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FIGHTING SUICIDE BOMBING

A Worldwide Campaign for Life

I. W. Charny

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PRIMO LEVI writes that

Evil is contagious and the inhuman being robs others of all human feeling. Evil procreates itself. It multiplies, corrupts the conscience of others and surrounds itself with collaborators . . . because of fear or because of some form of temptation.[1]

To **LIFE,**
In its sacredness,
To be protected in as many ways possible,
For the greatest possible number of human beings on our planet!

and, more personally:
To dearest Judy, always,
and to all our family.

I. W. Charny
Jerusalem
August 2006

Contents

Selected worldwide case incidents ix

Preface: This may be a politically incorrect books, but it is unshakable in supporting life for all people xiii

Acknowledgments xxvii

1. How can they do it? 1
2. Suicide bombing and its growing place in the world today 11
3. Contradictory image meanings of suicide bombings 26
4. Are suicide bombers a proper subject of psychology? 55
5. The ultimate existential meaning of suicide bombings: The killing of human life 79
6. Facing the dangerous future of civilization honestly 100
7. Is it right to fear and condemn all Muslims? (*Of course not!*) 127
8. Promoting a new worldwide constituency for human life and making suicide bombing unattractive and unacceptable 148
9. A Proposal for a "Worldwide Campaign for Life" by the leaders of many religions and other world leaders and heroes 166

Afterword: Inshallah 190

Representative Suicide Bombings around the World and a Conclusion: Suicide Bombing Is a Redefinition of the Legitimacy of Virtually All Killing 193

Selected Woldwide Case Incidents

IRAQ: WHERE U.S. TROOPS AND IRAQIS SET OUT TO REBUILD A POST-SADDAM COUNTRY

January 19, 2004. A suicide bomber detonated a pick-up truck laden with 500 kg of explosives at the main gate of the US headquarters in Iraq, killing at least 20 people and injuring more than 100. Most of the dead and injured were Iraqis queuing at a security cordon to enter the Republican Palace, the head of the US military and civil administration in Baghdad.

—*The Guardian*[1]

July 10, 2005. Suicide bombers struck Baghdad killing at least 33 people and wounding dozens more in three attacks on an army recruiting center, a police convoy and civilians.

—*Moscow Times*[2]

July 13, 2005. A suicide car bomber sped up to the American soldiers distributing candy to children and detonated himself. Months earlier, in September, 2004, 35 Iraqi children had been killed by a string of bombs as American troops were handing out candies at a government celebration of a new sewage plant, but many of the families blamed the Americans because their presence had attracted the insurgents to the ceremony.

—*Jerusalem Post*[3]

July 15, 2005. An "all-day suicide bomb blitz" claimed 22 lives in Baghdad. There were "at least" eight suicide car bombs on this day. One of the bombers blew up his vehicle on a bridge near the home of President Jalal Talabani, killing at least two presidential guards and wounding several others. "The string of attacks,

which began at 8 a.m. and ended more than 12 hours later, traumatized the capital on a day [Friday] that is normally reserved for prayer and family."

—*New York Times*[4]

July 17, 2005. 99 people were killed and more than 180 injured in suicide bombings over the past two days in Iraq, including an attack which exploded a fuel tanker parked in the center of Musayyib, about 45 miles south of Baghdad in which the death toll was at least 90. The tanker entered Musayyib after being searched at the city's entrance. The bomber who was strapped with an explosive vest approached the tanker and detonated.

—*CNN*[5]

Unheard of only a few decades ago, suicide bombings have rapidly evolved into perhaps the most common method of terrorism in the world . . . The numbers in Iraq alone are breathtaking: about 400 suicide bombings have shaken Iraq since the U.S. invasion in 2003, and suicide now plays a role in two out of every three insurgent bombings. In May, an estimated 90 suicide bombings were carried out in the war-torn country—nearly as many as the Israeli government has documented in the conflict with Palestinians since 1993.

—*Washington Post*[6]

AN EXTRAORDINARY WAVE OF ATTACKS—INCLUDING THE WORST DEATH TOLL IN BAGHDAD IN A SINGLE DAY[7]

September 14, 2005. A suicide car bomber ripped through a gathering of day laborers waiting for work at 6:50 a.m. at Aruba Square in the Khadamiya district of northern Baghdad, one of Baghdad's largest Shi'ite districts, where large numbers of laborers typically gather in the morning in hopes of being hired for the day. At least 75 people were killed and another 162 were wounded. The bomber used a new tactic: luring dozens of day laborers to a van with promises of work and then blowing it up.

More bombings and attacks followed throughout the day with several each hour, as police cars careened wildly through the city struggling to restore order and hospitals overflowed with wounded people. There were at least fourteen bombings on this Wednesday that left much of the capital city paralyzed. The death toll of 167 was the worst in a single day in Baghdad since U.S. troops overthrew Saddam two-and-a-half years ago.

