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**THE "WAR ON TERROR" AND "THE FUTURE OF AN ILLUSION":  
REGRESSION TO FUNDAMENTALIST RELIGION  
AS AN INADEQUATE DEFENSE AGAINST GROWING  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLEXITY**

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**DRAFT VERSION, NOT YET TO BE QUOTED!**

**1. INTRODUCTION:**

In this paper we will argue that the present period of rapidly increasing environmental complexity and interdependence tends to increase feelings of insecurity caused by a lack of environment mastery, in both the developed Western world and the largely underdeveloped Muslim world. This will be the case especially in the less educated parts of the population, where it will stimulate an upsurge of religion, especially its fundamentalist versions. In my last few papers I have dealt, directly or indirectly, with the overwhelming political and economic<sup>1</sup> reasons for the war on terror<sup>2</sup> and the leading role of the US in that war<sup>3</sup>, in this paper attention will therefore be directed to these religious aspects, both on the Muslim side and on the US-Christian side, and to the functions of religion as such in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century world.

For a thorough understanding of the following, nearly all you might ever want to know about terrorism from the Muslim side can be found by thoroughly looking at the PowerPoint presentations – and if you are interested in the subject also the papers - of the participants in a 2004 Suicide Terrorism Conference in Washington.<sup>4</sup> A recent MIT study complements these findings.<sup>5</sup> The main points of these presentations will be discussed later. Terrorism from the Western side is somewhat harder to understand since we ourselves are at issue here.

It is a truism that the present-day world is more than ever before characterized by increasing and often inter-correlated differences: the poor vs. the rich, the left-wing progressives vs. the right-wing conservatives, the educated vs. the non-educated, the religious vs. the non-religious, the Judeo-Christian world against the Muslim one, the exploiters vs. the exploited, etc.

To some extent, these differences have always been there, but in the sound bite world of instant TV coverage – which, amazingly, the poor often also have! – they often become painfully visible. Not only can we have our guilt trip by seeing people dying by the thousands on the side of the road through hunger, war or persecution, but *they* too can see how the affluent part of the Western world lives, and form themselves a generally exaggerated image of it which leads to jealousy. What better

anticipatory socialization could an aspiring al-Qaeda terrorist have? And there are many more of them than there are volunteers for the US army.

The above could be seen as a rough description of the tensions between the Western (Christian, Jewish or atheist) world and the Muslim world, but the existing tensions and contradictions *within* each of these worlds are at least as problematic:

- One reason why much of the Muslim world is such a good recruiting ground for al-Qaeda – apart from the fact that the US attacked two Muslim countries - is that, through the lack of countervailing forces, capitalist exploitation – also by local elites! - is worse there than anywhere in the Western world.<sup>6</sup> These local elites try to protect themselves against possible revolution by often actively directing discontent towards the West and especially towards the US.

- Especially in the US there is another contradiction: while it is one of the richest and technologically most developed nations in the Western world, and certainly the most powerful, and while it also (still) excels in virtually every aspect of science or culture, from nuclear physics to ballet, the population as a whole scores relatively low on education and religious sophistication, and in that sense is more comparable than visible at a superficial glance to many of the Muslim countries that are its adversaries in the war on terror. There is a considerable minority, especially in the so-called (Christian) Bible Belt, where fundamentalism leads to a literal belief in the Bible, coupled with a low tolerance of ambiguity<sup>7</sup>, and becomes manifest in the "Intelligent Design" hypothesis<sup>8</sup>, a successor to the concept of creationism<sup>9</sup> which is assumed to be an answer to evolution theory. While the US certainly still produces top-level science, there is a frightening growth of a deeply rooted and irrational anti-science attitude, especially among the Christian Right<sup>10</sup>, as evidenced, for example, by their resistance against stem cell research.<sup>11</sup>

Freud published his "The Future of an Illusion"<sup>12</sup> already in 1928. His thesis there is that religion fulfils deeply engrained childish insecurities that are hard to eradicate, and he therefore assumes that the illusions inherent in religion will indeed continue:

- A refusal to believe that everything ends with individual death leads to the illogical question "what would then have been the meaning of life".<sup>13</sup>

- The belief in an afterlife, nowadays decreasing in the Western world, is a strong reinforcement for Muslim suicide terrorists in view of the expected sexual rewards, as one of the by now famous Danish cartoons demonstrates

## **2. RELIGION AND THE WAR ON TERROR**

Most wars are fought for territory and/or access to raw materials, often with ideology and/or religion thrown in as an additional motive. However, purely religious wars have been relatively rare since the 1600s. The last more or less purely religious wars were the wars of Islamic expansion beginning in the 7th Century, the Crusades starting in the 11th Century and the Reformation wars beginning in the 16th Century,<sup>14</sup> when religion was forced to start its retreat in the face of accumulating scientific discoveries about the world around us.<sup>15</sup>

Of course, the war on terror is also primarily a war for raw materials, in this case mainly oil, but apart from being packaged as a struggle for democracy – a modern post-colonialist version of "civilizing the natives"! – it has been given a religious tone already in the beginning when president<sup>16</sup> Bush<sup>17</sup> unluckily announced it as a "crusade". This was not a slip of the tongue; as an article in the Guardian claims, but

the president got his orders to do something about Iraq and Afghanistan directly from God <sup>18</sup>, although this was obviously firmly denied by the White House <sup>19</sup>. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, such hallucinations should lead to immediate impeachment. A fellow-Texan, psychologist Doug Soderstrom <sup>20</sup>, considers the US at the moment “the biggest bully on the block” and illustrates this as follows:

“So, the next time you have a chance, listen to George Bush. Listen to Dick Cheney. Listen to Donald Rumsfeld. Listen to what they have to say, and how they say it. Look at how they position their bodies... so straight and tall. Pugnacious profiles. Self-righteous men, hardened to the core, and, no doubt, pious to a tee. Take a look at their faces; the smugness of their smile. And then..... never forget that power corrupts, and that absolute power corrupts absolutely, and that pride, without fail, always cometh before the fall! “

As to the effects of the war on the Iraqi population, it is certainly worth while to look at several blogs on Iraq <sup>21</sup>, which often give a better impression than can be gained from the daily news. There are different estimates about the number of dead in the civilian population <sup>22</sup>. While the US may have had for a long time an isolationist image, reality is different: the actual number of military interventions in foreign countries since 1798 has been an astounding 185 <sup>23</sup>, not including both world wars. One of these, by the way, resulted in an agreement signed already February 7, 1901 to cede Cuban territory at Guantánamo to construct a naval base <sup>24</sup>, where detainees are often held without process. <sup>25</sup> One century later, this base is apparently used, together with others in Europe, Iraq (Abu Ghraib <sup>26</sup>) and Afghanistan (Baghrum) for what is described euphemistically with terms like “outsourcing of torture” <sup>27</sup>, <sup>28</sup> “extraordinary renditions”, “ghost detainees”, etc. Therefore, in that sense, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are nothing new; and even the fact that the US Press is doing nothing to “challenge the lies of this war” <sup>29</sup> is old hat, as is the conclusion that the US press to a large extent is not a free press anymore. <sup>30</sup>

### ***2.1 On the US side: “Onward Christian soldiers” – The infiltration of the Republican Party and the American government by the Christian right:***

What indeed is new and very worrying in what is the most powerful military nation on earth is the increasing importance of the religious element in the present war on terror, and more precisely the growing influence of the fundamentalist Christian right in the US, as documented amongst others by an October 2005 public opinion poll <sup>31</sup>, which concluded that 22% of all Americans consider themselves to be Fundamentalist, Evangelical or Charismatic Christians. Perhaps, half a century after president Eisenhower coined the term “military-industrial complex”, this potentially explosive mixture should be called the “military-religious complex”.

Apart from president Bush, who was re-elected to a large extent by that Christian right, belongs to it himself, and actively promotes its interests, the present US government as a whole is explicitly influenced by the extremely conservative bias of a considerable portion of the electorate, which feels itself under attack in a secularizing (though for European standards still extremely religious) society which they do not feel at home in anymore. Actually, in reality it is the Christian right that is vehemently on the attack <sup>32</sup> against virtually all aspects of modernity <sup>33</sup>, including sex education <sup>34</sup>, and advances in science <sup>35</sup>. It tries to promote a Christian <sup>36</sup> nationalism <sup>37</sup> to attack the secular state <sup>38</sup>, and it is threatening the US Constitution in different ways. <sup>39</sup> Perhaps the US should emulate the excellent Turkish solution: a military government which takes power in cases of threat against the secular constitution, but

only after due warnings, and then voluntarily steps down again when the threat to the secular basis of the state has been removed.<sup>40</sup> Perhaps a suggestion for the US Army!?

Incredibly, without even have proven that people do have souls, Bible Belt Christians are trying to save Muslim souls in Iraq<sup>41</sup>:

"American Christian missionaries have declared a "war for souls" in Iraq, telling supporters that the formal end of the US-led occupation next June (2004, FG) will close an historic "window of opportunity". Organising in secrecy, and emphasising their humanitarian aid work, Christian groups are pouring into the country, which is 97 per cent Muslim, bearing Arabic Bibles, videos and religious tracts designed to "save" Muslims from their "false" religion."

Moreover, they have promoted the emergence of an Islamic theocracy in Iraq.<sup>42</sup> The aggressive activities of the Christian right<sup>43</sup> can indeed be compared with the *agitprop* (i.e., agitation and propaganda) activities of the Communist parties in the last century, and also with the infiltration tactics of the Nazis in the latter days of the Weimar Republic.<sup>44</sup> The core idea is to obtain power by devious means<sup>45</sup>, i.e., by using stealth tactics, and once obtained subject all of society to that power – i.e., produce a Christian Republic of the USA as opposed to the Islamic Republic of Iran – and then do the Crusades all over again, but this time with an arsenal of atomic weaponry.

The Republican Party has already been infiltrated and largely taken over by Christian fundamentalists.<sup>46,47</sup>, while many of them have or are specifically trained to have government functions<sup>48</sup>, - or influence people who have government functions<sup>49</sup>. A ludicrous example is NASA, "where a 24-year-old college dropout was until recently in a position to order senior officials to make references to the Big Bang compatible with the possibility of 'intelligent design.'" <sup>50</sup> Another example is formed by the Centers for Disease Control, which classifies all fertile women as "pre-pregnant"<sup>51</sup>. One such infiltrating agitprop organization is the Council for National Policy, a highly secretive organization described by the Times as consisting of "a few hundred of the most powerful conservatives in the country" who meet "behind closed doors at undisclosed locations...to strategize about how to turn the country to the right."<sup>52</sup>

Perhaps dominionism<sup>53</sup> is the clearest expression of the Christian right. The Wikipedia defines it as "a term used to describe a trend in [Protestant Christian evangelicalism](#) and [fundamentalism](#), primarily though not exclusively in the United States, that seeks to establish specific political policies based on religious beliefs".

Even a former Republican strategist and prolific writer<sup>54</sup>, Kevin Phillips, who worked on the Nixon campaign<sup>55</sup> in the 1960s, warns against this tendency in his recent book *American Theocracy*<sup>56</sup>. It is not only the Republican Party on which the Christian right concentrates its efforts at infiltration, but also for example the public school system where efforts are made to introduce Bible classes disguised as literature or history courses<sup>57</sup>. Generally, special prerogatives are asked for by the Christian right under the common denominator "faith-based initiatives".<sup>58</sup> President Bush has given billions (!) in subsidies to such faith-based initiatives.<sup>59</sup> A lawyer who originally was originally in favour of special treatment for faith-based groups, has recently published a book reversing her position.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, the title of this paragraph "Onward Christian soldiers" also holds literally true for the Christocrats in

the US air force <sup>61</sup>, which - after complaints of *Americans United for Separation of Church and State* <sup>62</sup> of official preference toward evangelical Christianity at the Air Force Academy - drew up draft guidelines in June 2005

"The guidelines, called "Revised Interim Guidelines Concerning Free Exercise Of Religion In The Air Force," significantly backtracks from those the Air Force issued last year following an investigation into allegations of heavy-handed forms of proselytization [by Evangelical Christians] at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo.<sup>63</sup>

However, on June 11, 2006 the House approved, voting 396 to 31, a defense authorization bill to the tune of 513 billion dollars <sup>64</sup>, which overrides the earlier Navy and Air Force regulations for non-sectarian prayer at official ceremonies. <sup>65</sup> In other words: Allah and Jahweh will not further participate in the war on terror.

The "Campaign to defend the Constitution" operates a useful website <sup>66</sup>, which documents attacks on the separation between church and state to prevent it from becoming a theocracy. However, that is precisely what is being exported to Iraq, instead of democracy. <sup>67</sup>

## **2.2 Resistance in the US against infiltration by the Christian right:**

Resistance against the Christian right (Christian Coalition <sup>68</sup>, founded in 1989 by televangelist Pat Robertson; Focus on the Family <sup>69</sup>; Family Research Council <sup>70</sup>; Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum <sup>71</sup> to name but a few) is slowly growing.

Up till now, it comes mainly from three groups:

1) *Other religions, mainly Jews* <sup>72</sup> - understandably so as they often function as the proverbial canary in the coal mine and are often the first to warn about the first whiffs of discrimination, even though in this case it is not a matter of discrimination against other religions, but rather a matter of pushing one's own religion down everyone else's throats; and to a lesser extent from Catholics <sup>73</sup>. Although conservative Catholics share some positions with the Christian right (abortion), they are more liberal and are generally in line with the position of the American Bishops Conference in several respects (re social welfare, death penalty, nuclear weapons, and homosexuality <sup>74</sup> ).

There is definitely some unease among American Jews and many others about the aggressive activities of the Christian right. <sup>75</sup> It is worth while in that respect to thoroughly reconnoiter the "jewsonfirst" website mentioned above: attacks of the Christian right on church-state separation, attacks on gay and lesbian civil rights, on the neutrality of public education <sup>76</sup>, on sex education, on abortion <sup>77</sup>, (by promoting government-subsidized and fake "pregnancy crisis centers", attacks on foreign aid (HIV subsidies only for promoting abstinence, while slashing subsidies for condoms!), on evolution by promoting Intelligent Design, cultural intimidation by the religious right, etc.:

"Bullying minorities into accepting public display of Christianity is not "unconstitutional". But it is definitely chilling, especially to Jews who hear in the triumphalism of the religious right echoes of Nazi street thuggery."

Also, many American Jews and even Israelis feel uneasy about the support given to Israel by the Christian fundamentalists – sometimes even acting in collusion with the worst elements on both sides: the Israeli mafia and Texas oil interests <sup>78</sup>. However, the national director of the Jewish Anti-Defamation League does not feel

embarrassed by evangelical support <sup>79</sup>, and argues why it is on balance good for Israel;

2) *Homosexuals*, who in the opinion of the Christian right commit the most heinous crime imaginable <sup>80</sup>. They view Sweden as an overly tolerant and decadent society, and describe the king of Sweden and his family in language not exactly befitting Christians (DO see endnote 39!) . A very interesting website <sup>81</sup> documents the anti-gay pronouncements of some well-known Christian right TV preachers like Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell and others - who should definitely feel at home in Iran where homosexuality carries the death penalty <sup>82</sup>. Another part of this "hate crime" website <sup>83</sup> compares Nazi anti-Semitic speech and religious right anti-gay speech on fifteen dimensions. Same-sex marriages are now possible in many Western countries <sup>84</sup>, including South-Africa from December 2006 onward, and in the state of Massachusetts, but encounter string resistance in most other states <sup>85</sup>: "It was Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve!" Louisiana, for example, has a no-exceptions abortion law, where even after rape or incest abortion is criminalized. However, a Federal Marriage Amendment that would define marriage as a union between one man and one woman was narrowly defeated in the senate. <sup>86</sup> In the Muslim world, homosexuality is of course legally impossible. <sup>87</sup> The Christian right is definitely homophobic, as the JewsonFirst website demonstrates with an extensive collection of links to the national press. <sup>88</sup>

3) and most forcefully from *atheists* <sup>89</sup>, a large part of whose criticism is obviously directed against religion per se, although often specifically against the Christian right. Atheists are often perceived (wrongly) as a threat to "the American way of life", are thought to be more criminal - though the percentage of atheists in prison is lower than in the general population – but turn out to be more often against torture than the general population. <sup>90</sup> According to Austin Cline, the Christian right is more characterized by what it is against than by what it is in favor of: it is anti-science <sup>91</sup>, anti-secularism, anti-feminism, anti-liberty, anti-pluralism, anti-sex, anti-enlightenment, anti-democratic, and most of all it is anti-modernity. <sup>92</sup> Its anti-sex attitudes are apparent in its uptight attitudes on abortion <sup>93</sup>

### **2. 3 The Muslim side of the war on terror:**

Since the start of the war on terror after the attack on the World Trade Center, Muslims <sup>94</sup> and Muslim nations enjoy the undivided attention of the neocon (a generally used shorthand for neo-conservative) circles in the US. With the end of the Cold War, a new external enemy was needed, and the stage was set for a vigorous military response to any other external threats, in view of the neocon need for an "American Century" <sup>95</sup>. Bacevich <sup>96</sup>, for example, himself a West Point graduate, feels that:

"while neoconservatism has many facets, [...], its influence on defense affairs has been to support intellectually the new American militarism."

