuries ago). Make or keep no pictures of people or animals (lest you be tempted to worship them as false gods).)
8. The sexes are segregated, before and after marriage. Marriages are arranged by fathers, following rituals that favor carnal love and aggression.
9. Publicly identify one's self as a Muslim at all times by wearing a turban or a veil. (This will allow your fellow Muslims to encourage you to remain faithful to Allah.)

Implications of Islam

1. Even in the USA where Muslims are only two percent of the population, it is impossible to cease being a Muslim, i.e., a Muslim cannot be converted from Islam. Any attempt to leave Islam, e.g. by ceasing to follow the behavioral requirements of Islam, will be opposed by ostracism by all of one's friends and by the certified threat of eternal damnation. (A change of religious conviction normally requires extended contemplation, for which no time is available to a practicing Muslim.)

2. Because all unconverted Christians are damned to eternal hell, although there may be temporary truces between Muslim and Christian, there can never be peace. Islam began as, and remains, a religion of conquest.
3. It is unfortunate that the religion of Mohammed has emerged as a challenge to the survival of Western Civilization at a time when the true nonphysical nature of man is just becoming visible on the horizon and while some of our leading scientists are still foolishly saying that man has no spiritual nature.