September 15, 2005. The following day, a second day of suicide bombings killed at least twenty people and wounded at least thirty-one.

September 17, 2005. Over four days after Al-Qaeda in Iraq declared all-out war on the Shiite majority, more than 250 people have been killed. At least fifty-two

more people were killed or found dead throughout the country on September 17.

BESLAN, RUSSIA: A FIRST DAY IN SCHOOL WHERE BOMBS AND BULLETS REPLACE TRADITIONAL FLOWERS

September 1, 2004. Muslim Chechen terrorists took hundreds of schoolchildren and adults hostage on September 1 at School Number One in Beslan. In the Russian Federation, "First September" of every year is a holiday known as the "Day of Knowledge," when children are accompanied to school by their parents and other family members dressed in their best clothes. After listening to speeches, the First Graders give a flower to the Last Graders, and the Last Graders then take the First Graders to their first class.

On September 3, a chaotic battle broke out between the terrorists and Russian security forces. There are conflicting versions of what happened. One is that the terrorists set off bombs, killing children and themselves. When Russian Special Forces stormed the school, the hostage-takers set off more large explosions, totally destroying the gymnasium and setting much of the building on fire, while special forces commandos blew holes in walls to allow hostages to escape. The television broadcast chilling images of heavily armed hooded assailants among the hundreds of women, children, and men. The TV pictures showed hundreds of people crowded into the gym beneath a string of explosives dangling from a basketball hoop. By the time the event had concluded, 344 civilians were killed, at least 172 of them children, and 727 were wounded.

The attack on the Beslan school came a day after a suicide bombing in Moscow killed ten people, and just over a week after two Russian passenger planes crashed following explosions and killed all ninety people aboard. Beslan residents left teddy bears and flowers at the gutted school as a tribute to those killed.

—Compiled from *Wikipedia Encyclopedia* and the *Associated Press*[8]

A Muslim Web site in the United Kingdom, YusufIslam, commented: "Nothing is more precious to a parent than the love of their offspring, but for the parents of Beslan we can only share the tears and convey our deepest sympathies, though no words or effort could ever bring those children back . . . The fact that the hostage takers were reportedly Muslim makes it difficult for some to avoid the conclusion that the religion of Islam must be the cause of this demented act . . . The religious premise of the oft-repeated accusation disappears when you look closer at the facts: how opposed to the teaching of Islam this kind of act is. Even the most unlearned of Muslims know that the Prophet of Islam was always so merciful to children and their mothers . . . Crimes against innocent bystanders taken hostage in any circumstances have no foundation whatsoever in the life of Islam and the model example of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him . . . "

—YusufIslam.org.uk[9]

BEERSHEVA, ISRAEL: RETURNING WITH BOMBS FOR A FOLLOW-UP VISIT TO A HOSPITAL WHERE ONE HAS BEEN TREATED KINDLY

In December 2004, Wafa Samir Bas, a 21-year-old Palestinian woman, came to Soroka Hospital in Beer Sheva in Israel after suffering burns to many parts of her body when a gas canister exploded in her home. She received a number of blood transfusions in the course of the doctors saving her life. When she recovered, one of the doctors joked with her about her having "Jewish blood flowing in her arteries." Her family subsequently sends a letter of appreciation to the hospital.

In June 2004, six months later, Wafa comes back to the hospital as a suicide bomber to blow up the very hospital in which she had previously received dedicated treatment. In order to gain clearance to enter the hospital grounds, she used the medical follow-up form which called for her to come back to the hospital for an examination. Fortunately, she was apprehended in time by security people and the tragedy was averted.[10]

Wafa was a student at Al-Quds Open University whose president, Sari Nusseibah, is a well-known Palestinian leader for nonviolence. Wafa said she did not want to detonate herself at Soroka because many Arabs are treated there and was interested in another hospital in central Israel, but she agreed to a request by Al-Aksa brigades to take advantage of her access to Soroka Hospital.

There have been numerous attempts to send suicide bombers into Israel disguising themselves as patients asking for entry on humanitarian grounds to seek medical treatment. "A senior Israeli security official pointed out that human rights groups have often harshly criticized Israel in the past, for carrying out inspections on sick Palestinians requiring medical treatment in Israel. "Our dilemma is how to differentiate between those who really seek treatment and sometimes those who may suffer from terminal illnesses and figure they have nothing to lose by agreeing to carry out a suicide attack."" Earlier in 2005, a Hamas operative who planned to launch a suicide bomb attack in Israel succeeded in entering the Jewish-occupied West Bank on the basis of his being a possible kidney donor.[11]

After being apprehended, Wafa said: "It didn't bother me at all if children and women were killed by my suicide bomb. You have killed children too. You think that you are innocent and that only we are terrorists?" But then Wafa also added the telltale information: "Even when I was a little girl, I dreamt of dying as a *shahid* (martyr) for Allah. I am prepared to sacrifice myself a thousand times."[12]

—*Yediot Achronot* (Hebrew daily newspaper) and the *Jerusalem Post*.