He also argues that:

"the military and the evangelical right began to share common viewpoints, notably on "traditional values" and common themes of patriotism and America's role in the world. The religious outlook of the officer corps, previously restrained Episcopalianism, tilted toward evangelical Christianity, and the makeup of the Chaplains' Corps followed suit."

All this tells more about the US side of the war on terror than about the Muslim side, which was demonized by a neocon government that played on the xenophobic fears of an American public <sup>97</sup>, already singularly uninformed about what goes on in the rest of the world. <sup>98</sup> However, on the Muslim side, in spite of and apart from fundamentalist fanaticism, there seems to be more religious tolerance than the Western media lead us to believe, with their propaganda terms like "the axis of evil"- in contrast to Ronald Reagan's still purely communist "evil empire" <sup>99</sup> now largely consisting of Muslim nations, with the exception of North Korea.

With Khadaffi getting old and tired <sup>100</sup> at the time of writing this, Iran seems one of the few Muslim states more or less officially sponsoring state terrorism <sup>101</sup>, and doing so at least in part from an Islamic viewpoint. Moreover, its president has hardly made himself popular by insisting on his rather contradictory message that on the one hand Iran has a right to develop its own nuclear technology for peaceful purposes only, while on the other hand Israel should be wiped off the map <sup>102</sup> - the first time an UN member has suggested this about another UN member. Nevertheless, in this case as well, the Iranian situation may have been exaggerated in the Western media, as former ISA president Immanuel Wallerstein maintains <sup>103</sup>:

"Why would not the balance of terror operate equally well in the Middle East? Why would not the possession by Iran of nuclear weapons be an element in pacifying the Middle East rather than the reverse? The only answer offered is that the Iranian government is not sufficiently "rational" to abstain from using the bomb. But this is clearly nonsense - racist nonsense, one should add. The present Iranian regime is at least as politically sophisticated as the Bush regime, and is a lot less vocally militarist."

In an as usual well-informed article in the New Yorker, Seymour Hersh basically agrees with Wallerstein, and discusses the risks of an aggressive policy towards Iran <sup>104</sup>, as does former presidential adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski <sup>105</sup>. This policy already seems to be under way <sup>106</sup>, with a decision to promote regime change already taken <sup>107</sup>, and with covert operations presently going on inside Iran, and with the nuclear option certainly not excluded. According to one of Hersh's informants,

"Under Ahmadinejad, the Revolutionary Guards have expanded their power base throughout the Iranian bureaucracy; by the end of January, they had replaced thousands of civil servants with their own members. One former senior United Nations official, who has extensive experience with Iran, depicted the turnover as "a white coup," with ominous implications for the West. "Professionals in the Foreign Ministry are out; others are waiting to be kicked out," he said."

While this possibly forthcoming coup at first sight looks a bit like a relatively peaceful alternative to the "night of the long knives" in Nazi Germany <sup>108</sup>, such a complete restructuring of the Iranian bureaucracy definitely may have ominous implications. Certainly so when Ahmadinejad will feel really threatened by the aggressive posturing of the American Satan <sup>109</sup>, as he seems to be, having started construction on a third nuclear centre with a capacity of up to 155.000 centrifuges. <sup>110</sup> Iranian counter-measures are apparently already in preparation: The Guardian mentions that a so-called independent two year old group, with 52.000 recruits, the Committee for the Commemoration of Martyrs of the Global Islamic Campaign <sup>111</sup>, linked to the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, is now recruiting members especially in Britain. They are given a choice of attacking "the Quds (=Jerusalem) occupiers" [Israel], the British author Salman Rushdie, or "the occupiers of Islamic lands", i.e., the US and Britain. Iran is financing terrorists to hit

Americans in Iraq as well as Israeli civilians.<sup>112</sup> As an aside, one may wonder why non-Arab Iran is and always has been almost more vehemently anti-Israel than any Arab country. Perhaps president Ahmadinejad is all the more infuriated because both Israel's president (Katsav) and until recently also its minister of defence (Mofaz) happen to be Iranian-born.

However, as Irshad Manji<sup>113</sup> argues<sup>114</sup>, Ahmadinejad is not pathologically sick, as Elie Wiesel claims, but his behaviour is "entirely rational from the perspective of a religious fanatic". As a Shia Muslim, he eagerly awaits the return of the "hidden imam", just like the Evangelical Christians, including president Bush, are waiting for Armageddon, and 40% of the Israeli religious settlers in the West Bank and Gaza strip have a similar "belief in a divinely ordained mission to inhabit the land."<sup>115</sup> Now that Ahmadinejad has taken the initiative<sup>116</sup> to write Bush<sup>117</sup> we can only hope for the start of a fascinating theological correspondence between the two presidents, and hope – to paraphrase the ending of the well-known cult movie "Casablanca" – that this will be the beginning of a beautiful friendship. Where are the good old days when presidents engaged in naked power politics? Nevertheless, conservative columnist Charles Krauthammer<sup>118</sup> advises the US government not to fall into the trap offered by Iran's president, and reverse longstanding Iran policy, in spite of the fact that the US has a decreasing number of foreign policy options with rising oil prices.<sup>119</sup>

Of course, while Iran may be the only country supporting terror so openly, individuals in many other Muslim countries also give financial support, especially to the war against Israel, and like Iran subsidize the PLO, Hezbollah, Hamas and Islamic Jihad.<sup>120</sup> This money enables the poor souls who are indeed pathologically sick to end their lives in a totally useless and even counter-productive suicide. Bradley Burston<sup>121</sup> argues: 1) suicide bombings have had a catastrophic effect on the Palestinian national movement; 2) the shahid bomber has soiled the name of Allah and of Palestine, "draining the Palestinian people of the abundant reservoir of international good will that their cause and their plight enjoyed for decades"; 3) The shahid bomber plays into the hands of his worst enemies: the settlers and the Jewish hard right; 4) but it is a moral booster for the folks back home. In an earlier article<sup>122</sup>, Burston lashes out rather effectively at Ahmadinejad's remarks about Israel, and at Hamas. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict will most probably remain very messy for quite some time<sup>123</sup>, certainly as long as suicide bombing continues<sup>124</sup> after the recent victory of Hamas which strives for another Islamic state, incorporating all of Israel as its maps show<sup>125</sup>, and provides different information to the west than to the other Arab states.<sup>126</sup> However, the Hamas government consists of a highly educated crew<sup>127</sup>, most of them with university degrees. The Iran-subsidized Islamic Jihad has several websites, operating from Iran and the US.<sup>128</sup>

As is well-known, the "*cartoon controversy*"<sup>129</sup> sparked vehement and rather hysterical protests all over the Muslim world in general - and caused well over 100 deaths and more than 800 wounded<sup>130</sup> - after publication of mildly critical cartoons of Mohammed in a Danish newspaper.<sup>131</sup> Just depicting the

prophet is already sacrilege, let alone criticizing him, although much of the Arab press is still full of the most obscene anti-Semitism <sup>132</sup>, even in relatively friendly Jordan.<sup>133</sup> In this respect those involved in the cartoon riots certainly have double standards, and should perhaps develop a somewhat thicker skin. Also the Danish cartoons led to an often rather tasteless "anti-Semitic cartoon contest" in the Iranian newspaper Hamshari <sup>134</sup>, to which a group of Israeli cartoonists reacted with another anti-Semitic cartoons contest, only open to Jews, at least equally sharp and often very good, though often also like the Iranians in bad taste. <sup>135</sup> As one of the organizers said:

"...we can do the best, sharpest, most offensive Jew hating cartoons ever published! "No Iranian will beat us on our home turf!"

As we stated at the very beginning of this paper: "... we will argue that the present period of rapidly increasing environmental complexity and interdependence tends to increase feelings of insecurity and a lack of environment mastery <sup>136</sup>, in both the developed Western world and the largely underdeveloped Muslim world."

This seems to be the root cause that is driving both sides in the war on terror. It remains a moot point who started it, certainly if one is not fixated on the attack on the WTC, but takes decades of Third World exploitation in to account. The Muslim world is still afflicted with the lingering anti-Western resentments of the exploited ex-colonial world (not to speak of the Crusades) and partly as a result of that is still underdeveloped, poor, and under-educated, <sup>137</sup> and therefore feels bewildered in an environment it has not made. The Western world, on the other hand, is now also driven on the defensive, and suddenly has to arm itself against a diffuse, elusive and fanatical enemy that can hardly be pinpointed. Things were simpler and easier in the good old days of the Soviet Union, when there was the safety of MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction). Clearly, these two tendencies reinforce each other, and lead to exaggerated theories like Huntington's "clash of civilizations" <sup>138</sup>, which then may tend to become self-fulfilling prophecies.

### **3. THE EUFUNCTIONS AND DYSFUNCTIONS OF (MONOTHEISTIC) RELIGION IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

#### **3.1 Introduction:**

This brings us to a more serious point: to what extent has at least a large part of formerly functional religion become dysfunctional in the present-day hyper-complex environment? <sup>139</sup>

Advances in (both social and natural) science and knowledge have on the one hand increasingly reduced the feelings of insecurity that were often a root cause of religious beliefs, and have led to an increased sense of environment mastery that contributed to secularization. On the other hand, increased mastery of one's micro-environment (progress qua medical facilities, insurance against natural disasters, international communication, etc.) has led many to the realization that there is a much larger macro-environment – for many visible only for the first time through the ICT revolution - which one cannot influence?

And to what extent is religion even actively fueling disagreements in a globalized world between groups that have opposite economic interests, and is it hiding the economic causes of these disagreements, thus making it more difficult to even discuss them, let alone solve them? Both for a simple Muslim in Wajiristan, or an almost as simple Christian in America's Bible Belt, it is often easier to suggest simple religious solutions than to discuss the complexities of economic and political interactions in a globalized world.

In line with the title of this paper, we feel that much of the content of the world's mainstream religions needs to be modernized, and denuded of its sometimes patently irrational elements in order to be at least a little more applicable to modern times. However, before giving the impression here that the irrationality of religion is the only root of all evil, and that atheism is the only solution, it should be stressed here - although that merits another paper - that this seemingly rational world of ours is still full with the most absurd nonsense, from venerable semi-"sciences" like astrology, to spiritism (which implies life after death).<sup>140</sup>

Sub 2.2 we have mentioned that, in response to the activities of the Christian right in the US, different atheist organizations and websites have emerged or expanded their activities there (mentioned in endnote 79) Most influential of these has probably been Sam Harris, with his "Atheist Manifesto"<sup>141</sup>, and his earlier book, "The end of faith"<sup>142</sup>. In the following, we will quote him extensively, as he summarizes very well what many other authors say in a more roundabout way.

Harris defines atheism not as a philosophy, not even as a view of the world, but simply as a refusal to deny the obvious. The word "atheism" should not even exist, as there are no non-astrologers and non-alchemists. In the US 260 million Americans (87% of the population) claim to "never doubt the existence of God". Harris thinks they should be obliged to present evidence for his existence, and for his benevolence as well, in view of "the relentless destruction of human beings we witness in the world each day".

Belief in God's existence is actually necessary for seeking public office in the US, with the result that "public policy in our country conforms to religious taboos and superstitions appropriate to a medieval theocracy". Harris mentions a Washington Post poll which mentions that 80% of Katrina's survivors claim that the event has only strengthened their faith in God. His reaction:

"Only the atheist recognizes the boundless narcissism and self-deceit of the saved. Only the atheist realizes how morally objectionable it is for survivors of a catastrophe to believe themselves spared by a loving God while this same God drowned infants in their cribs."

The same goes, *mutatis mutandis*, for the Holocaust<sup>143</sup>, the genocide in Rwanda<sup>144</sup>, and "lesser" disasters.

This leads to the problem of theodicy, which Harris considers solved:<sup>145</sup> he adheres to the other solution, i.e. that the biblical God is a fiction, and stresses that we are all atheists with respect to Zeus and Thor. Harris considers atheism

“... a moral and intellectual necessity. It is a necessity, however, that places the atheist at the margins of society. The atheist, by merely being in touch with reality, appears shamefully out of touch with the fantasy life of his neighbors.”

Harris mentions that according to several recent polls:

“22% of Americans are certain that Jesus will return to Earth sometime in the next 50 years. Another 22% believe that he will probably do so. This is likely the same 44% who go to church once a week or more, who believe that God literally promised the land of Israel to the Jews and who want to stop teaching our children about the biological fact<sup>146</sup> of evolution.”

As stated earlier, President Bush is fully aware of the importance of this voting bloc, and therefore “their views and prejudices now influence almost every decision of national importance”. The numbers from recent public opinion polls are rather frightening:

“More than 50% of Americans have a “negative” or “highly negative” view of people who do not believe in God; 70% think it important for presidential candidates to be ‘strongly religious’.... Only 28% of Americans believe in evolution (!); 68% believe in Satan (!)”

I cannot but fully agree with the conclusion: ***“Ignorance in this degree, concentrated in both the head and belly of a lumbering superpower, is now a problem for the entire world.”***

Harris admits it is easy enough to criticize religious fundamentalism, but he is even more critical of religious moderation:

“While fundamentalists justify their religious beliefs with extraordinarily poor evidence and arguments, they at least make an attempt at rational justification. Moderates, on the other hand, generally do nothing more than cite the good consequences of religious belief. Rather than say that they believe in God because certain biblical prophecies have come true, moderates will say that they believe in God because this belief “gives their lives meaning.” Fundamentalists, on the other hand, tend to consider the tsunami in New Orleans, the attack on the World Trade Center and similar catastrophes as “another oblique message about the evils of abortion, idolatry and homosexuality”<sup>147</sup>

“Faith is nothing more than the license religious people give themselves to keep believing when reasons fail. In a world that has been shattered by mutually incompatible religious beliefs, in a nation that is growing increasingly beholden to Iron Age conceptions of God, the end of history and the immortality of the soul, this lazy partitioning of our discourse into matters of reason and matters of faith is now unconscionable.”

Harris ridicules the concept of a “God gene”<sup>148</sup>, and quotes instead the Human Development Report (2005)<sup>149</sup> which tends to support his thesis that the least religious societies<sup>150</sup> are also the healthiest, according to criteria like:

“life expectancy, adult literacy, per capita income, educational attainment, gender equality, homicide rate and infant mortality. Conversely, the 50 nations now ranked lowest in terms of human development are unwaveringly religious.”<sup>151</sup>

“The United States is unique among wealthy democracies in its level of religious literalism and opposition to evolutionary theory; it is also uniquely beleaguered<sup>152</sup> by high rates of homicide, abortion, teen pregnancy, STD infection and infant mortality. The same comparison holds true within the United States itself: Southern and Midwestern states, characterized by the highest levels of religious superstition and hostility to evolutionary theory, are especially plagued by the above indicators of societal dysfunction, while the comparatively secular states of the Northeast conform to European norms.”

Harris argues that “the dubious link between Christian literalism and Christian values is also belied by other indices of charity”, and mentions in this respect:

1) that countries with high levels of atheism give more foreign aid than the US <sup>153</sup>, with the US often at or near the bottom of the list compared to the generally much less religious European countries;

2) that the salary ratio between top-tier CEO’s and their average employee ranges from 24:1 (UK), 15:1 (France), 13:1 (Sweden) in Europe, while it is an astounding 475:1 in the US. <sup>154</sup>

Zuckerman presents an excellent overview of contemporary rates and patterns of atheism, often based on a comparison of different research projects and opinion polls per country, in the forthcoming *Cambridge Companion to Atheism* <sup>155</sup>. He distinguishes “organic atheism” from “coercive atheism” (most of the (ex-) Communist countries). Countries with coercive atheism are often:

“marked by all that comes with totalitarianism: poor economic development, intellectual censorship, widespread corruption, ubiquitous depression, etc. However, nations marked by high levels of organic atheism – such as Sweden, the Netherlands, and France -- are among the healthiest, wealthiest, most educated, and most free societies on earth.”