Preface

> This may be a politically incorrect book, but it is unshakable in supporting life for all people.
>
> We are in the process of an historical war between the World of Arrogance [i.e. the West] and the Islamic world, and this war has been going on for hundreds of years... Is it possible for us to witness a world without America and Zionism? You had best know that this slogan and this goal are attainable, and surely can be achieved. —Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad speaking at the "World without Zionism" conference in Teheran[1]
>
> Too many Muslims are being killed... The suicide attacks are turning many Muslims against the jihadis altogether... [However] the alternatives these critics recommend are no less violent... Many... suggest that jihadis diminish their efforts in Iraq and revert to spectacular attacks in the West. —*New York Times*[2]

For a long time it has seemed that suicide bombings and other megaterrorist events occur only in selected places on earth, so that one might get along fairly safely by staying out of the bad neighborhoods—like we used to do in New York City, for example.

Although it has long been known that many groups and political movements engage in terrorist murders of a wide variety of victims, in recent years there has been an increasing awareness of Islam as a major and growing source of terror. But here again many people in the West are drawn into the illusion that maybe the core of Islamic terror is their hatred of Israel and their wish to destroy that country and its people, so again the thought appears that perhaps there are ways of staying out of the bad neighborhood, or at least working at solving that basic problem and thereby putting an end to growing Islamic terror.

Slowly but surely, it has become clear that the facts don't fit. Suicide bombings and other terrorist actions have flourished in such diverse and far-off places as Sri Lanka, India, Chechnya, Russia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and more that bear little to no relationship to the Israel-Palestinian conflict. Still, it is hard to shake off the illusion that the one issue keeping terrorism going is that Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and indeed much of Arab rhetoric keeps up a steady pounding of accursed Israel and the damned Jews.

As this book goes to press, news has come of an unprecedented plot for suicide bombers to down some ten British airplanes on their way to the United States—according to some reports the explosions were to be done over major U.S. cities so as to cause further enormous destruction. The deputy commissioner of London's Metropolitan Police was quoted as saying that the aim of the plot was "mass murder on an unimaginable scale."[3]

The plotters, who were identified mainly as Britons of Islamic origin, many from a Pakistani background, were reported to have planned to use liquids that would be smuggled into the airplanes in their hand luggage to create devastating explosions. According to the *New York Times*, a warning issued to air security officials noted that "plotters working to down trans-Atlantic airplanes might have used the most ordinary of household items and chose peroxide." The *Times* story noted further that, "The use of such compounds as a main charge was popularized in suicide bombings by Palestinian terrorist groups," and that in general "only tiny amounts of liquid materials were needed to bring down a plane."[4]

Peroxide had been used in the July 7, 2005, London mass transit attacks in which 66 died and over 700 were wounded.

One of the thousands of passengers who were stranded by canceled flights was heard saying on CNN that he had always planned his travels to stay away from the trouble spots in the world, but that there no longer was safety anywhere in the world, and we had reached a point where we were all at risk.

The *Pakistan Times* reported that, "Draconian hand luggage restrictions similar to those imposed by London and Washington were introduced in Australia, Canada, Ghana, Kenya, Hungary, Italy and Switzerland. Other countries affected included Belgium, Denmark, the Czech Republic, Russia, Sweden, Thailand and Spain, where 191 people died in an extremist attack in 2004."[5]

In a major speech to the World Affairs Council in Los Angeles, the United Kingdom's prime minister, Tony Blair, called for a radical rethink of foreign policy to combat "reactionary Islam" with an "arc of moderation" across the Middle East. The prime minister said that "the battle against global extremism will not be won unless a moderate, mainstream Islam is empowered."[6]

United States' President George W. Bush was quoted as saying that the United States was "at war with Islamic fascists who will use any means to destroy those of us who love freedom."[7] But clearly it is not only the United States that is at war. In the largest sense, the civilization that promotes life for human beings is at war with a counter-civilization that espouses, promotes, and announces proudly

that it literally "loves death" (explicit quotations from Al-Qaeda to this effect will be reported later).

The latest Harry Potter book, *Harry Potter and the Half-Prince*, published in 2005, opens where the evil of Voldermort and his Death Eaters has grown so strong that they are spilling over into the Muggle world of real people.

Now try writing Osama bin Laden, Al-Qaeda, and the suicide bombers in a rewrite of the above. In our very real world, the four suicide bombings in London on July 7, 2005, and the failed attempts to replicate the bombings two weeks later on July 21 have now joined the terror bombings in Madrid (which were not suicide bombings) on March 11, 2004 (known to many as "3/11"), and the incredible airplane suicide bombings in New York and Washington on September 11, 2001 (very much known also as "9/11"); and there is no place in the world that stands exempt today. Thus, Oriana Fallaci warned her naïve and escapist Italian compatriots that Al-Qaeda most certainly will also come to Italy.

> Will the massacre touch us too?—will it really touch us the next time? Oh, yes. I haven't the slightest doubt. I've never had the slightest doubt. I've been saying this, too, for the last four years. And I add: They have not yet attacked us [only] because of their need for a landing zone, a bridgehead, a handy outpost named "Italy." Geographically handy because it is the closest one to both the Middle East and Africa; that is, to the countries that supply the greatest number of troops. Strategically handy because we offer succor and collaboration to those troops.
>
> "It's only a question of time. Al Qaeda will strike you soon," said Al Faqih, the exiled Saudi who became friends with Bin Laden during the conflict with the Russians in Afghanistan and who according to the American secret services, is a financer of Al Qaeda, adding that the attack upon Italy is the most logical thing in the world. Is not Italy the weak link in the chain of allies in Iraq?[8]

If my publisher were to allow me, I might retitle my book, *How Can Voldermort's Suicide Bombers Do It?*

A nightmarish insecurity has enveloped U.S. troops in Iraq as well as Iraq police and troops in the newly reconstituted security forces and troops of the post-Saddam effort at government, and a nightmarish insecurity is enveloping the world because the attacks using suicide bombers are increasing in many regions and are everywhere. In Iraq on one single day in April 2005, four separate suicide bombings erupted one after another successively[9]; in July 2005, there were "at least" eight suicide bombings on a single day.[10]In a single month, the same April 2005, there was an unbelievable number of sixty-seven suicide bombings in Iraq.[11] In May 2005, there were an estimated ninety suicide bombings.[12]

Many of us will remember when we were shocked at a single suicide bombing anywhere. Who knows what the record numbers will have become by the time this book is published, and who would ever have believed we would be seeing such numbers anywhere in the world?

For the Western world at this writing, the two most prominent and symbolically impressing events of suicide bombings are those of September 11 in the

United States, and July 7 in London. In both cases, Al-Qaeda delightedly showed off its trademark of carrying out several essentially simultaneous major suicide bombings. The simultaneous attacks are acted with what one might even think of as the grace and precision of concert performers, except that theirs are concerts of hell and death. A new form of ambush warfare has come into our world. Yesteryears' feared cloaked assassins jumping out of the shadows to knife and kill one or a handful of victims have become transformed into exploding bomb carriers wearing bomb-laden belts on their persons or carrying them in their cars. The suicide explosion is a sudden moment of hell. Its deadly boom sends shudders through peoples' beings, and flying bloody body parts and stumps strike out capriciously in every direction. A new mode of killing, and along with it insane, blind terror, has taken a center stage in a more mad, uncivilized world.

The reader will find at the end of the book an assembly of representative incidents of suicide bombings which are taking place in an ever-increasing number of countries, regions, and locations in the world. As time goes by, the list could be many more pages and could fill a book of its own. To read the existing list is also an experience for the reader that challenges one's ability to maintain a sense of awe, horror, and protest at repeated incidents of injuries, gore, and death.

This is and is not an academic book. It is not written in a conventional formal style. As one reader said, it is written "in a very personal style and your humanity, concern, heartbreak, and genuine compassion resonate throughout the book." At the same time, it is a book that is well grounded in the responsible and objective reports, studies, and essays on suicide bombers that our Western world has produced thus far. The above reader also gives the manuscript high marks for its coverage, and that it is "certainly thorough in its grasp and use of the extant literature."

At the same time, the reader does not feel comfortable with the fact that I move back and forth between my personal emotions and judgments and systematic analytic scholarship, and this will also be true of many other readers who are accustomed to separate facts and rational analysis from emotional and spiritual responses. For my part, I do like combining these modes. I do appreciate that there are tensions in combining the emotional and the analytic, but I like both modes touching each other. I believe in an integration of the two with a back-and-forth commentary between them leading to a synthesis that is enriched by the contradictions between these two ways of experiencing life. I think the emotional and analytic should very much live together, check one another, and complement one another.

What I do agree with is that it is that I have a responsibility to distinguish between personal statements of my opinions and presentations of information and evidence from identified sources. I hope that the reader will find that I have done this by a combination of first-person statements in which I take responsibility for my feelings and personal judgments, along with the extensive endnotes and bibliographic references that I have provided which document clearly the many specific sources of information.

Altogether, I want to invite the reader on a journey with me in which we will explore, both intellectually and emotionally, a series of challenging questions and complexities about the suicide bombers.

A simple restaurateur in Jerusalem where I live said to me:

> It is already a World War, but the world doesn't want to recognize it. The Muslim terrorist groups are exploding everywhere—look at the map of the globe: Riyadh, Casablanca, Bali, New York, Washington, Madrid, London . . . It will take a few more years with more and more suicide bombings and other terrorist attacks, and then our world will realize that it has been led into a new kind of World War.