Apart from the fact that the least religious societies score high on life expectancy, adult literacy, per capita income, educational attainment, gender equality, homicide rate and infant mortality – as mentioned above – they also have the lowest youth illiteracy rates, and are most accepting of gender equality as demonstrated by a high percentage of female members of parliament. Zuckerman stresses:

“...that I am in no way arguing that high levels of organic atheism *cause* societal health or that low levels of organic atheism *cause* societal ills such as poverty or illiteracy. If anything, the opposite argument should be made: **societal health causes widespread atheism, and societal insecurity causes widespread belief in God**”.

Zuckerman rejects the argument brought forward by many cognitive neuropsychologists and academic theists that belief in God is biologically natural or neurologically based <sup>156</sup>.

### **3.2 Religion and violence**

According to Harris, “One of the greatest challenges facing civilization in the 21st century is for human beings to learn to speak about their deepest personal concerns—about ethics, spiritual experience and the inevitability of human suffering—in ways that are not flagrantly irrational.” He maintains that “religious faith promotes human violence to an astonishing degree, and indeed, many wars are going on at this moment that certainly have a strong religious component <sup>157</sup>, “ It does so in two ways: 1) for some, by the psychopathic imagination that God wants you to engage in violence – and will reward you for it with an eternal life - plus 72 virgins, as in jihadist violence; 2) for many, because their religion constitutes the core of their moral identity.

Harris maintains that “human conflict is not always reducible to a lack of education, to poverty or to political grievances”; this for him is “one of the many delusions of liberal piety”. Many jihadists are quite well-educated <sup>158</sup> (see also endnote 2), and apparently the human mind can easily be partitioned by faith. If one wants to uproot

the causes of human violence, one must uproot the false certainties of religion. These are often quite extreme, both in mainstream Christianity <sup>159</sup> and mainstream Islam <sup>160</sup>, and presumably in most other religions as well. Some Christian websites, like "Rapture Ready" <sup>161</sup>, even sound as if the people behind them are certifiably insane.

However,

"Religion is only area of our discourse in which people are systematically protected from the demand to give evidence in defense of their strongly held beliefs. The endgame for civilization cannot be mutual tolerance of patent irrationality. While all parties to liberal religious discourse have agreed to tread lightly over those points where their worldviews would otherwise collide, these very points remain perpetual sources of conflict for their coreligionists. *Political correctness, therefore, does not offer an enduring basis for human cooperation.*"

From the argument presented so far, it should be clear that the war on terror is largely a religious war, whereby fundamentalist Muslims are making a holy war (jihad) to a large extent directed against fundamentalist US Christians that still live, as Harris suggested, in the Iron Age, but unfortunately have 21<sup>st</sup> century armaments. It remains to be analyzed who has started this war; the attack on the World Trade Center should not necessarily be considered the start of this war. Of course, there are many other factors involved, apart from religious ones (vestiges of colonialism, capitalist exploitation of the Third World, etc.).

However, especially in Europe, the war on terror has reduced much of the goodwill the US had acquired, having "saved" Europe in two World Wars

#### **4. EUROPE VS. AMERICA: WHO SHOULD, CAN, AND WILL TAKE THE LEAD IN THE WAR ON TERROR?**

Up till now, the US has been clearly leading the war on terror, and has determined that and how it should be waged - and understandably so, in view of its military might, and in view of the attack on the WTC. Recently, however, the power equilibrium in the Western world is changing, as argued in three fascinating books, recently reviewed by Tony Judt in the New York Review of Books <sup>162</sup> and quoted at length in the following:

"To a growing number of Europeans, however, it is America that is in trouble and the "American way of life" that cannot be sustained. The American pursuit of wealth, size, and abundance —as material surrogates for happiness —is aesthetically unpleasing and ecologically catastrophic. The American economy is built on sand (or, more precisely, other people's money). For many Americans the promise of a better future is a fading hope. Contemporary mass culture in the US is squalid and meretricious. No wonder so many Americans turn to the church for solace."

It is not anymore generally assumed that Europe and America are converging upon a single model of late capitalism. The US has a number of peculiarities that are relatively absent so far in Europe, and would make Europe better able to lead the world into an anyhow uncertain future:

- 1) we have dealt already with the nation's marked religiosity, which apparently does not prepare people for life in a complex and globalized world
- 2) selective prurience, especially on TV <sup>163</sup>

- 3) affection for guns and prisons: the European Union has 87 prisoners per 100.000 population, the US has 685
- 4) the US still embraces the death penalty in most states, whereas its abolition is a condition for EU membership, and it executes prisoners on a scale matched only in China, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the Congo.<sup>164</sup>
- 5) Americans work harder than Europeans<sup>165</sup>; one in three even works more than 50 hours per week
- 6) The US is an excellent place to be rich (see endnote 85) and has become enormously richer in the last quarter century: in 1980 the average CEO earned 40 times the salary of the average manufacturing employee, now that is 475 times!
- 7) A privileged minority has access to the best medical treatment, but 45 million Americans are completely without health insurance; South Africa and the USA are the only two developed countries without universal medical coverage, and while the WHO mentions that the US is number one in health spending per capita, it is considered 37<sup>th</sup> in the quality of its service.
- 8) As a consequence Americans live shorter than Europeans; the US ranks 26<sup>th</sup> in infant mortality, its rate double that of Sweden. While the US spends 15% of its GDP on health care, Sweden spends only 8%. The same picture emerges when one compares educational spending in the US and Europe: the US spends much more on education, has the best universities in the world, but gets worse results.
- 9) While Americans work more hours, GDP per hour of work in Europe is approaching US levels, or even surpassing them<sup>166</sup>
- 10) Among other things as a result of waging wars, the US now has a foreign debt of 3.3 trillion dollars, or 28% of GDP. Europe invests nearly 40% more in the US than the US does in Europe
- 11) Social security in the broadest sense is much better in Europe, including parental leave in case of childbirth. Norway's minister for children and family is quoted: "Americans like to talk about family values. We have decided to do more than talk; we use our tax revenues to pay for family values."
- 12) In the US today the richest 1 percent holds 38 percent of the wealth and they are redistributing it ever more to their advantage. Meanwhile one American adult in five is in poverty—compared with one in fifteen in Italy.

So far the essentials from the reviews of Rifkin and Reid. The third author discussed in Judt's review, Timothy Garton Ash, roughly agrees with this diagnosis, but adds a few other points:

- 13) "As an international citizen the US is irresponsibly delinquent. In 2003 the EU spent 36,5 billion on development aid, the US about one third of that amount, nearly 80% of which has to be spent on American goods and services."<sup>167</sup> Moreover, the US does not pay its fair contribution to the UN.<sup>168</sup>
- 14) The US, with 5% of the world's population, is responsible for 25% of greenhouse gas output.
- 15) Ash clearly does not like president Bush: "But on the insouciant indifference of the present incumbent of the White House he is utterly unforgiving: 'It was said of ancient Rome that the emperor Nero fiddled while the city burned. In the new Rome, the president fiddled while the Earth burned.'" However, Ash is hardly more positive about Blair: "a political tactician with a lucrative little sideline in made-to-measure moralizing."
- 16) Insofar as international opposition to different treaties is concerned, the US tends to find itself in bad company:

- a) the 1997 international treaty to ban landmines was accepted in the UN by a vote of 142-0, with the US, Russia and a few other countries abstaining;
- b) The US and Somalia are the only two states which have not ratified the 1989 Convention on Children's Rights.
- c) The US is opposed to the international biological weapons convention – together with countries like China, Russia, India, Pakistan, Cuba and Iran.
- d) The US supported a measure introduced by Iran denying two gay rights groups a voice at the United Nations, together with Cuba, Sudan and Zimbabwe, nations the State Department has cited in annual reports for their harsh treatment of homosexuals.<sup>169</sup>

17) Ash notes that American-style belligerent patriotism is rare in contemporary Europe, perhaps because it “experienced the twentieth century to a degree unmatched anywhere else”<sup>170</sup>, whereas the US did not.

18) Corruption surely exists everywhere, but some countries are more corrupt than others. Since president Bush was elected, the number of lobbyists has more than doubled: there are now 65 lobbyists for every member of Congress, spending nearly 200 million dollars per month on wining, dining and seducing federal officials.<sup>171</sup>

Judt ends by stating: “As things now stand, boundary-breaking and community-making is something that Europeans are doing better than anyone else. The United States, trapped once again in what Tocqueville called its “perpetual utterance of self-applause,” isn't even trying.”

The conclusion of his review of these three books (see endnote 93) is that Europe may be better equipped to deal with the problems that are caused by the war on terror than the US.<sup>172</sup>

Some other publications add strength to this conclusion:

The *National Vanguard*, otherwise a nasty white supremacist and anti-Semitic journal, quotes from the above-mentioned *European dream* and other sources.<sup>173</sup>

19) The US ranks 49<sup>th</sup> in the world in literacy, and 28<sup>th</sup> out of 40 in mathematical literacy (*New York Times*, December 12, 2004).

20) 20% of Americans think the sun orbits the earth, and 17% believe the earth revolves around the sun once a day (*The Week*, Jan. 7, 2005).

21) The European Union leads the U.S. in “...the number of science and engineering graduates; public research and development (R&D) expenditures; and new capital raised.... Europe surpassed the United States in the mid-1990s as the largest producer of scientific literature” (*The European Dream*, p.70). Nevertheless, Congress cut funds to the National Science Foundation. The agency will issue 1,000 fewer research grants this year (*NYT*, Dec. 21, 2004).

22) Lack of health insurance coverage causes 18,000 unnecessary American deaths a year, six times the number of people killed on 9/11.) (*NYT*, Jan. 12, 2005.)

23) “U.S. childhood poverty now ranks 22nd, or second to last, among the developed nations. Only Mexico scores lower” (*The European Dream*, p.81).

24) The harsh conclusion of the *Vanguard*: The USA is “number one” in nothing but weaponry, consumer spending, debt, and delusion.

Add to all this that the US has managed to make itself highly unpopular, already for a long time in the third world, including its own hemisphere, and now especially in the Muslim world and even in Europe. Different reasons are given for this:

- David Callahan argues that cheating has come to be rewarded as a result of America's brutally competitive climate, and has permeated the culture. <sup>174</sup>
- Allan Uthman <sup>175</sup> presents the top ten signs of the impending police state, and includes here the relatively unknown presidential signing statements. <sup>176</sup>
- Austin Cline <sup>177</sup> argues that the warrantless wiretapping proposed by attorney general Gonzalez can easily lead to a dictatorship. “
- A recently pensioned Supreme Court judge, Sandra Day O'Connor, also feels the US “risks edging near to a dictatorship” <sup>178</sup> if the party's rightwingers continue to attack the judiciary.
- Andrew Kohut, <sup>179</sup> former head of the Gallup organization, and presently director of the Pew Center for the People and the Press, reports that a recent (i.e. 2003) Pew survey found that “majorities in seven of eight Muslim countries think that the United States might threaten their country militarily”. He added: “Last year we had loathing of the United States, this year we have fear and loathing.”
- Bob Herbert <sup>180</sup> argues that the present government instills fear in Americans in order to be better able to manipulate them. Quote: “If voters can be kept frightened enough of terrorism, they might even overlook the monumental incompetence of one of the worst administrations the nation has ever known.”

## 5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:

If one is looking for a suitable symbol to depict both sides of the war on terror, one may take the two presidents on both sides: Bush and Ahmadinejad. Amazingly, they are far from being each other's opposites as one would have expected at first sight; on the contrary, they are very much like one another, and in that sense one cannot help wondering what the conflict is all about. It is deplorable that this seemingly rational and rationalized world of ours has regressed this far that two religious fanatics have managed to become presidents of their countries, and that they both espouse completely crazy millennial ideologies: Bush waiting for the Rapture and Admadinejad for the return of the hidden imam.

If you feel I am exaggerating, just type "rapture"<sup>181</sup> in Google, and look especially at the Rapture Index. <sup>182</sup> And as to the return of the hidden imam, apart from a historical explanation<sup>183</sup>, the author Timothy Garton Ash has an interesting article on modern Iranian youth, entitled "Soldiers of the hidden imam". <sup>184</sup>

This paper has largely concentrated on the negative aspects of the US – especially in comparison to Europe - and those of its president and its government. That is not to deny that the US has its good sides, and Europe its bad ones. The recent French and Dutch "no" votes against the European Constitution are an embarrassment, and the widespread European resistance against the admission of Turkey is likewise something to be ashamed of, also because here is a Muslim country with a strictly secular constitution, where at least the generals outrank the mullahs.

While there is a tendency nowadays to criticize Islam - in view of its positions re democracy, emancipation of women, homosexuality, etc. – we hope to have demonstrated that the convictions of fundamentalist US Christians are at least as primitive and mediaeval. The losing battle of religion against the advances of science has caused Creationism <sup>185</sup> to be slowly replaced by the absurd theory of "intelligent

design" <sup>186</sup> as the fundamentalist answer to Darwinian evolution theory. <sup>187</sup> However, in present-day post-authoritarian culture, many "infidels" and even modern Christians do not have any objections to evolution theory, and realize that God is a projection of man, rather than the other way round, and that this projection has changed from a stern, authoritarian father to a democratic friend and adviser with the transition from a pre-WW2 authoritarian male-dominated culture <sup>188</sup> to a relatively more female-dominated and egalitarian one.

If only for the practical purpose of taking some religious steam out of the war on terror, mainstream religions should stress the relativity of their convictions <sup>189</sup>, in order not to aid in promoting fundamentalism. The growing environmental complexity of our present multi-group society produces anxiety, if not fear, and demands high tolerance of ambiguity, typically lacking in monotheistic religions, esp. their fundamentalist offshoots.

For those needing a religion, we plead here for at least a modernized <sup>190</sup>, "systems-inspired religion". <sup>191</sup> Based on, for example, the ten commandments <sup>192</sup> one could compare these with similar logical and acceptable prescriptions for decent human interaction in other religions and perhaps arrive at a sort of "religious UN charter". Such a charter would probably be more humanistic than religious – and probably would end up like a UN Declaration of Human Rights, without the absurd and non-falsifiable propositions that characterize so many religions. As long as the war on terror will continue, it should at least be bluntly admitted that it is a war about power, money, land, minerals, etc. that has nothing to do with religion. As Freud described in *The Future of an Illusion*, there obviously is no answer fulfilling the needs for transcendence of those longing to somehow transcend the limitations of their individual life. The French poet Jacques Prévert agreed in a witty little poem <sup>193</sup>. Even for suicide terrorists - or suicide tourists <sup>194</sup> for that matter! – there are no answers to satisfy the apparently inborn need for transcendence. Transcendence can only be satisfied in the here and now. As William Blake said: "Eternity is in a grain of sand" <sup>195</sup>, not in an imaginary hereafter.

Chris Hardwick, "Both a grain of sand and eternity ", [The Guardian](http://www.guardian.co.uk/religion/Story/0,2763,1345004,00.html), Saturday November 6, 2004  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/religion/Story/0,2763,1345004,00.html>

FURTHER ENDNOTES TO BE INSERTED:

Austin Cline, Terrorism as Symbol and Performance Violence (Book Notes: *Terror in the Mind of God*)  
<<http://atheism.about.com/b/a/192790.htm>>

## ENDNOTES:

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<sup>1</sup> Leonard C. Lewin: *Report from Iron Mountain: On the possibility and desirability of peace*  
<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/068482390X/>

This first reference has nothing directly to do with this paper, but it is a brilliant phantasy I read some 40 years ago that will clarify several unexpected aspects of war and peace. Do read at least the reviews on Amazon.com. As one of the reviewers writes, it explains: foreign aid, wasteful spending,

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the destruction of American industry, a job corps, gun control, a national police force, the apparent demise of Soviet power, a UN army, disarmament, world bank, a world money, the surrender of national independence through treaties,..."

<sup>2</sup> The cost of that war has been high, not only for the Iraqis (estimated of Iraqis killed run as high as 100,000, but also for Americans. See "Faces of the Fallen – U.S. service members who died in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom", Washington Post (2708 total fatalities till June 8, 2006). This website contains photos of nearly all the fallen soldiers at: <http://projects.washingtonpost.com/fallen/>

<sup>3</sup> See for example: [Globalization and Sustainability: The Cynics, the Romantics, and the Realists](#) (2000); [Powerlessness vs. Passionlessness: North "meets" South at the WTC](#) (2002); ["Continental Drift": The Causes and Probable Consequences of American Unilateralism](#) (2003).

<sup>4</sup> A Suicide Terrorism Conference was held October 25-26, 2004 in Washington. See <http://www.nijpcs.org/terror/> for more detailed information. You can download highly interesting PowerPoint presentations here by the following speakers, all experts in suicide terrorism, and also download their papers from the above website:  
[http://www.nijpcs.org/terror/Allison\\_Smith.ppt](http://www.nijpcs.org/terror/Allison_Smith.ppt)  
[http://www.nijpcs.org/terror/Andrew\\_Silke.ppt](http://www.nijpcs.org/terror/Andrew_Silke.ppt)  
[http://www.nijpcs.org/terror/Ariel\\_Merari.ppt](http://www.nijpcs.org/terror/Ariel_Merari.ppt)  
[http://www.nijpcs.org/terror/Arjuna\\_Gunawardena.ppt](http://www.nijpcs.org/terror/Arjuna_Gunawardena.ppt)  
[http://www.nijpcs.org/terror/Marc\\_Sageman.ppt](http://www.nijpcs.org/terror/Marc_Sageman.ppt)  
[http://www.nijpcs.org/terror/Mohammed\\_Hafez.ppt](http://www.nijpcs.org/terror/Mohammed_Hafez.ppt)

<sup>5</sup> Nichole Argo, "The Hard Truth About Suicide Bombers", [AlterNet](#). Posted May 8, 2006  
<http://www.alternet.org/audits/35815/> and:  
Nicole Argo, Human Bombs: Rethinking Religion and Terror Nichole, MIT Center for International Studies, [http://web.mit.edu/cis/pdf/argo\\_audit\\_4.06.pdf](http://web.mit.edu/cis/pdf/argo_audit_4.06.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Reuven Paz, "Africa : The Gold Mine of Al-Qaeda and Global Jihad", Global Research in International Affairs (GLORIA) Center, The Project For The Research Of Islamist Movements (Prism) Occasional Papers, Volume 4 (2006), Number 2 (June 2006)  
[http://www.intelligence.org.il/eng/eng\\_n/html/rp\\_0606.htm](http://www.intelligence.org.il/eng/eng_n/html/rp_0606.htm)

<sup>7</sup> In social psychology, scales for measuring tolerance of ambiguity have been correlated with creativity, internal vs. external locus of control, uncertainty avoidance, etc. See for example Katya Stoycheva, "Talent, Science and Education: How Do We Cope with Uncertainty and Ambiguities", *Institute of Psychology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences*,

<sup>8</sup> The Wikipedia has an excellent and very detailed article on Intelligent Design, with many links (and links within links) to related concepts like creationism, <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intelligent\\_design](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intelligent_design)>. The term was first used, though in an unrelated way, in an 1847 (sic) article in Scientific American. The concept was recently used in a number of court cases against people claiming that Intelligent Design should be taught in schools as an equal alternative to evolution theory. In the case of the Dover area school district the judge ruled that intelligent design is not science and is essentially religious in nature.  
- See also: New York Academy of Sciences, Jan 25 lecture by Marc W. Kirschner, Harvard University: "The Plausibility of Life: Resolving Darwin's Dilemma" on the new book of the same title by himself and John C. Gerhart, <http://www.nyas.org/events/eventDetail.asp?eventID=5282&date=1/25/2006>. See the new book itself at <[www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tq/detail/-/0300108656](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tq/detail/-/0300108656)>  
- And also: Charles Krauthammer: "Phony Theory, False Conflict -'Intelligent Design' Foolishly Pits Evolution Against Faith", Washington Post, November 18, 2005, page A23.  
<<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/11/17/AR2005111701304.html>>.  
- And also the website: Creation & Intelligent Design Watch, Hosted by the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal, <http://www.csicop.org/intelligentdesignwatch/>, with a large collection of interesting articles, surely covering all you want to know about intelligent design.

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<sup>9</sup> The website <http://atheism.about.com> gives the following definition: Creationism is the religious doctrine, opposed to naturalistic evolution, that life on this planet was created by a special, unique act of God. Creationism goes beyond this traditional religious belief, however, in asserting that this belief can be proven empirically and scientifically.

Unfortunately for creationists, science only deals with natural events which are repeatable, not supernatural events which never repeat - thus, by definition, creationism can never be scientific. It must always remain a pseudoscience, based more upon faith than upon actual evidence or internal logic. See [http://atheism.about.com/library/glossary/evolution/bldef\\_creationism.htm](http://atheism.about.com/library/glossary/evolution/bldef_creationism.htm)

<sup>10</sup> Austin Cline, Ann Druyan on Changing Attitudes Towards Science in America

<http://atheism.about.com/b/a/185442.htm?nl=1>

Quote: “[W]e seem to be engaged in a great turning away from reality. The engine of science continues to churn out discoveries at an astonishing rate, and yet our culture seems to have lost the ability to translate these insights into a grander perspective. It’s as if our first forays into the immensity of the universe have sent us flying into a panic. The dawning reality of our tiny portion of space and time has been too much for us to bear. We turn away, seeking refuge in the discredited myths of our centrality. ....Evidence of this failure of nerve is plentiful: Public school science educators shrink from teaching the fundamentals of biology. Science museums in the South feel the need to shield their visitors from Imax films that give the true age of volcanoes. ... Radical religious fundamentalists have seized the national conversation. The rest of us are left to re-fight battles and arguments won decades ago.”

<sup>11</sup> Defconamerica.org: “Meet America’s most influential stem cell scientists”

[http://defconamerica.org/images/downloadables/nyt\\_stemcell.pdf](http://defconamerica.org/images/downloadables/nyt_stemcell.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Die Zukunft einer Illusion* (The Future of an Illusion), Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag, Leipzig-Wien-Zürich, 1928. The complete German text is freely available at <<http://www.madeasy.de/1/illusio1.htm>> . English translation available at <<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0393008312/103-1173321-1948649>> .

<sup>13</sup> Austin Cline, *Meaning of Life: Is there a Question to be Answered?* (Book Notes: Losing faith in faith

<http://atheism.about.com/b/a/256277.htm?nl=1>

Dan Barker, *Losing faith in faith: From preacher to atheist*, Freedom from Religion Foundation, 1992

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1877733075/002-4951938-9234420>

<sup>14</sup> See Mike Wooldridge, “Can religion be blamed for war?”

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/wtwtgod/3513709.stm> . This article was part of a "War Audit", <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/wtwtgod/default.stm> , commissioned for the February 2004 BBC programme "What the World Thinks of God". It investigates the links between war and religion through the ages, and was carried out by researchers at the Department of Peace Studies at Bradford University. See also, from the same BBC project: “God and war: An audit and an exploration”, compiled by Greg Austin, Todd Kranock and Thom Oommen,

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/programmes/wtwtgod/pdf/god\\_and\\_war.pdf](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/programmes/wtwtgod/pdf/god_and_war.pdf) and also <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/wtwtgod/3513709.stm>, and a contribution by an Evangelical Christian: dr Richard Land, “How religion defines America”, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/wtwtgod/3518221.stm>

<sup>15</sup> Religion has generally fought a rearguard battle, and always had to retreat when it did not limit itself to matters of faith, but made "factual" pronouncements about the real world that were proven wrong by science: in Galilei's time that the sun revolved around the earth; among many Christians in the US at the moment that creation happened 6000 instead of some 15 billion years ago (!)

<sup>16</sup> One may sincerely doubt whether there is a legally elected president Bush. See the harsh verdict by someone who is supposed to know what it means to be elected president: Robert F. Kennedy Jr., “Was the 2004 Election Stolen?”

[http://www.rollingstone.com/news/story/10432334/was\\_the\\_2004\\_election\\_stolen](http://www.rollingstone.com/news/story/10432334/was_the_2004_election_stolen)

Republicans prevented more than 350,000 voters in Ohio from casting ballots or having their votes counted -- enough to have put John Kerry in the White House.

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<sup>17</sup> In the meantime, a large collection about president Bush, his background, his personality, his policies has been published. You can look up the publication details at amazon.com by clicking on the name of the book:

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/richpub/listmania/fullview/X9TY6Z3PSSZX/002-5337658-7258450>

[The Book on Bush: How George W. \(Mis\)leads America](#) by Eric Alterman

[A Man of Faith : The Spiritual Journey of George W. Bush](#) by David Aikman

[Losing America: Confronting a Reckless and Arrogant Presidency](#) by Robert C. Byrd

[George W. Bush on God and Country : The President Speaks Out About Faith, Principle, and Patriotism](#) by George W. Bush

[A Charge to Keep : My Journey to the White House](#) by George W. Bush

[The Lies of George W. Bush](#) by David Corn

[Worse Than Watergate: The Secret Presidency of George W. Bush](#) by John W. Dean

[Bushworld: Enter at Your Own Risk](#) by Maureen Dowd

[Bush on the Couch: Inside the Mind of the President](#) by Justin A. Frank

[All the President's Spin : George W. Bush, the Media, and the Truth](#) by Ben Fritz

[Fortunate Son: George W. Bush and the Making of an American President](#) by James Hatfield

[The Bush - Haters Handbook: A Guide to the Most Appalling Presidency of the Past 100 Years](#) by Jack Huberman (Nation Books, December 2003)

[Bushwhacked : Life in George W. Bush's America](#) by Molly Ivins

[A Matter of Character : Inside the White House of George W. Bush](#) by Ronald Kessler

[Crimes Against Nature : How George W. Bush and His Corporate Pals Are Plundering the Country and Hijacking Our Democracy](#) by Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

[The Faith of George W. Bush](#) by Stephen Mansfield

[Cruel and Unusual: Bush/Cheney's New World Order](#) by Mark Crispin Miller

[Bush's Brain : How Karl Rove Made George W. Bush Presidential](#) by James Moore

[American Dynasty : Aristocracy, Fortune, and the Politics of Deceit in the House of Bush](#) by Kevin Phillips

[Misunderestimated: The President Battles Terrorism, John Kerry, and the Bush Haters](#) by Bill Sammon

[Playing President : My Relationships with Nixon, Carter, Bush I, Reagan, and Clinton--and How They Did Not Prepare Me for George W. Bush](#), by Robert Scheer (Akashic Books, 2006)

[The Bush Survival Bible: 250 Ways to Make it Through the Next Four Years Without Misunderestimating the Dangers Ahead, and Other Sublimable Statergies](#) by Gene Stone

[The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill](#) by Ron Suskind

[Obliviously On He Sails : The Bush Administration in Rhyme](#) by Calvin Trillin

[House of Bush, House of Saud: The Secret Relationship Between the World's Two Most Powerful Dynasties](#) by Craig Unger

[Plan of Attack](#) by Bob Woodward

<sup>18</sup> See <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/usa/story/0,12271,1586978,00.html>> Ewen MacAskill, [The Guardian](#), Friday October 7, 2005: "George Bush: 'God told me to end the tyranny in Iraq' " George Bush has claimed he was on a mission from God when he launched the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, according to a senior Palestinian politician in an interview to be broadcast by the BBC later this month. Mr Bush revealed the extent of his religious fervour when he met a Palestinian delegation during the Israeli-Palestinian summit at the Egyptian resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, four months after the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003. One of the delegates, Nabil Shaath, who was Palestinian foreign minister at the time, said: "President Bush said to all of us: 'I am driven with a mission from God'. God would tell me, 'George go and fight these terrorists in Afghanistan'. And I did. And then God would tell me 'George, go and end the tyranny in Iraq'. And I did."

<sup>19</sup> See <http://www.guardian.co.uk/usa/story/0,12271,1587122,00.html>. James Sturcke: "White House denies Bush God claims", [Guardian](#), Friday October 7, 2005.

<sup>20</sup> Doug Soderstrom, Ph.D., "The Only Hope For the World", Published on Wednesday, February 1, 2006 by CommonDreams.org, <http://www.commondreams.org/views06/0201-22.htm>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.healingiraq.com> (Healing Iraq)

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<http://www.riverbendblog.blogspot.com> (Baghdad Burning)  
<http://www.afamilyinbaghdad.blogspot.com> (A family in Baghdad)  
<http://iraqgirl.blogspot.com/> (HHK's blog)  
<http://hammorabi.blogspot.com/> (Hammorabi)  
<http://secretsinbaghdad.blogspot.com/> (secrets in Baghdad)  
<http://astarfrommosul.blogspot.com/> (A star from Mosul - Living in War)  
<http://www.back-to-iraq.com/> (Back to Iraq - by an American journalist)  
<http://dahrjamailiraq.com/weblog/> (Dahr Jamail's Iraq Dispatches)  
<http://dailywarnews.blogspot.com/> (Today in Iraq)  
<http://citycalledhell.blogspot.com/> (Where the Date Palms Grow)  
<http://healingiraq.blogspot.com/>  
<http://raedinthemiddle.blogspot.com/>

<sup>22</sup> See for example <http://www.iraqbodycount.net/>, while good overviews are also available from <http://www.antiwar.com/casualties/>. The CNN website at <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2003/iraq/forces/casualties/2006.03.html> even presents detailed personal data plus photographs of the fallen American and coalition troops..

<sup>23</sup> See <http://www.globalpolicy.org/empire/history/interventions.htm>, "US Interventions - US Military and Clandestine Operations in Foreign Countries - 1798-Present", *Global Policy Forum*, 2005

<sup>24</sup> Miguel Angel Alvarez, "The U.S. Naval Base In Guantanamo - A dagger in the heart of Cuba's land", Special for Granma International, March 15, 2006  
<http://www.granma.cu/ingles/2006/marzo/mierc15/12guantanamo.html>

<sup>25</sup> Winston Churchill said already on November 21, 1943: "The power of the executive to cast a man into prison without formulating any charge known to the law, and particularly to deny him the judgement of his peers, is in the highest degree odious, and the foundation of all totalitarian government whether Nazi or Communist" (from E-Newsletter for Democrats, issue 442, February 24, 2006

<sup>26</sup> [Paul Rockwell](#), "Army Reservist Witnesses War Crimes: New Revelations about Racism in the Military", *In Motion Magazine*, April 2, 2005  
[http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/global/pr\\_adelgado.html](http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/global/pr_adelgado.html)

<sup>27</sup> Jane Mayer, "Outsourcing torture - The secret history of America's "extraordinary rendition" program", *The New Yorker*, February 7, 2005.  
See [http://www.newyorker.com/printables/fact/050214fa\\_fact6](http://www.newyorker.com/printables/fact/050214fa_fact6) .

<sup>28</sup> Robert Scheer, *The Wonderful World Of Outsourced Torture*, Truthdig, Dec. 14, 2005  
[http://www.truthdig.com/eartothe-ground/item/20051214outsourcing\\_torture/](http://www.truthdig.com/eartothe-ground/item/20051214outsourcing_torture/)

<sup>29</sup> Robert Fisk, "The Farcical End of the American Dream - The US Press Is Supposed to Be Challenging the Lies of this War", *Global Policy Forum*, March 19, 2006. Do read this short article, and be amazed about the inhumanity not only of the torture, but also of his wife.  
<http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/iraq/media/2006/0319farcical.htm>

<sup>30</sup> Derrick Z. Jackson, *The war on free press*, *Boston Globe*, May 24, 2006  
<http://www.globalpolicy.org/empire/terrorwar/liberties/2006/0524freepress.htm>

<sup>31</sup> The (Jewish) Anti-Defamation League commissioned a public opinion poll by the Marttila Communications Group. See [http://www.adl.org/PresRele/RelChStSep\\_90/4830\\_90.htm](http://www.adl.org/PresRele/RelChStSep_90/4830_90.htm) for the most important results: "Poll: Americans Believe Religion Is 'Under Attack' -- Majority Says Religion is 'Losing Influence' In American Life".  
See also [http://www.adl.org/religious\\_freedom/poll\\_files/frame.htm](http://www.adl.org/religious_freedom/poll_files/frame.htm) for the detailed results: "American attitudes toward religion in the public square. An anti-defamation league survey - 800 interviews - October, 2005" .

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<sup>32</sup> Some groups are more than just fundamentalist, they are really dangerous. See: Austin Cline, "Christian Identity: White Supremacy, Christian Supremacy, Christian Nationalism"  
<http://atheism.about.com/od/christianidentity/p/IdentityRacism.htm>

<sup>33</sup> Austin Cline, "Fundamentalism and Fear of Modernity (Book Notes: *Civil Wars: A Battle for Gay Marriage*)"  
<http://atheism.about.com/b/a/190989.htm>

<sup>34</sup> Adolescent Sexual Health in Europe and the U.S.—Why the Difference?  
<http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/factsheet/fsest.htm>

This article presents figures about: the teen pregnancy rate, the teen birth rate, the teen abortion rate, and prevalence rates for all venereal diseases: syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia and HIV/AIDS. All of these rates are considerably higher in the US than in France, Germany and the Netherlands, except the HIV rate for girls in France.