This was the kind of conversation that is personally satisfying to me, not only because it was with someone who agrees with my views, but because in general I am the kind of person who enjoys and respects the wisdom and common sense of what I call an "everyday person." I try to have lots of conversations like that with merchants and taxi drivers, and my impression is that the plain folk I meet—in Israel, the United States, and England, which are my most frequent hangouts—already understand that what is happening in the world is a new form of genocidal terrorism, including the awesome and frightening suicide bombers. They understand that the crazy explosions of planes, trains, buses, and crowds of people are not only instruments of the endless local conflicts our world has always seen, but a growing movement in our time of a hardcore and mainly Islamic expansionism that is seeking to dominate the world (including to regain a lost glory of Islam such as it had centuries ago)—even if not all of the Muslims doing the exploding today already know consciously that they want to take over the world. It's a new kind of World War. And it is growing on us insidiously.

People who tend to be "innocents" like to have a clear-cut old-fashioned explanation for everything that happens, in terms that are familiar to them, and especially explanations of evil as events that are based on some tangible unfairness, deprivation, humiliation, and insults to the poor hapless people who were then "forced" to commit their evil acts out of their frustration at the injustices done to them.

For innocents there is no evil that grows out of plain *e-v-i-l*—a ruthless search for power, conquest, injury, and death to others, any of which, and all of which together, are plain satisfying to the cruel instincts in the people committing these acts. So the world of the innocents remains a good one even as planes topple magnificent towers in New York, bombs explode trains in Madrid (these were terrorist attacks by explosions that were set off at the targets without suicide bombers), and suicide bombers explode underground trains and a bus in London.

The causes of it all? Listen to the periodic Al-Qaeda broadcasts, and ask academics and liberals who sympathize with the terrorists, and you'll hear the real culprits of all the killings are rotten global America, of course; also the forever turbulent Middle East, including without hesitation the archevil of imperialistic Zionism; and understandably also the revolts of impoverished peoples. No mention

is made of a widespread commitment of many (I will emphasize over and over again, not all) Muslims and Islamic nations to a deadly murderous jihad against the infidels, or to a quest for world domination by the representatives of Allah.

We need to know that the gods of most peoples can turn imperialistic and genocidal. Christian gods have taken their turns in the past, like in the Crusades when Jewish and Muslim blood flowed like water at their hands. Jews too have committed genocidal murders, though admittedly on a smaller scale, so they too have shown that all of God's children can do it and that all the gods can become sponsors of murder campaigns. Right now, it is the Muslims' turn.

Liberal intellectuals can be the biggest innocents around. The funny thing for me is that, to this very day, I consider myself more of a "liberal" thinker than any other political designation I can apply to myself. But the huge difference that has developed for me is that I am a liberal who knows that there is enormous evil in this world, and that we have to fight it or perish. Sometimes I say that I am a pacifist who carries a gun for self-defense. That is what World War II was about. And the emerging World War III is no different.

Writing this book has brought me smack up against a considerable number of my friend-liberals in the academic world, including editors in the publishing world, and including the kinds of successful academics to whom publishers turn for reviews of manuscripts who, in my judgment, automatically defend anyone who looks like or sounds like a possible revolutionary or oppressed person fighting for justice and self-determination. If the killers have a just political or sound cause, they at least want to "understand" them, if not actually justify their "fight for freedom." I deeply disagree.

One liberal reader of this manuscript said most complimentarily, "This is an extremely interesting and ambitious work. The work seeks to engage a number of areas that flow from the author's analysis and experience of suicide terrorism, including: problems with western psychiatry, Islam, democracy and western models of government, and culture of life versus culture of death. The work is therefore potentially fascinating and important." This is strong lively music to an author's ears. But having said these wonderful words, this quite thoughtful reviewer proceeds to criticize the book, because "Islam is given a bad press, including the fact that 'Charny's standards for treating Islam are different from those he uses to discuss Christianity or Judaism, being more forgivable and charitable to the latter and less charitable to Islam.'"

Let me be clear on this point. I will express nothing but respect for Islamic religion and culture, but I will in no way refrain from condemning Islamic terror and killing. For the record, I have already commented that Christianity has gone through many periods of incredible genocidal killing, and not only in the Crusades that I mentioned, but also in the vicious Inquisition, and in so many of the great European wars which were essentially the work of Christian nations. I also said that I know that my own Judaism has on its hands a series of "melanoma-type" spots of having committed genocidal massacres, so that my own people's vaunted traditions of ethics and greater nonviolence are also marred by indications of

our very much being members of the same human race as other peoples who have specialized more in mass murder. But the facts of *our* times are that the growing number of mega-suicide-bomber terrorists are, for the most part, from the fundamentalist interpreters of Islam as a religious-culture that is at war with the West and the rest of the world in a jihad.

The above reviewer said that I am citing questionable sources that are negative on Islam. Yes, I do quote from some writers and scholars who have become systematically identified with anti-Islamic thinking such as Oriana Fallaci, Daniel Pipes, and Bat Ye'or, but in each case I identify for the reader, and in the last two cases discuss at some length and criticize the known extreme position of the writers while still making use of their legitimate scholarship and judgments. Moreover, I cite many contemporary news reports of Islamic violence from the daily newspapers and media that give the facts about Islamic violences in a wide range of countries around the world.

At the same time, I also do quote and refer to a great many voices in the world of Islam that are committed to nonviolence and a shared peaceful existence with other religions and cultures, and I treasure these voices deeply. In fact, I build the book toward a climax of a proposal for working with the peace-living people in Islam in an effort of *all* of us together to fight the next World War not only militarily, but as a battle of a Culture of Life against a Culture of Death.

Yes, I do adopt the thesis of a "clash of civilizations," or a battle between a culture of life versus a culture of death, which in our time is represented to a large but not at all exclusive extent by Judeo-Christian values versus fundamentalist Islam. Such a battle between cultures is not new in human history at all. Over the centuries, and today as well, the creation of a culture of death has been and is the work of many and various peoples far removed from any connection to Islamic thought, including pagan peoples in the distant past who butchered much of the world, fierce indigenous native peoples who as a matter of rule slaughtered other native peoples; in modern times, Nazi Germany and its super-science-and-industry of death; also in modern times Communist utopias, such as led by Stalin in the West and by Mao tse-Tung and Pol Pot in southeastern Asia that executed astronomic numbers and proportions of nations—and no less their own people; or blood-curdling rampages of death against one's own neighbors if not against one's own family in Rwanda and several other countries on the African continent.

The human species—our species—is expert at splitting into cultures which are deeply devoted to killing and death, even as the generic human experiences of savoring life—eating, procreating, and bringing up new generations—somehow remain the predominant mode of life, even for many of the most dedicated killers when they return to their abodes from their killing work.

Right now, it is Islam's turn to be at the center of the culture of death in our world and the rest of us who believe in life need to fight them, but without a holier-than-thou denial of how our various nations, ethnicities, religion and such have been there and done that killing in other eras.

Nonetheless, according to my above liberal critic, you can't predict a war between the civilizations is unfolding, or you are Muslim-bashing, and of course thereby you are very politically incorrect. The above reviewer only too gleefully notes that the United States has also violated the rules of the Geneva Convention, and that democratic cultures and governments also violate life and decency frequently enough, so why do I get up such a lather about current predominance of Muslim people in setting off waves of terrorist death all around the globe? He writes:

> I find it difficult to credit the rosy view that things are so right with democracies. Charny's instantations of what he means by culture of death are all focused on Islam, thus eviscerating his rhetorical move . . . Having read bits of the Old Testament, I can attest that Islam is not unique in calling for the elimination of the unfaithful who are ipso facto enemies.[13]

I agree completely. But how much repetition and clarification does it take to get across that I am not against any specific nation, ethnicity, religion, political group, or whoever for who they are, but I am against any group that in their time takes on the role of stewarding and leading a culture of death and executing other human beings en masse. I agree that humans have always gone for the jugular of eliminating enemies. Moreover, in my judgment, virtually all religions have in them a dialectic of peace-loving, life-respecting values versus calls for death-making. Only right now it is Islam which is up to bat and, on the whole, opting for the death-making concepts that are all too available in its dogma. The need to be violent and justify violence runs deeply and naturally through many aspects of much (I will keep saying, not all) Arab culture. Thus, see the totally unexpected context of the Arab Doctors' Association in Egypt and how the association advised its doctors not to extend any help to victims of the deadly earthquake and tsunami that hit Asia in December 2004, including in Sri Lanka and in India, because the tsunami was an act of God.

> The Arab Doctors' Association secretary-general, Dr. Abd Al-Mun'im Abu Al-Futuh . . . [said] that this earthquake was divine punishment because of the Muslims' oppression by the infidels, invaders and occupiers headed by the U.S., and that therefore we have no interest in what had happened![14]

Speaking of medical concepts, my critic also concludes that I am suffering from "an underlying ethnocentrism" because I also conclude that the suicide bombers are intrinsically "pathological." For me it means that they are antihuman, unhealthy, and undesirable, and certainly not deserving as being regarded as "normal people" who are "simply" suffering a political disturbance or protest. My argument is that suicide bombing is at least no less dangerous to human life than smoking, and that the Surgeon Generals of our Western world need to declare that suicide bombing, with great certainty, brings death to human beings, and therefore

should be considered "sick," "abnormal," and all the other words we westerners use in our culture for differentiating between behaviors that enhance health and behaviors that kill. We shall see later that the language of our Western psychiatric classification system is ill prepared to deal with this subject as well as with a whole host of related issues of violence and evil in human life. To me this means that we in the West have our work cut out for us to revise our psychiatric classification system of human ill will and destructiveness, but not that there is anything wrong with identifying suicide bombers and other terrorists as disturbed, evil, and rotten.