<sup>35</sup> Chris Mooney, "The Republican War on Science", The New York Times, December 18, 2005  
<<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/18/books/review/18horgan.html?8bu&emc=bu>>

<sup>36</sup> [Michelle Goldberg](#), *Kingdom Coming: The Rise of Christian Nationalism* (Hardcover)  
<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0393060942/002-4951938-9234420> and  
<http://www.kingdomcoming.com/>

<sup>37</sup> Austin Cline, "America's Cult of the Flag and Fetish Behavior Around the American Flag"  
<http://atheism.about.com/od/flagburningdesecration/a/FlagFetishCult.htm?nl=1>

<sup>38</sup> [Isaac Kramnick](#), *The Godless Constitution: A Moral Defense of the Secular State*.  
<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0393328376/002-4951938-9234420>

<sup>39</sup> David Cline, "Should politicians swear to uphold the Bible?"  
<http://atheism.about.com/b/a/252152.htm>

Quote: from Jamie Raskin, professor of law at American University, responding to MD state Senator Nancy Jacobs' biblical justification for supporting a ban on same sex marriage: "Senator, when you took your oath of office, you placed your hand on the Bible and swore to uphold the Constitution. You did not place your hand on the Constitution and swear to uphold the Bible."

<sup>40</sup> Austin Cline, Turkey's Internal Conflict: Mosque vs. State  
<http://atheism.about.com/b/a/257355.htm>

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<http://www.portal.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.ihtml?xml=/news/2003/12/27/wirq27.xml&sSheet=/news/2003/12/27/ixhome.html>, December 2007, 2003. "Bible Belt missionaries set out on a 'war for souls' in Iraq - US Christian evangelists want to 'save Muslim souls' in Iraq, writes David Rennie in Cleveland (Filed: 27/12/2003). From a systems-theoretical/cybernetic viewpoint I would be interesting to make an effort to redefine the term "soul" in terms that are understandable for non-believers.

<sup>42</sup> [Juan Cole](#), How Bush Created a Theocracy in Iraq, Truthdig website, December 2, 2005,  
<[http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/how\\_bush\\_created\\_a\\_theocracy\\_in\\_iraq/](http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/how_bush_created_a_theocracy_in_iraq/)>

<sup>43</sup> Barry Seidman argues that the Christian religious left is also inherently incompatible with democracy. See: [Barry Seidman](#), "A Critique of the New Religious Left"  
[http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/20060530\\_critique\\_religious\\_left/](http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/20060530_critique_religious_left/)

Quote: "What we must understand is that while fundamentalists of every shade try to relive the golden years of religious violence here in the 21st century, it is imperative that we do not fail to expose their creation of false scarcities. There is no supernatural realm; there are no gods or angels. Never were. There is no "sacred" land, people or ideas. What there is we can find in the beauty of Earth's deserts, polar caps, mountain ranges and seas—and inside each one of us. We can enjoy the diversity of life on this planet as the one species capable of contemplating what life actually is. (14) This is the crux of scientific humanism."

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<sup>44</sup> And also: Austin Cline, Review of "The Holy Reich: Nazi Conceptions of Christianity, 1919-1945", by Richard Steigman-Gall,

<http://atheism.about.com/od/bookreviews/fr/HolyReich.htm>, and also:

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/customer-reviews/0521823714/002-4951938-9234420>

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0195168402/002-4951938-9234420>

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0195168402/>

<sup>45</sup> Austin Cline, "The Political Agenda of the American Right (Book Notes: *America Right Or Wrong*)"

<http://atheism.about.com/b/a/256254.htm?nl=1>

Anatol Lieven, *America Right Or Wrong: An Anatomy Of American Nationalism*, Oxford University Press, USA (October 1, 2004), <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0195168402/002-5218606-8292813>

<sup>46</sup> Esther Kaplan: *With God on Their Side: How Christian Fundamentalists Trampled Science, Policy, and Democracy in George W. Bush's White House*. Kaplan is connected to the Campaign to Defend the Constitution, <http://www.defconamerica.org/> . As the DIRECT e-newsletter of the Southern California Democrats says about this book:

*"Christian Fundamentalists made up 40 percent of George W. Bush's electorate in 2004, the result of an intense mobilization that brought out at least 3.5 million new conservative evangelical voters. And it's no wonder the Christian right turned out for Bush with such enthusiasm. As Esther Kaplan shows in this richly detailed investigation, President Bush devoted much of his first term to cultivating their support. Family planning and AIDS organizations saw their funds cut, while church groups received millions of dollars to promote sexual abstinence and marriage. Bush appointed a Christian right dream team to the federal courts dedicated to tearing down what one such judge calls the "so-called separation between church and state." Bush officials slipped creationist literature into our national parks, granted human rights to embryos, and declared that Bush was sent by God. Even the president's foreign policy was shaped by religious zeal."*

<sup>47</sup> Sunsara Taylor, "Esther Kaplan: 'On the Trail of the Christian Right' ", *Revolutionary Worker* #1269,

February 27, 2005, <http://rwor.org/a/1269/esther-kaplan-christian-right.htm> . An interview about

Kaplan's book mentioned in endnote 18. Kaplan mentions there deputy undersecretary of defense Jerry Boykin --a general who has both a military role and a civilian role in the war on terror: "And he says the enemy is Satan, and that we need to join God's Army to defeat this enemy. So, here's the guy who is actually supposed to be capturing Osama bin Laden, but he's saying in public that Osama bin Laden isn't the enemy.

<sup>48</sup> JewsonFirst.org, "Faculty leave Patrick Henry College because of severe limits on academic freedom", May 25, 2006

<http://www.jewsonfirst.org/06b/patrickhenry.html>

In 2006 more than half the faculty at Patrick Henry College quit because of the institution's severe restrictions on academic freedom. News recently emerged of five professors leaving. The school trains right-wing Christians, most of them home-schooled, for high-level government posts; it has reportedly placed a number of its students in the Bush administration and Congress. The departing faculty members' accounts of their experiences illustrate the doctrinal rigidity of those who aspire to Christianize our government."

<sup>49</sup> Rick Perlstein, "The Jesus landing pad – Bush White House checked with rapture Christians before latest Israel move", *The Village Voice*, May 18, 2004.

<http://www.globalpolicy.org/empire/terrorwar/fundamentalism/2004/0518bushjesus.htm> or

<http://www.villagevoice.com/news/0420.perlstein.53582.1.html>

<sup>50</sup> Howard Kurtz, "Prozac for Republicans", *The Washington Post*, May 12, 2006

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/blog/2006/05/12/BL2006051200517.html>

Quote: "Bush is often charged with undermining federal workers by politicizing what are supposed to be objective and analytic functions. He has done this, among other places, at the CIA, the FDA, and NASA, where a 24-year-old college dropout was until recently in a position to order senior officials to make references to the Big Bang compatible with the possibility of 'intelligent design.' Politics per se,

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however, is not the enemy of effective public-sector management. Those presidents who have run the federal government most effectively--I would cite FDR, JFK, and Clinton--have balanced their policy wonks with capable hacks while cultivating youthful idealism and more positive feelings about public service."

<sup>51</sup> Sunsara Taylor--CDC to Women: Prepare to Give Birth! *Truthdig*, June 6, 2006

[http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/20060606\\_sunsara\\_taylor\\_preconception/](http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/20060606_sunsara_taylor_preconception/)

<sup>52</sup> Jeremy Leaming and Rob Boston, "Who Is The Council For National Policy And What Are They Up To? And Why Don't They Want You To Know?," *Americans United for Separation of Church and State*,

[http://www.au.org/site/News2?page=NewsArticle&id=6949&news\\_iv\\_ctrl=0&abbr=cs](http://www.au.org/site/News2?page=NewsArticle&id=6949&news_iv_ctrl=0&abbr=cs)

<sup>53</sup> Frederick Clarkson, "Christian Reconstructionism: Theocratic Dominionism Gains Influence", March-June 1994. This excellent four-part article gives a good idea of the rise (unfortunately not yet of the fall) of dominionism.

Part I: Overview and roots, <http://www.publiceye.org/magazine/v08n1/chrisre1.html>;

Part II: A Generation of Reconstructionists, <http://www.publiceye.org/magazine/v08n1/chrisre2.html>;

Part III: No Longer Without Sheep, <http://www.publiceye.org/magazine/v08n1/chrisre3.html>;

Part IV: A Covert Kingdom, <http://www.publiceye.org/magazine/v08n1/chrisre4.html>.

See also <http://www.jewsonfirst.org/dominionism.html>; the "jewsonfirst" website has over 500 short articles on dominionism, and <http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dominionism> presents definitions of dominionism, "the movement to replace the Constitution with a theocracy".

<sup>54</sup> The New York Times has reviewed several of his books in a "featured author" supplement, with titles that speak for themselves, like:

['American Dynasty: Aristocracy, Fortune, and the Politics of Deceit in the House of Bush'](#), New York, Viking Adult (2004)

['Wealth and Democracy: A Political History of the American Rich'](#), New York, Broadway (2002)

['Arrogant Capital: Washington, Wall Street, and the Frustration of American Politics'](#), Back Bay Books (reprint edition (1994))

['Boiling Point Republicans, Democrats and the Decline of Middle-Class Prosperity'](#), Random House, 1993 '(1993)

Clickable titles, reviews available after registering free of charge with New York Times, and shorter ones also at Amazon, <http://www.amazon.com>.

<sup>55</sup> Kevin Phillips, *"The Emerging Republican Majority"*, 1969

<sup>56</sup> Kevin Phillips, *American Theocracy, The Peril and Politics of Radical Religion, Oil, and Borrowed Money in the 21st Century*,

The New York Times Book Review writes (March 19, 2006): "*American Theocracy* may be the most alarming analysis of where we are and where we may be going to have appeared in many years. It is not without polemic, but unlike many of the more glib and strident political commentaries of recent years, it is extensively researched and frighteningly persuasive...By describing a series of major transformations, by demonstrating the relationships among them, and by discussing them with passionate restraint, Phillips has created a harrowing picture of danger that no American reader will welcome, but that none should ignore."

See also: Kevin Phillips: "How the GOP Became God's Own Party", The Washington Post, April 2, 2006, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/04/01/AR2006040100004\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/04/01/AR2006040100004_pf.html)

<sup>57</sup> Bible study "literature" and "history" courses, "JewsonFirst", an overview of Christocrat efforts to block non-sectarian Bible courses in several states and organize their own.

<http://www.jewsonfirst.org/bibleclass.php>

<sup>58</sup> Faith-based initiative

[http://www.theocracywatch.org/faith\\_base.htm](http://www.theocracywatch.org/faith_base.htm)

<sup>59</sup> "Executive Order: Responsibilities of the Department of Commerce and Veterans Affairs and the Small Business Administration with Respect to Faith-Based and Community Initiatives."

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<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/06/20040601-1.html>

<sup>60</sup> Marci A. Hamilton, "God vs. the Gavel: Religion and the Rule of Law", Cambridge University Press, now argues that religious groups must generally be held to the same legal and regulatory standards as everyone else.

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0521853044/002-4951938-9234420>

Review by Austin Cline at: <http://atheism.about.com/od/bookreviews/fr/GodGavel.htm>

<sup>61</sup> Patrick Martin, Christian fundamentalist bigotry reigns at US Air Force, World Socialist Website, 30 April 2005, <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2005/apr2005/acad-a30.shtml>

<sup>62</sup> Air Force Issues Troubling Guidelines On Religion, Says Americans United. Watchdog Group Criticizes Military Branch For Ignoring Rights of Minority Faiths and Nonbelievers Thursday, February 9, 2006

[http://www.au.org/site/News2?abbr=pr&page=NewsArticle&id=7929&security=1002&news\\_iv\\_ctrl=1241](http://www.au.org/site/News2?abbr=pr&page=NewsArticle&id=7929&security=1002&news_iv_ctrl=1241)

<sup>63</sup> See <http://www.af.mil/libraryguidelines.pdf> for the definitive guidelines and for links to several informative articles, see <http://www.jewsonfirst.org/airacademy.html>.

<sup>64</sup> "US Trade and Budget Deficits, and the Fall of the Dollar", Archived Articles, *Global Policy Forum*, 2002 - present

<http://www.globalpolicy.org/soecon/crisis/bubarchives.htm#dollaratrisk>

<sup>65</sup> [Alan Cooperman and Ann Scott Tyson](#), Washington Post Staff Writers, "House Injects Prayer Into Defense Bill", The Washington Post, Friday, May 12, 2006; Page A05,

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/05/11/AR2006051102009.html>

<sup>66</sup> Mentioned already sub endnote 18 (Kaplan): <http://www.defconamerica.org/> concentrates especially on cases where the Christian right is assaulting the separation between church and state. For example, as of late March 2006 the Georgia legislature passed legislation that will create state-funded Bible classes in public schools, and will put the Ten Commandments in county buildings.

<sup>67</sup> Juan Cole, "How Bush created a theocracy in Iraq", Truthdig, December 2, 2005, presents a good historical overview of political developments in Iraq since the 1950s.

[http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/how\\_bush\\_created\\_a\\_theocracy\\_in\\_iraq/](http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/how_bush_created_a_theocracy_in_iraq/)

<sup>68</sup> The *Christian Coalition of America* (<http://www.cc.org/>) as it is officially named, has chapters in many states, and has a legislative agenda with more than a dozen bills and amendments it wants to get passed by the senate (<http://www.cc.org/>).

<sup>69</sup> *Focus on the Family* (<http://www.family.org/>) focuses on giving children a biblical education, and is led by a televangelist.

<sup>70</sup> The *Family Research Council* (<http://www.frc.org/>) has as founding co-sponsors: Focus on the Family Action, Americans United to Preserve Marriage, and American Family Association Action.

<sup>71</sup> *Eagle Forum* (<http://www.eagleforum.org/>) is so conservative it would not even be called arch-reactionary in Europe. The subtitle of its website proclaims: "leading the pro-family movement since 1972". It is fascinating to reconnoiter this website as well as those mentioned in the previous three endnotes, all defending "family values".

<sup>72</sup> Shlomo Shamir, "ADL's Foxman warns of efforts to 'Christianize America' ", (originally in Haaretz, November 6, 2005, <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/641831.html> (not available anymore), and <http://www.jewsonfirst.org/05a/sep013.html>). This website is a treasure trove on information on the policies and activities of the Christian right - recommended reading! Its statement of principle reads: "Why we're JewsOnFirst.org, the Jewish response to attacks on the First Amendment by the Christian right. The First Amendment to the Constitution begins: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof... We Jews have relied on those few

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words as the enduring bulwark of our freedom, security and privacy here in the United States. But in recent years, we've witnessed numerous efforts by fundamentalist Christians to erode the First Amendment by imposing their religious values through legislation, executive power, and intimidation.

<sup>73</sup> Nicole Winfield, "Vatican official refutes intelligent design", Seattle Post-Intelligencer, November 18, 2005, available at <http://www.jewsonfirst.org/05a/public016.html>

<sup>74</sup> Mary E. Bendyna, John C. Green, Mark J. Rozell, Clyde Wilcox, "Uneasy Alliance: Conservative Catholics and the Christian Right", *Sociology of Religion*, Spring, 2001,

<sup>75</sup> Shmuel Rosner: "David Brog on why Christians support the Jewish state", in rubric "Rosner's Guest", Ha'aretz, May 9, 2006 – a fascinating discussion of mr. Brog with the readers of the Israeli daily Ha'aretz, <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/pages/rosnerGuest.jhtml?itemNo=713233> . See also David Brog, *Standing with Israel – Why Christians support the Jewish state*, Frontline, May 2006,

<sup>76</sup> "Christian Fundamentalist Attacks on Public Education", JewsonFirst.org. This website has a collection of items, covering the period late 2005 – mid 2006, on things like obligatory bible courses, on Christocrats' pressures to have school prayer accepted, and even religious courses at universities (!), on efforts to push "intelligent design" as science, on swearing in prescribed school books, on checking whether schools collaborate with homosexual activists. <http://www.jewsonfirst.org/public.html#kentuckydates>

<sup>77</sup> "Louisiana enacts no-exceptions abortion law", JewsonFirst.org, June 8, 2006. Abortion, even when resulting from rape or incest, is criminalized. <http://www.jewsonfirst.org/06b/louisianalaw.html>

<sup>78</sup> See <http://www.globalpolicy.org/intljustice/wanted/2005/1212ties.htm> : "Ties Between Christian Fundamentalists, Texas Oil Interests, etc.", Global Policy Forum, December 11, 2005. It mentions: "Additional ties between southern Christian fundamentalists, Texas oil interests, and Russian-Israeli mobsters and weapons smugglers uncovered. According to informed Washington insiders, there is increasing evidence of financial links between key "Christian Right" GOP notables and an international ring of Russian-Ukrainian-Israeli mobsters tied to notorious Russian weapons smuggler Viktor Vasilevich (aka Anatoliyevich) Bout."