So many nonpsychological or psychiatric professionals repeatedly express the truth naively that the suicide bombers must be "off their rockers;" for they are inherently violating the commonsense normality of life. Following the July 7 Al-Qaeda terrorist attack in London in which three Underground sites and a bus were exploded by four suicide bombers, an editorial in the *International Herald Tribune*, attributed to the *New York Times*, quoted author Joseph Conrad from 100 years ago "that a terrorist act is 'purely destructive,'" and continued:

> Madness alone is truly terrifying, inasmuch as you cannot placate it either by threats, persuasions or bribes . . . we still use that language—madness—because it still applies to the murder of innocent people . . . The only 'purpose' the London bombing can be said to have is to puncture the veneer of civilization, to show us what the terrorists hope is the madness that lies behind it . . . to show us how little we can rely upon the edifice of normalcy . . .[15]

As far back as 1986, I proposed in the formal mental health literature that *all* cases that are evaluated by psychiatrists and clinical psychologists should be required to include simultaneously an evaluation of whether a person is doing serious harm to their *own* life potential, along with an evaluation of whether a person is doing serious harm to the life potential of *others*. In my definitions, the "normal" and "healthy" are those who protect, enhance, love, and live life and help or allow others to do so, and the "sick" and "disturbed" are those who do harm, degrade, insult, and destroy life, whether their own or the lives of others.

It is also very important to add that just because we call someone "sick" doesn't mean they have a right to come back and demand the mercy we do offer people who are carried away by uncontrollable personal torment and tragically hurt another person. There are a certain number of cases of violence that do deserve the mercy of society such as a legal verdict of "not guilty by virtue of insanity." But mass killing is first of all criminal and most certainly calls for a response by the criminal justice system. Even if the killer is truly crazy, which is sometimes the case, the fact is that the crime is so huge that it must be punished. Mass killers deserve no mercy.

This book seeks to tell the truth about who are the main suicide bombers in our world today without fear of political incorrectness. As the previous editorial also concluded, "London has shown . . . [that] to be flung into our fears is a way of discovering who our adversaries really are—and that they are not ourselves."[16]

Moreover, this book predicts soberly, based on the facts and informed judgments of many political and security analysts, let alone common sense, that in the foreseeable future the next scenes in our lives very highly probably *will* include:

suicide bombings + megaweapons of destruction

Please ponder for a moment the enormity of such terrible events to come.

In making this prediction, I am not gloating nor am I a prideful predictor. I am a grieving, fearful human being who is aware that too many people and cultures in our human species make the most horrible choices to destroy and maim *millions* of fellow human beings, often including their own people. If there is anything that can be done to prevent the tragedy, or to prepare for it to minimize the destruction of lives that will ensue, and to prevent further recurrences, more than anything else I want to do these things that will save lives.

But It Is Unshakable in Supporting Life for All People

This book is not for those who need to be politically correct. Nor is it for innocents who can only see our upcoming world as one of the wholesome coexistence and mutual enrichment of different cultures, religions, and nations—that I too so deeply want and toward which I work. It is about a grim reality that is spreading insidiously.

Let it be noted again, we are not writing about something that is really new, for evil thrusts of power and murder have characterized our human race from the earliest time, wherever humans are to be found—including by Jews, Christians, Muslims, and so many other ethnicities, religions, and nationalities, and including everywhere we look, in Southeast Asia, the Indian continent, Africa, wherever. Where the next biggest destruction will come from, I don't know. I do know it will be from human beings like today's suicide bombers who set no limits on their killing.

In this book we examine through the lenses of modern psychology and psychiatry how the human mind can do these disgusting things. The book is a serious attempt to understand the suicide bombers, even respectfully in a sense, within their cultural and psychological worlds. In fact, as I wrote this book, I found myself *almost* capable of experiencing the suicide bombers' mindsets, including the sense of sacrifice and dedication of many of them, and also the incredible security of becoming part of a doctrinaire group where one gives up one's own ability to think and choose. Nonetheless, my firm conclusions are fully on the side of Western civilization's historic injunction, "Thou Shalt Not Kill."

Our understanding of the suicide bombers does not turn into acceptance or romanticization of them as underdog freedom fighters or devoted martyrs to their people. For all our efforts to understand the culture-meanings and human motivations of suicide bombers, we remain unambiguously against killing civilians and unambiguously denounce the suicide bombers.

I will be calling for a solution to the scourge of suicide bombings and terror through a combination of a resolute military battle against them, including tough preemptive legal and police means which necessarily *will* threaten to undermine our democratic civil rights, but I am willing to take the risks.

The liberals will hate the call for full force against the terrorists, and especially the approval of major preemptive measures to find the potential terrorist killers—in their mosques and community centers, when they make their purchases of explosive materials in hardware stores, through their e-mails and cellular communications, in the course of their travel to and from other countries, and so on—*before* the explosions.