<sup>79</sup> Abraham H. Foxman, National Director of the Anti-Defamation League, "Why Evangelical Support for Israel is a Good Thing", <http://www.adl.org/Israel/evangelical.asp>

<sup>80</sup> See <http://www.godhatesfags.com/main/index.html> , a website devoted to violent hatred of homosexuals, partially as expressed by the Christian right. For example by the following websites: <http://www.godhatessweden.com/> which says: "The King looks like an anal-copulator, & his grinning kids look slutty & gay!" And: "You jackass Swedes just don't get it. Once you have laws to chill Bible preaching, we don't give a rat's tutu whatever else you do or say. You are drippings from the Devil's own penis - a veritable sperm bank for Satan's queers. "To me belongeth vengeance and recompence...for the day of their calamity is at hand." Deut. 32:35. Obviously, there is also "God's ultimatum to America's perverted press" at <http://www.godhatesfags.com/fags/fagmedia.html> .

<sup>81</sup> Matthew Shepard Online Resources: "The religious right and anti-gay speech: in their own words" presents quotes from people and organizations like Jerry Falwell, the Family Research Council, the American Family Association, and others (<http://www.hatecrime.org/subpages/hatespeech/hate.html> ). One can also see there a link to a right-wing Christian website (where one can see Matthew Shepard not only burning in hell, but also screaming: <http://www.godhatesfags.com/memorial.html> . This website is named after a gay boy who for that reason was beaten to death by right-wing Christians (see also <http://www.matthewsplace.org>, the official web memorial created by his mother, and also <http://www.matthewshepard.org>, the website of the foundation named after him, and [http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew\\_Shepard](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew_Shepard) ) .

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<sup>82</sup> The judicial system in Iran is described in outline in the Wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judicial\\_system\\_of\\_Iran](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judicial_system_of_Iran). Iran is one of seven countries in the world that carry the death penalty for homosexual acts: all of them justify this punishment with Islamic law

<sup>83</sup> See <http://www.hatecrime.org/subpages/hitler/hitler.html> which compares Nazi Anti-Jewish Speech vs. Religious Right Anti-Gay Speech, and concludes the two are frighteningly similar along fifteen dimensions.

<sup>84</sup> Same-sex marriage, Wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Same-sex\\_marriage](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Same-sex_marriage)

<sup>85</sup> Mark Philip Strasser, *Legally Wed: Same-Sex Marriage and the Constitution*, Cornell University Press, 1997.  
<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0801484294/002-4951938-9234420>

<sup>86</sup> "Gay marriage amendment fails", Reuters, June 7, 2006  
[http://today.reuters.com/news/newsarticle.aspx?type=topNews&storyid=2006-06-07T152046Z\\_01\\_N07187386\\_RTRUKOC\\_0\\_US-RIGHTS-GAYS-CONGRESS.xml&src=rss](http://today.reuters.com/news/newsarticle.aspx?type=topNews&storyid=2006-06-07T152046Z_01_N07187386_RTRUKOC_0_US-RIGHTS-GAYS-CONGRESS.xml&src=rss), and also: "Federal Marriage Amendment", Wikipedia. This amendment to the Constitution, which would define marriage as a union of one man and one woman, was narrowly defeated in the US Senate on June 7, 2006.  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal\\_Marriage\\_Amendment](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Marriage_Amendment)

<sup>87</sup> Brian Whitaker, *Unspeakable love*, University of California Press, 2006  
<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0520250176/>

<sup>88</sup> Fundamentalist Christians Preaching Hatred of Homosexuals  
<http://www.jewsonfirst.org/hate.html> . This website provides different links to interesting articles. For example:  
- Spurious, repeatedly cited, homophobic "research" (by Paul Cameron of the one-man Family Research Institute), <http://www.jewsonfirst.org/hateresearch.php>  
- "The Religious Right's 'Conversion Therapy' Offensive", <http://www.jewsonfirst.org/exgay.php>  
- [Elizabeth Weill-Greenberg](#), "Two-thirds of gay students face harassment: report", *Washingtonblade.com*, Friday, April 28, 2006

<sup>89</sup> Sam Harris, *An Atheist Manifesto*, [http://www.truthdig.com/dig/item/200512\\_an\\_atheist\\_manifesto/](http://www.truthdig.com/dig/item/200512_an_atheist_manifesto/) . Although the US is one of the most religious countries on earth, there is a large number of atheist websites, like American Atheists, <http://www.atheists.org/> , Americans united for separation of church and state, <http://www.au.org/site/PageServer> , Center for Inquiry Transnational, <http://www.centerforinquiry.net/> , Council for Secular Humanism, <http://www.secularhumanism.org/> , with two journals: *The Skeptical Inquirer*, <http://www.csicop.org/si/> and *Freedom from Religion Foundation*, <http://www.ffrf.org/> , *The raving Atheist*, <http://www.ravingatheist.com/> , *The secular web*, <http://www.infidels.org/> , *The Skeptics Society*, with journal *The Skeptic*, <http://www.skeptic.com/> and *Free Inquiry*, which contains a short article by famous systems theorist Mario Bunge in the 2006 February-March issue: Mario Bunge, "Enlightened Solutions for Global Challenges", [http://www.secularhumanism.org/index.php?section=library&page=bunge\\_26\\_2](http://www.secularhumanism.org/index.php?section=library&page=bunge_26_2) . An interesting website is also <http://www.theocracywatch.org>, with information regarding "The rise of the religious right in the Republican Party" .

<sup>90</sup> Austin Cline, "Atheists hated more than gays, Muslims, all other groups", <http://atheism.about.com/b/a/255008.htm?nl=1>

<sup>91</sup> Its anti-science attitudes are perhaps most visible in its resistance against advances in medical science, especially when these are even remotely connected to sexuality, as in AIDS, or even anti-cancer therapy requiring vaccination. See:

- Gene Gerard: "Religion Running Roughshod Over Cancer Science", *Truthdig*, June 11, 2006  
[http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/20060611\\_gene\\_gerard\\_religion\\_cancer\\_science/](http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/20060611_gene_gerard_religion_cancer_science/)
- Gene Gerard: "White House Failing America's AIDS Crisis", *Truthdig*, June 17, 2006

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[http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/20060613\\_gene\\_gerard\\_aids\\_crisis/](http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/20060613_gene_gerard_aids_crisis/)

<sup>92</sup> Austin Cline: "Christian right and modernity: America's Christian right opposed to modernity", about.com website, undated.

<http://atheism.about.com/od/christianrightagenda/p/ChristianModern.htm?nl=1>

<sup>93</sup> Undermining Abortion: How the Christian Right Undermines the Right to Abortion. It does so by requiring parental or spousal notification/consent, forced counseling and often unscientific advice, waiting periods before getting an abortion, intimidation of abortion clinics, restrictions on abortion funding, fetal abuse laws (the Christian right wants laws against drinking, smoking or drugs during pregnancy, implying that the fetus is a person and that killing it is plain murder), limitations on valid (i.e. non-frivolous) reasons and times (first semester of pregnancy only) for abortions, restrictions on contraception, etc. Over 80% of counties in the US have no abortion services, so the right to abortion is not a right when it cannot be exercised.

<http://atheism.about.com/od/abortioncontraception/p/UndermineAbort.htm>

<sup>94</sup> Austin Cline: "Basic beliefs: What do Muslims believe? Holy Days, Holy Site, Beliefs". This short overview of the most important elements of Muslim belief can be found at:

<http://atheism.about.com/od/islammuslims/p/Beliefs.htm>

<sup>95</sup> Donald Kagan, Gary Schmitt, Thomas Donnelly, *Rebuilding America's Defenses - Strategy, Forces and Resources For a New Century, A Report of The Project for the New American Century*, September 2000. This is the most important policy document of the neocons.

<http://www.newamericancentury.org/RebuildingAmericasDefenses.pdf>

<sup>96</sup> Andrew J. Bacevich, *The New American Militarism: How Americans Are Seduced by War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. See review in *Parameters*, the interesting US Army War College Quarterly (<http://www.carlisle.army.mil/usawc/parameters/>), with all back issues from 1995 onward available electronically, at: <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/05winter/win-rev.htm>  
<http://terroristwatch.tripod.com/iranianties.html>

<sup>97</sup> See for example the full text of the Patriot Act, accepted under considerable pressure in October 2001, at <http://www.epic.org/privacy/terrorism/hr3162.html>

<sup>98</sup> Compared to most Europeans, most Americans speak hardly any foreign languages. Of course they don't need to, since most of the world speaks English. Also, to the extent they seriously read newspapers, their newspapers devote a far smaller section to foreign news than most European ones. They usually have a very limited grasp of especially geography

<sup>99</sup> Although when Gorbachev first met Reagan, he stressed that the (then) Soviet Union was fighting the first war of the 21st century, also on behalf of the US, on its southern borders.

<sup>100</sup> Khadaffi seems to have lost his revolutionary zeal lately, though he is still regularly speaking out on the world's problems, and sharply criticizes both the US and the Western world, and also the Arab world. See his personal website at <http://www.algathafi.org/index-en.htm> and especially his article "Brother Leader of the Revolution Moammar Ghadhafi presents an analysis about the actual crisis the world is passing through about terrorism", <http://www.algathafi.org/terrorism/terrorism.htm>

<sup>101</sup> The website <http://terroristwatch.tripod.com/iranianties.html> presents information about the ties between Iran and several terrorist organizations, like Hezbollah and Palestine Islamic Jihad.

<sup>102</sup> The Israeli chief of staff (an air force general) was asked on CNN (April 14, 2006) how far he was prepared to go to prevent Iran from developing an atomic bomb. His short answer: "2000 kilometers".

<sup>103</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein, Commentary 179, "Iran and the bomb", <http://fbc.binghamton.edu/179en.htm>. At <http://fbc.binghamton.edu/cmpg.htm> you will find all 182 articles about interesting subjects ex-ISA president Wallerstein has published since 1998. Many of these articles can also be found in the weekly edition of the Egyptian newspaper Al Ahram: <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/index.htm>.

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<sup>104</sup> Seymour Hersh, "The Iran plans", *The New Yorker*, April 17, 2006, [http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/articles/060417fa\\_fact](http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/articles/060417fa_fact)

<sup>105</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Been there, done that - Talk of a U.S. strike on Iran is eerily reminiscent of the run-up to the Iraq war", *Los Angeles Times*, April 23, 2006. Brzezinski was national security adviser during the Carter administration.

Quote: "There is unintended irony in a situation in which the outrageous language of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (whose powers are much more limited than his title implies) helps to justify threats by administration figures, which in turn help Ahmadinejad to exploit his intransigence further, gaining more fervent domestic support for himself as well as for the Iranian nuclear program."  
<http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/commentary/la-op-brzezinski23apr23.1.4177462.story>

<sup>106</sup> <sup>106</sup> Ray McGovern, "Juggernaut Gathering Momentum, Headed for Iran", *Truthout*, February 6, 2006  
<http://www.globalpolicy.org/empire/intervention/iran/general/2006/0206juggernaut.htm> and also:  
<http://www.truthout.org/cgi-bin/artman/exec/view.cgi/48/17505>

<sup>107</sup> Matthew Yglesias: "Iran: Don't Do It", *Global Policy Forum*, April 20, 2006  
<http://www.globalpolicy.org/empire/intervention/iran/general/2006/0419dontdoit.htm>

<sup>108</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Night\\_of\\_the\\_Long\\_Knives](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Night_of_the_Long_Knives)

<sup>109</sup> There is obviously talk about a pre-emptive strike on the Iranian nuclear facilities, using nuclear bunker-busting bombs. The Union of Concerned Scientists describes the drawbacks of these weapons, including the possible death of millions in other countries:

[http://www.ucsusa.org/global\\_security/nuclear\\_weapons/nuclear-bunker-buster-rnep-animation.html](http://www.ucsusa.org/global_security/nuclear_weapons/nuclear-bunker-buster-rnep-animation.html).  
The *New York Times* writes in its April 15, 2006 editorial: "A flurry of reports about possible preparations for air strikes seems to have alarmed American military and foreign policy specialists more than the Iranians — and rightly so."

<sup>110</sup> DEBKAFile , <http://www.debka.com>, seems to be well-informed and closely related to Israeli intelligence sources. The DEBKAFile Exclusive Report: "Iran Flaunts Low-Level Enrichment to Conceal High-Powered Weaponization Plant", April 14, 2006. The Debka file website presents details of secret Iranian activities, at <http://www.debka.com/article.php?aid=1158>, :

".... top-secret plant under construction that is designed to run 155,000 centrifuges, enough to enrich uranium for 3-5 nuclear bombs a year. This is Project B, or the hidden face of the enrichment plant open to inspection at Natanz." ....." The clerical rulers in Tehran have long suspected the Americans or Israelis would eventually bomb Natanz out of existence. Therefore, four years ago, they began constructing its mirror - albeit on a far larger scale - in order to push ahead uninterrupted with enrichment for weapons, regardless of objections from the West, Israel and Arab neighbors.

Russian experts completed the initial plans in 2003 and construction began in early 2004. In late 2005, Bulgarian transport planes delivered tens of thousands of centrifuges from Belarus and Ukraine; they were transported directly to Neyshabour in Khorassan, 38 kms to the southeast of Mashad. In January 2006, 23 Ukrainian engineers arrived to start installing the equipment, joined in February by 46 Belarusian nuclear experts who are working in shifts to prepare the 155,000 P-1 and P-2 centrifuges for operation. This compares with 60,000 in Natanz - of which 40,000 are accessible for inspection while 20,000 are hidden in closed subterranean chambers."

<sup>111</sup> Robert Tait in Tehran and Ewen MacAskill: " Iranian group seeks British suicide bombers", *The Guardian*, Wednesday April 19, 2006

<sup>112</sup> DEBKAFile Special Report: "Fat Iranian Cash Contracts for Terrorists to Hit American Troops and Israeli Civilians", May 6, 2006, <http://www.debka.com/article.php?aid=1102> . A quote: "According to DEBKAFile's counter-terror sources, Iranian intelligence shells out a fee of \$50,000 and 80,000 to Sunni hit squads in central and western Iraq for every attack on American troops. Half this amount is paid out up front with the hit list; the balance, when the mission is accomplished. Unlike al Qaeda which kills Iraqis indiscriminately, Iranian intelligence paymasters insist on pinpointing Americans only.

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The rate for Palestinian terrorist groups setting up strikes against Israelis is around \$50,000 for each “successful” suicide killing. The rate is lowest in southern Iraq, where there are plenty of pro-Iranian Shiite gangs. They can earn \$20,000 to \$30,000 from Iranian intelligence for murdering or injuring British soldiers. There, as in Israel, Iranian intelligence sends over advanced bombs and operating technology through the Hizballah.”

<sup>113</sup> Irshad Manji, *The trouble with Islam*, St. Martin’s Press, 2004. This book can be found at <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0312326998/002-4951938-9234420>. See also her personal website at: <http://www.muslim-refusenik.com/>

<sup>114</sup> Irshad Manji, “Ahmadinejad and Armageddon, Iran’s president craves Doomsday. We must not cave in to him”, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 18, 2006, <http://www.muslim-refusenik.com/news/philadelphia-inquirer-2006-05-18.html>

<sup>115</sup> Raffi Berg, “Israel’s religious settlers”, *BBC News*, 18 August 2003 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle%5Feast/3144791.stm>  
Quote: “According to a recent survey of settlers by the Jerusalem-based Harry S Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace, nearly 40% of Israelis in the West Bank and Gaza Strip live there out of a belief in a divinely ordained mission to inhabit the land.”

<sup>116</sup> The full text of Ahmadinejad’s recent letter of to Bush can be found at <http://jihadwatch.org/archives/011362.php>

<sup>117</sup> For a satirical piece on Bush’s reaction to Ahmadinejad’s letter see “Andy Borowitz – Bush demand that Iran halt production of long letters”, [http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/20060512\\_andy\\_borowitz\\_iran\\_letters/](http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/20060512_andy_borowitz_iran_letters/)

<sup>118</sup> [Charles Krauthammer](#), Say No to Tehran’s Gambit, *The Washington Post*, Friday, May 26, 2006; Page A21 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/05/25/AR2006052501987.html>

<sup>119</sup> Brendan Murray, “Bush Leverage with Russia, Iran, China Falls as Oil Prices Rise”, *Bloomberg*, May 1, 2006 <http://www.globalpolicy.org/empire/challenges/general/2006/0501leverage.htm>

<sup>120</sup> [Rachel Ehrenfeld](#), *Funding Evil: How Terrorism Is Financed--and How to Stop It*, Bonus Books 2003, expanded edition February 2005 <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1566252318/002-4951938-9234420?n=283155>

<sup>121</sup> Bradley Burston: “A special place in hell – the cult of suicide, the culture of failure”, *Haaretz*, April 20, 2006

<<http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/pages/ShArt.jhtml?itemNo=707640&contrassID=2>>

An extensive excerpt: “According to Argo, “What the bombers say is, ‘I did it to deter [the Israelis]. They need to feel our pain. If they feel our pain, they won’t hurt us again.’ ” But of course we will. And we will hurt them precisely because the bomber bombed. And it will be our pretext for any number of additional measures for which large numbers of Palestinians will suffer. And the world will let us, because the world, having been attacked in Bali and Moscow and in Iraqi mosques, and in Madrid and London and Lower Manhattan, no longer has patience for Palestinian bombers, no longer has patience for Palestinian leaders who condone them, and, in the end, no longer has patience for the Palestinian cause.

Suicide bombing is no longer just a cult activity. It is no longer merely a failure. It has become a failure on a monumental scale, the very symbol of the culture of failure that keeps a state of Palestine an idea and not a reality. Palestinians said early in the intifada that it was suicide bombing that put their cause back on the world map. That may well have been true at the time. What is clear now, however, is that it is suicide bombing that has kept Palestine off the world map. It has, at the same time, markedly shrunk the map of the Palestinian West Bank, by providing the rationale and the defense for the route of the fence that makes the Green Line 1967 border a fading memory. The political culture of the

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Palestinians, steeped in naqba [catastrophe], haunted by 1967, furious with intra-Palestinian corruption and misrule, has become a culture of failure which prizes the grand gesture of spectacular futility, whether it is pushing the detonator switch, or refusing to recognize Israel - even as you (Hamas) prepare to petition the Israeli High Court of Justice to allow Hamas legislators to keep their Israeli-issued personal documents.

<sup>122</sup> Bradley Burston, "What makes Islam so easy to hate?" Haaretz, 31 Jan. 2006  
<http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/pages/ShArt.jhtml?itemNo=676507&contrassID=2>

An excerpt: "There is a depth of self-pity here that even we Jews can't top. While they're at it, they have redefined genocide for the benefit of us Jews. They have also redefined occupation for the rest of the world. At this point, the only real occupation that exists is when Jewish people here or Christian people there in Iraq, occupy Muslim people. They have also redefined the modern nation-state, having made it an article of their faith in congregations from London to Indonesia that of all the countries in the world, one and only one lacks any right to continue to exist."

<sup>123</sup> Austin Cline, "Scars of War, Wounds of Peace: The Israeli-Arab Tragedy, by Shlomo Ben-Ami"  
<http://atheism.about.com/od/bookreviews/fr/ScarsWar.htm>  
See also <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0195181581/102-1012553-1372157> for a detailed review of the book

<sup>124</sup> Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S.), March 29, 2006  
Anat Berko and Edna Erez, " 'Ordinary People' and 'Death Work': Palestinian Suicide Bombers as Victimizers and Victims"  
[http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam\\_multimedia/English/eng\\_n/html/psb\\_0406.htm](http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/html/psb_0406.htm)

<sup>125</sup> Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S.), November 2003  
"Geography and Politics: Maps of 'Palestine' as a means to instill fundamentally negative messages regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict".  
[http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/MALAM\\_MULTIMEDIA/ENGLISH/AUTHORITY/PDF/MAPS.PDF](http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/MALAM_MULTIMEDIA/ENGLISH/AUTHORITY/PDF/MAPS.PDF)

<sup>126</sup> Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S.), April 14, 2006  
"Discrepancies between statements made by Hamas to Palestinian and Arab media and those made to Western media"  
[http://www.intelligence.org.il/eng/eng\\_n/html/hamas\\_140406e.htm](http://www.intelligence.org.il/eng/eng_n/html/hamas_140406e.htm)

<sup>127</sup> Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S.), March 29, 2006  
"The new Hamas government and its political platform".  
[http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam\\_multimedia/English/eng\\_n/pdf/Hamas\\_gov\\_e.pdf](http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/Hamas_gov_e.pdf)

<sup>128</sup> Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S.), May 24, 2006  
"Palestinian Islamic Jihad Internet sites and their Internet providers"  
[http://www.intelligence.org.il/eng/eng\\_n/html/pij\\_internet\\_e0506.htm](http://www.intelligence.org.il/eng/eng_n/html/pij_internet_e0506.htm)

<sup>129</sup> The Wikipedia gives an excellent and almost overly detailed overview of the entire cartoon controversy at:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jyllands-Posten\\_Muhammad\\_cartoons\\_controversy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jyllands-Posten_Muhammad_cartoons_controversy)

<sup>130</sup> See "Cartoon Body Count – Death by Drawing", <http://www.cartoonbodycount.com/>

<sup>131</sup> The cartoons are still visible on this website: <http://michellemalkin.com/archives/004413.htm>

<sup>132</sup> See for example the reports of the Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Anti-Semitism and Racism of Tel-Aviv University, <http://www.tau.ac.il/Anti-Semitism/default.htm> and more

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specifically the country reports, in this case about the Arab countries, the most recent one being from 2003: <http://www.tau.ac.il/Anti-Semitism/asw2003-4/arab.htm> .

<sup>133</sup> Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S), "A review of malicious anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic cartoons systematically and continuously published in Jordan 's popular daily Ad-Dustour", June 25 , 2006  
[http://www.intelligence.org.il/eng/eng\\_n/html/ad\\_dustour.htm](http://www.intelligence.org.il/eng/eng_n/html/ad_dustour.htm)

<sup>134</sup> <http://www.hamshahri.org/>, in Farsi. However, the contest is administered by <http://www.irancartoon.com/> which says in English:

**International cartoon contest-Holocaust**

"International Cartoon Competition: where 'is the red line of western press freedom?' "

Theme: 1-Where is red line of western press freedom? 2-Why should the "Palestinian people" pay for the "holocaust" ? 3-About Danish cartoons

Holocaust: West's reaction towards holocaust creates serious questions in the mind of world's peoples, such as: 1) Why discussion is not allowed concerning holocaust, if it is a historical fact. 2) The holocaust had been finished and nothing can be done for it. But the bigger holocausts are happening in Iraq, Palestine and Afghanistan and we can protect their victims. 3) Why suppressed and suffered people of Palestine living hundreds kilometer away from Poland and Germany should pay the price for holocaust?

Deadline: May 15, 2006. Awards: First prize :12000\$ Second prize:8000\$ Third Prize:5000\$.

The website also mentions: "Regarding to clarification of the issue of "Holocaust" this website possibly will be closed by United States, in this case please refer to the following addresses [and then three addresses are given, F.G.]. So far, persons from 44 countries participated.

<sup>135</sup> See <http://www.boomka.org/> and also [http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Israeli\\_group\\_announces\\_anti-semitic\\_cartoons\\_contest](http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Israeli_group_announces_anti-semitic_cartoons_contest), which quotes one of the organizers: "We'll show the world we can do the best, sharpest, most offensive Jew hating cartoons ever published!", said Sandy. "No Iranian will beat us on our home turf!". Wikipedia also has an informative article about the different aspects of the "cartoon controversy"

<sup>136</sup> The literature on Internal vs. External Locus of Control is interesting here. The Locus of Control scale, based on Julian Rotter's original work, can be found at <http://www.psych.uncc.edu/pagoolka/LC.html>

<sup>137</sup> See V.S. Naipaul, *Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey*, Vintage Reissue Edition, 1982, and also his *Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions Among the Converted Peoples*, Vintage, 1999.

<sup>138</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The clash of civilizations*, see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clash\\_of\\_Civilizations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clash_of_Civilizations).

<sup>139</sup> Austin Cline, "Society is worse off when God is on its side", <http://atheism.about.com/b/a/206105.htm> . This article gives a concise overview of Gregory S. Paul's article in the Journal of Religion and Society, see endnote 138. The same thesis, that religion correlates negatively with several indicators of societal health, is also brought forward in Kevin Baldeosingh, "Nations under God", <http://www.caribscape.com/baldeosingh/religion/sober/2005/religion8.html>

<sup>140</sup> See <http://www.skeptdic.com/> , the *Skeptic's Dictionary*, which lists and defines close to 500 (!) irrational beliefs, and explains why they are nonsense. Do at least reconnoiter this site thoroughly to see how many irrational beliefs you hold yourself! Similar sites, by Massimo Polidoro and Luigi Garlaschelli are [www.csicop.org/genx/polidoro](http://www.csicop.org/genx/polidoro) and <http://www.cicap.org/en/> .

<sup>141</sup> Sam Harris, "Atheist Manifesto", Truthdig, undated (2006), [http://www.truthdig.com/dig/item/200512\\_an\\_atheist\\_manifesto/](http://www.truthdig.com/dig/item/200512_an_atheist_manifesto/), and also:  
- Sam Harris, "Response to Reader Comments and Criticism", *Truthdig*, Jan. 26, 2006;  
- Sam Harris: "Sam Harris on the Reality of Islam", Truthdig, Febr. 7, 2006, [http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/20060207\\_reality\\_islam/](http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/20060207_reality_islam/)

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<sup>142</sup> Sam Harris, *The end of faith. Religion, terror, and the future of reason*. New York, W.W. Norton & Company, August 2004, ISBN: 0393035158. Generally very positive reviews can be found in important publications like the Guardian (Richard Dawkins), the New York Times Book Review, the Economist, the Independent, the Observer, the San Francisco Chronicle, and New Scientist. See <http://www.samharris.org/>.

<sup>143</sup> See the excellent Holocaust encyclopedia of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/>, in English, French and Spanish.

<sup>144</sup> See [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in\\_depth/africa/2004/rwanda/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in_depth/africa/2004/rwanda/default.stm), the BBC's "Rwanda genocide: ten years on", which includes nasty video footage.

<sup>145</sup> He writes: "If God exists, either he can do nothing to stop the most egregious calamities or he does not care to. God, therefore, is either impotent or evil. Pious readers will now execute the following pirouette: God cannot be judged by merely human standards of morality. But, of course, human standards of morality are precisely what the faithful use to establish God's goodness in the first place. And any God who could concern himself with something as trivial as gay marriage, or the name by which he is addressed in prayer, is not as inscrutable as all that. If he exists, the God of Abraham is not merely unworthy of the immensity of creation; he is unworthy even of man."

<sup>146</sup> The "Talk Origins archive – Exploring the Creation/Evolution controversy", <http://www.talkorigins.org/> is a Wikipedia-like website, which presents 29+ evidences for macro-evolution, see: <http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/comdesc/>

<sup>147</sup> Alan Cooperman, Washington Post Staff Writer, "Where Most See a Weather System, Some See Divine Retribution", the *Washington Post*, Sunday, September 4, 2005; Page A27. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/09/03/AR2005090301408.html>

<sup>148</sup> He states: "Any account of a "god gene" that causes the majority of Americans to helplessly organize their lives around ancient works of religious fiction must explain why so many inhabitants of other First World societies apparently lack such a gene. The level of atheism throughout the rest of the developed world refutes any argument that religion is somehow a moral necessity." See especially: "The brain chemistry of the Buddha", interview by Laura Sheahen of Dean Hamer, a molecular biologist at NIH, author of *The God gene*, [http://www.beliefnet.com/story/154/story\\_15451\\_1.html](http://www.beliefnet.com/story/154/story_15451_1.html)

<sup>149</sup> The *Human Development Report 2005* is commissioned by the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). The complete report (6,3 Mb) can be downloaded at <http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2005/>.

<sup>150</sup> Norway, Iceland, Australia, Canada, Sweden, Switzerland, Belgium, Japan, the Netherlands, Denmark and the United Kingdom, according to this report.

<sup>151</sup> Ruth Gledhill, "Societies worse off 'when they have God on their side' ", *The Times*, September 27, 2005. See <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2-1798944,00.html>. This is a review of the article in the following endnote.

<sup>152</sup> Gregory S. Paul, "Cross-National Correlations of Quantifiable Societal Health with Popular Religiosity and Secularism in the Prosperous Democracies". *Journal of Religion and Society*. Vol. 7 (2005), <http://moses.creighton.edu/JRS/2005/2005-11.html>. This methodologically sophisticated and detailed study has used data for religious belief from the International Social Survey Program (ISSP), with the last survey including some 23.000 persons in 17 of the developed democracies. Data on social health and dysfunction come mainly from the UN Development Program.

<sup>153</sup> See Anup Shah, *The US and foreign aid assistance*, which presents both absolute amounts of foreign aid and foreign aid as a percentage of GNP. See:

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<http://www.globalissues.org/TradeRelated/Debt/ForeignAidNumbersinChartsandGraphs>, which says: "USA's aid, in terms of percentage of their GNP has almost always been lower than any other industrialized nation in the world, though paradoxically since 2000, their dollar amount has been the highest. (Only since 2004 have they moved up from last place, by one.)"

See also: *Washington Post* editorial: "Counting Aid Dollars - A Half-Successful Attempt to Improve the US Standing", *Washington Post*, April 16, 2006

<http://www.globalpolicy.org/socecon/develop/oda/2006/0416counting.htm> and  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/04/15/AR2006041500782.html>

<sup>154</sup> [Tony Judt](#), "Europe vs. America, *The New York Review of Books*, vol. 52, number 2, February 10, 2005, <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/17726> . Judt reviews three recent books on the relationship between the US and Europe:

T.R. Reid, *The United States of Europe: The New Superpower and the End of American Supremacy*, Penguin Books

Jeremy Rifkin, *The European Dream: How Europe's Vision of the Future Is Quietly Eclipsing the American Dream*, Tarcher/Penguin

Timothy Garton Ash, *Free World: America, Europe, and the Surprising Future of the West*, Random House

<sup>155</sup> Phil Zuckerman, "Atheism: Contemporary Rates and Patterns" , forthcoming in *Cambridge Companion To Atheism*, Edited By Michael Martin, Cambridge University Press, 2005.

See <http://www.pitzer.edu/academics/faculty/zuckerman/atheism.html> .

A few quotes from Zuckerman:

"One leading theory comes from Norris and Inglehart (2004), who argue that in societies characterized by plentiful food distribution, excellent public healthcare, and widely accessible housing, religiosity wanes. Conversely, in societies where food and shelter are scarce and life is generally less secure, religious belief is strong. This is not a new theory (Thrower, 1999). For example, Karl Marx (1843) argued that people who suffer in oppressive social conditions are apt to turn to religion for comfort. Sigmund Freud's (1927) central thesis was that belief in God served to comfort humans in the face of earthly pain, suffering, and death."

<sup>156</sup> Zuckerman mentions the following titles:

- Ashbrook, James and Carol Rausch Albright. 1997. *The Humanizing Brains: Where Religion and Neuroscience Meet*. Cleveland, OH : Pilgrim Press.

- Barret, Justin. 2004. *Why Would Anyone Believe in God?* Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

- Newberg, Andrew and Eugene D'Aquili. 2001. *Why God Won't Go Away: Brain Science and the Biology of Belief*. New York, NY: Ballantine Books.

- Persinger, Michael. 1987. *Neuropsychological Bases of God Beliefs*. New York, NY: Praeger.

- Wilson, David Sloan. 2002. *Darwin's Cathedral: Evolution, Religion, and the Nature of Society*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

He summarizes his findings in his Conclusion:

Based on a careful assessment of the most recent survey data available, we find that somewhere between 500,000,000 and 750,000,000 humans currently do not believe in God. Such figures render any suggestion that theism is innate or neurologically based untenable. The nations with the highest degrees of organic atheism (atheism which is not state-enforced through totalitarian regimes but emerges naturally among free societies) include most of the nations of Europe, as well as Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Israel. There also exist high degrees of atheism in Japan, Vietnam, North Korea, and Taiwan. Many former Soviet nations, such as Estonia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus also contain significant levels of atheism. Atheism is virtually non-existent in much of the world, however, especially among the most populated nations of Africa, South America, the Middle East, and much of Asia.

High levels of organic atheism are strongly correlated with high levels of societal health, such as low homicide rates, low poverty rates, low infant mortality rates, and low illiteracy rates, as well as high levels of educational attainment, per capita income, and gender equality. Most nations characterized by high degrees of individual and societal security have the highest rates of organic atheism, and conversely, nations characterized by low degrees of individual and societal security have the lowest rates of organic atheism. In some societies, particularly Europe, atheism is growing. However,

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throughout much of the world – particularly nations with high birth rates – atheism is barely discernable.

<sup>157</sup> “Incompatible religious doctrines have balkanized our world into separate moral communities—Christians, Muslims, Jews, Hindus, etc.—and these divisions have become a continuous source of human conflict. Indeed, religion is as much a living spring of violence today as it was at any time in the past. The recent conflicts in Palestine (Jews versus Muslims), the Balkans (Orthodox Serbians versus Catholic Croatians; Orthodox Serbians versus Bosnian and Albanian Muslims), Northern Ireland (Protestants versus Catholics), Kashmir (Muslims versus Hindus), Sudan (Muslims versus Christians and animists), Nigeria (Muslims versus Christians), Ethiopia and Eritrea (Muslims versus Christians), Sri Lanka (Sinhalese Buddhists versus Tamil Hindus), Indonesia (Muslims versus Timorese Christians), Iran and Iraq (Shiite versus Sunni Muslims), and the Caucasus (Orthodox Russians versus Chechen Muslims; Muslim Azerbaijanis versus Catholic and Orthodox Armenians) are merely a few cases in point. In these places religion has been the explicit cause of literally millions of deaths in the last 10 years.”

<sup>158</sup> Jonathan Yardley, Review of “Perfect Soldiers, The 9/11 hijackers”, *The Washington Post*, May 1, 2005. Also: Terry McDermott, *Perfect Soldiers: The 9/11 Hijackers: Who They Were, Why They Did It* [http://www.harpercollins.com/global\\_scripts/product\\_catalog/book\\_xml.asp?isbn=0060584696&tc=bd](http://www.harpercollins.com/global_scripts/product_catalog/book_xml.asp?isbn=0060584696&tc=bd)

<sup>159</sup> See <http://www.skepticsannotatedbible.com/>, a well-organized website where one can search in both the Old and New Testaments on subjects like injustice, absurdity, cruelty and violence, intolerance, as well as on subjects like women, prophecy, sex, etc.

<sup>160</sup> See <http://www.skepticsannotatedbible.com/quran/index.htm> where one can search the entire Qur’an on the same subjects as mentioned above. See also: Sam Harris, “Verses from the Koran”, <http://www.truthdig.com/images/diguploads/verses.html>

<sup>161</sup> The “Rapture Ready” website is worth thorough reconnoitering: <http://www.raptureready.com/index.php>.

<sup>162</sup> Tony Judt: Review: *Europe vs. America*, New York Review of Books, Vol. 52, number 2, February 10, 2005, at <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/17726>. The books reviewed are: [\*The United States of Europe: The New Superpower and the End of American Supremacy\*](#), by T.R. Reid, Penguin, 305 pp., \$25.95  
[\*The European Dream: How Europe's Vision of the Future Is Quietly Eclipsing the American Dream\*](#), by Jeremy Rifkin, Tarcher/Penguin, 434 pp., \$25.95  
[\*Free World: America, Europe, and the Surprising Future of the West\*](#), by Timothy Garton Ash, Random House, 286 pp. \$24.95

<sup>163</sup> Judt mentions the informal and often formal code: no bare breasts on TV, but malfunctioning penises are perfectly alright.

<sup>164</sup> Timothy Bancroft-Hinchey: “Death warrants – Saddam 148, Bush 152”, Pravda, April 19, 2006. <http://english.pravda.ru/opinion/columnists/19-04-2006/79363-deathwarrant-0>. Bush signed more death warrants than Saddam, and more than any state governor in the history of the US.

<sup>165</sup> According to the OECD a typical employed American put in 1,877 hours in 2000, compared to 1,562 for his or her French counterpart. Holidays are far more generous in Europe: 30 days paid leave in Sweden, 23 days in the UK

<sup>166</sup> Productivity per hour of work in Italy, Austria, and Denmark is similar to that of the United States; but the US is now distinctly outperformed in this key measure by Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, ...and France. See Andrew Sharpe, Appendix Table 2, "Output per House Levels in the OECD Countries Relative to the United States" for 2003; Centre for the Study of Living Standards, *International Productivity Monitor*, No. 9 (Fall 2004), at [www.csls.ca/ipm/9/sharpe-tables.pdf](http://www.csls.ca/ipm/9/sharpe-tables.pdf)

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<sup>167</sup> Ash does of course make quite a few reservations about this very black and white picture, and mentions in his review many of the contemporary drawbacks of Europe.

<sup>168</sup> [US vs. Total Debt to the UN: 2005](http://www.globalpolicy.org/finance/tables/core/un-us-05.htm)  
<http://www.globalpolicy.org/finance/tables/core/un-us-05.htm>

<sup>169</sup> Warren Hoge, "Rights Groups Fault U.S. Vote In U.N. on Gays", See *New York Times*, Jan. 27, 2006.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/01/27/international/middleeast/27nations.html>

<sup>170</sup> Judt mentions "invasion, occupation, civil war, anarchy, massacres, genocide, and the descent into barbarism". American losses in World War Two, in both the "Pacific theatre" and the "European theatre" amounted to some 300.000 dead - 292.131 to be precise, see <http://www.cwc.lsu.edu/other/stats/warcost.htm> - while Russian losses (Red Army plus civilians) are estimated at 20-27 million, with the Wikipedia mentioning 23,2 million for the Soviet Union. <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_World\\_War\\_II\\_casualties\\_by\\_country](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_World_War_II_casualties_by_country)>

<sup>171</sup> See Bill Moyers (yes, THE Bill Moyers!), "A Culture of corruption - Let's Save Our Democracy by Getting Money Out of Politics", *The Washington Spectator*, April 1, 2006,  
[http://www.washingtonspectator.com/articles/20060401cleanmoney\\_1.cfm](http://www.washingtonspectator.com/articles/20060401cleanmoney_1.cfm)

<sup>172</sup> Stephen Kinzer, "U.S. history lesson: stop meddling - In the last 100 years, the U.S. has ousted the governments of at least 14 countries and forcibly intervened in dozens of others -- to what end?", *Los Angeles Times*, May 13, 2006  
<http://www.latimes.com/news/printedition/opinion/la-oe-kinzer13may13.1,1703136.story>  
"The CIA placed Mohammed Reza Pahlavi back on the Peacock Throne. His repressive rule led, 25 years later, to the Islamic Revolution. That revolution brought to power a clique of bitterly anti-Western mullahs who have spent the decades since working intensely, and sometimes violently, to undermine U.S. interests around the world."

<sup>173</sup> Michael Ventura, "America by the numbers", *National Vanguard*, May 24, 2006,  
<http://www.nationalvanguard.org/story.php?id=9066> . The full article is available at City Pages, Minneapolis, Volume 26 - [Issue 1264](#), and quotes CNN: "The leading cause of death of pregnant women in this country is murder" (CNN, Dec. 14, 2004) and the New York Times: "Women are 70 percent more likely to die in childbirth in America than in Europe" (NYT, Jan. 12, 2005). See <http://www.citypages.com/databank/26/1264/article12985.asp>

<sup>174</sup> [David Callahan](#), *The Cheating Culture: Why More Americans Are Doing Wrong to Get Ahead*, Harcourt 2004  
<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0151010188/002-4951938-9234420>, and also:  
<http://atheism.about.com/b/a/252150.htm>

<sup>175</sup> Allan Uthman, "Top 10 Signs of the Impending U.S. Police State", *AlterNet*, May 26, 2006  
<http://www.alternet.org/story/36553/>  
The presidential signing statements – which he adds often before signing a bill – nullify the bill concerned. For example, if torture is forbidden, the signing statement can read that under certain circumstances, the president can allow torture. Bush has issued over 700 such signing statements, and thus never needed to veto a bill.

<sup>176</sup> "Examples of the president's signing statements", *The Boston Globe*, April 30, 2006  
[http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2006/04/30/examples\\_of\\_the\\_presidents\\_signing\\_statements/](http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2006/04/30/examples_of_the_presidents_signing_statements/)

<sup>177</sup> Austin Cline, "George W. Bush's Republican Dictatorship: Another Step Forward"  
<http://atheism.about.com/b/a/257374.htm>  
Quote: "It's Republican officials and lawyers who are arguing that the president's constitutional authority as commander-in-chief of the armed forces is effectively the same as the [Weimar Constitution's Article 48](#), which gave the German President dictatorial powers."

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<sup>178</sup> Julian Borger in Washington, "Former top judge says US risks edging near to dictatorship - Sandra Day O'Connor warns of rightwing attacks", *The Guardian*, March 13, 2006  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/usa/story/0,,1729396.00.html>

<sup>179</sup> [Bernard Gwertzman](#), "Kohut: Fear and loathing of the US" , *Council on Foreign Relations*, June 18, 2003  
<http://www.cfr.org/publication/6061/kohut.html>

<sup>180</sup> Bob Herbert, "America the Fearful", the *New York Times*, May 15, 2006, reprinted in *The Progressive American*,.  
Quote: "This is a road map to totalitarianism. Hallmarks of totalitarian regimes have always included an excessive reliance on secrecy, the deliberate stoking of fear in the general population, a preference for military rather than diplomatic solutions in foreign policy, the promotion of blind patriotism, the denial of human rights, the curtailment of the rule of law, hostility to a free press and the systematic invasion of the privacy of ordinary people."  
<http://64.226.238.78/PA/bh/bh204.shtml>

<sup>181</sup> See "Rapture", Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rapture>, a somewhat messy entry in the usually good Wikipedia, and a much better "The Rapture" in *Catholic Answers*,  
<http://www.catholic.com/library/Rapture.asp>

<sup>182</sup> "The Rapture Index", [www.raptureready.com/rap2.html](http://www.raptureready.com/rap2.html) demonstrates the madness of the concept.

<sup>183</sup> John W. Swails, "Ahmadinejad Awaits the Hidden Imam", *The American Thinker*, January 25th, 2006, [http://www.americanthinker.com/articles.php?article\\_id=5188](http://www.americanthinker.com/articles.php?article_id=5188)> See also: Iran Press Service, "Iran Government Urging The Hidden Imam To Help", October 21, 2005,  
[http://www.iran-press-service.com/ips/articles-2005/october-2005/jamkaran\\_211005.shtml](http://www.iran-press-service.com/ips/articles-2005/october-2005/jamkaran_211005.shtml)

<sup>184</sup> [Timothy Garton Ash](#), "Soldiers of the Hidden Imam", *The New York Review of Books*, vol. 52, number 17, November 3, 2005. See <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/18390>

<sup>185</sup> The website [http://atheism.about.com/library/glossary/evolution/bldef\\_creationism.htm](http://atheism.about.com/library/glossary/evolution/bldef_creationism.htm) gives the following definition of creationism (also called creation science): Creationism is the religious doctrine, opposed to naturalistic evolution, that life on this planet was created by a [special](#), unique act of God. Creationism goes beyond this traditional religious belief, however, in asserting that this belief can be proven empirically and scientifically. Unfortunately for creationists, science only deal with natural events which are repeatable, not supernatural events which never repeat - thus, by definition, creationism can never be scientific. It must always remain a pseudoscience, based more upon faith than upon actual evidence or internal logic.

<sup>186</sup> See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intelligent\\_design](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intelligent_design) which states: Intelligent Design (sometimes abbreviated **ID**) is the [controversial](#) assertion that certain features of the [universe](#) and of [living things](#) exhibit the characteristics of a product resulting from an [intelligent](#) cause or agent, as opposed to an unguided process such as [natural selection](#).  
Adherents of Intelligent Design have claimed that it stands on equal footing with, or is superior to, current scientific theories regarding the [origin of life](#) and the [origin of the universe](#). [1] This claim has not been accepted by the [scientific community](#), [who](#) argue that Intelligent Design is not a [scientific theory](#) but [creationist pseudoscience](#) or [junk science](#). [2] Critics have accused Intelligent Design proponents of trying to find gaps within current [evolutionary theory](#) only to fill with speculative [beliefs](#), and that Intelligent Design in this context may ultimately amount to the "[God of the gaps](#)" [3].  
The [National Academy of Sciences](#) has said that Intelligent Design "and other claims of [supernatural](#) intervention in the origin of life" are not science because their claims cannot be tested by [experiment](#) and propose no new [hypotheses](#) of their own. [4] Proponents of Intelligent Design make the claim that there is a [systemic bias](#) within the scientific community against proponents' ideas and research, because of the [naturalistic](#) assumption that science can or should only make reference to natural causes. Critics have called this argument [polemical](#), as Intelligent Design, in its opposition to what it terms "[methodological naturalism](#)" is at [odds](#) with current scientific philosophy and [methodology](#).

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<sup>187</sup> This proves they have not understood the variation-selection-stabilization sequence inherent in evolution theory, which has weeded out any potentially stupid designs, but obviously could not work within the extremely short 6000 years since creation they believe in. Evolution theory is rejected not so much because it is considered incorrect, but because natural selection presupposes a purely materialistic universe goes against Christian values which are felt threatened, and would presumably remove any inhibitions against immoral behavior. See also Elia Leibowitz, The Absurdity of intelligent design, Ha'aretz, Sept. 20, 2005, <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/626277.html>

<sup>188</sup> It is interesting to speculate that the great number of fatherless children after WW2 – especially in Germany with its percentage-wise heavy male losses - contributed to the more matriarchal turn Western culture has taken especially since the late 1960s when these children started making their imprint on Western culture, in Woodstock, Paris and elsewhere: "I've seen God, and she was black". The German psychoanalyst Alexander Mitscherlich has documented this trend for Germany (Mitscherlich, Alexander, *Society Without a Father: A contribution to social psychology*, Harper Perennial, 1963).

<sup>189</sup> Austin Cline: "GOD.com: A Deity for the New Millennium, by John A. Henderson" (book review) <<http://atheism.about.com/od/bookreviews/fr/GodCom.htm>> and:  
John A. Henderson, *GOD.com: A Deity for the New Millennium*, Parkway  
<http://www.amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/ASIN/0805954481/026-5591904-0007620>

<sup>190</sup> John A. Henderson, *GOD.com: A Deity for the New Millennium*, Parkway  
<http://www.amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/ASIN/0805954481/026-5591904-0007620>  
See also the book review: Austin Cline: "GOD.com: A Deity for the New Millennium, by John A. Henderson"  
<http://atheism.about.com/od/bookreviews/fr/GodCom.htm>

<sup>191</sup> It should primarily stress interaction and interrelationship over hierarchy: i.e. no God on top, conceptualized as the absolute, male ruler, but rather as a thermostat safeguarding an ultimate earthly equilibrium. It should stress the here and now, and act strongly against otherworldly escapism toward the imaginary future of an afterlife.

<sup>192</sup> Mel Brooks, in the movie "The meaning of life" has Moses walking down from Mt. Sinai, carrying three heavy stone tablets, numbered 1-5, 6-10 and 11-15. When he stumbles and drops one tablet which falls to smithereens, he mumbles : Well, ten left".

<sup>193</sup> To them, I can only offer Jacques Prévert's little poem:  
"Il y a des gens qui dansent sans entrer en transe  
et il y en a d'autres qui entrent en transe sans danser.  
Ce phénomène s'appelle la Transcendance  
et dans nos régions il est fort apprécié."  
Transl.: "There are people who dance without entering trance, and there are others who enter trance without dancing. This phenomenon is called transcendence, and in our regions it is very much appreciated." (Jacques Prévert, *Spectacle*, Librairie Gallimard, 1949). See also:  
<http://atheisme.free.fr/Biographies/Prevert.htm>  
And as to indeed transcending the limitations of one's individual life, Prevert certainly thought religion was not the best way: ""La meilleure façon de ne pas avancer est de suivre une idée fixe." (Transl. The best way not to advance is to follow an *idée fixe*). (Jacques Prévert / 1900-1977).

<sup>194</sup> "Suicide tourism websites shut down", *USA Today*, November 4, 2005  
[http://www.usatoday.com/travel/news/2005-11-04-suicide-tourism\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/travel/news/2005-11-04-suicide-tourism_x.htm)

<sup>195</sup> "To see a world in a grain of sand  
And a heaven in a wild flower,  
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand  
And eternity in an hour."  
(William Blake)  
[http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/William\\_Blake](http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/William_Blake)

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Plus as an encore, an interesting article about Kierkegaard, which Google coughed up next apart from the Blake references:

Chris Hardwick, "Both a grain of sand and eternity ", [The Guardian](http://www.guardian.co.uk/religion/Story/0,2763,1345004,00.html), Saturday November 6, 2004  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/religion/Story/0,2763,1345004,00.html>