On the other hand, the law-and-order people will want to destroy the terrorists and be done with them, and they are going to be impatient and totally skeptical of my further proposal that we also wage a "war" for a cultural value of respecting life over the prevailing culture of death of the suicide bombers and other terrorists. Famed psychiatrist Robert Jay Lifton has cautioned that although suicide bombing arouses our fears of "world ending or apocalyptic violence, it is tempting to plunge into combating suicide bombing in a way that resembles it and that is a great danger."[17]

This book may be politically incorrect, which means that it steps on certain toes, by calling Islamic suicide bombings and other terror a serious world threat; favoring without reservation an intelligence-police-military war against terrorism and strict intelligence-police measures to hunt down, identify, and take strong preemptive legal actions against potential suicide bombers and terrorists, notwithstanding the real threats and abuses of human rights that have to follow (and then need to be regulated and corrected by us); and daring to dream of a worldwide campaign for cultural change and evolution to greater respect and protection of human life.

Let me formulate and discuss further the three major types of political incorrectness in which this book engages:

- Political Incorrectness 1: I stand firmly against Islamic terrorism (again I emphasize not against Islam itself as a faith or culture), notwithstanding the disdain and irate criticisms of many liberals-academics who define much of the war against terror as imperialism and prejudice against Islam

There are those who don't want to talk about the facts that most—though indeed not all—of the terrorism in the world today is being executed by Muslims. Those who don't want to say so include many wonderful peace-loving people, including many academics who want to believe that if you say nice and decent things about whoever, in this case Muslims, they will come through and be decent. Oriana Fallaci describes this kind of piety as a "decadence of Westerners . . . to be identified with their illusion of being able to deal amiably with the Enemy, and even less with their fear. A fear that induces them to meekly host the enemy, to attempt to conquer him with sympathy, hoping that

he will allow himself to be absorbed; while [the enemy] is the one who wants to absorb."[18]

Some highly skilled observers-researchers of Muslim terrorism have ended up being branded unjustifiably by much of the academic world as firebrand anti-Muslims, and as if have been polarized out of the intellectual establishment, so that there are respectable intellectual circles where their writings are suspect and are not at all to be cited. In fact, some of these critics of Islam really were the resolute whistle blowers who told us early on, firmly and even courageously, that a nascent worldwide movement of Islamic terror was afoot in the world, and was going to get worse and worse and worse.

Too many liberal-academic-intellectuals hate the sounds of resolute antiterrorism. They equate them with proviolence, prowar, jingoism, globalism, and imperialism. In my judgment, they are wrong. The suicide bombers and other terrorists, like the utopian visionaries of Nazism and Communism, are serious threats to the lives of decent people.

Still, there is no question that a huge number of Muslims, followers and leaders, do want peace and nonviolence, and in this book we are committed to hearing appreciatively and with a real sense of kinship many life-caring voices in Islam, and not only the hateful pronouncements of Al-Qaeda's "Death-Eaters."

- Political Incorrectness 2. If suicide bombers and other terrorists are threatening to destroy more and more lives and are aiming for world domination, we certainly need to fight them and very hard. The battle against terrorists has to be conducted with every police and military power possible, also with legal and police means to limit evil terrorists' rights and to ferret them out as early as possible.

For those who care about democracy and human rights, these tactics are very touchy and involve an inevitability of abuses of innocent people, overuse of power, and fascist violations of human rights, even if unwittingly. A liberal intellectual, like myself, is legitimately on guard against such abuses and violations of democracy, and also will oppose aspects of the battle against terrorists that are inhumane and unlawful if less violent and less invasive procedures to stop the terrorists could have been used. Yet, notwithstanding the dangers to human rights and democracy, I am firmly and fully for killing terrorists when they are ready to strike, and for heading them off as early as possible with investigative skill, courage, and preemptive power.

- Political Incorrectness 3. I also believe that if the battle against the suicide bombers and terrorists is limited to legal and police-military power, and does not extend to a major spiritual battle over values, the battle will be lost. How often now have we seen a modern military power vanquish and occupy an enemy nation and people and then fail bitterly to build a functional society? In many cases, the occupied society turns with glee on its conqueror and

defeats it from within in a grueling guerrilla-revolutionary-terrorist battle for independence.

The above understanding leads many decent people to a conclusion that although a military battle against terrorists may be justified, it is largely and most often unwise. I do not agree, and thus I become politically incorrect to these lovers of peace and opponents of military actions. I am strongly in favor of President Bush and Prime Minister Blair's "war on terror." (That does not mean I agree with how we went into war in Iraq without international authorization and consensus and seriously weakened the U.N. system.) But I do believe that we also need a new kind of culture campaign to make suicide bombings and terrorism unacceptable, unattractive, even disgusting in the very cultural milieus which currently honor and sponsor such warfare.

The capstone of this book will be a proposal for a *"Worldwide Campaign for Life,"* with a large investment of international funds and energies over many years to promote new levels of caring, respect, and protection of human life in our world. The proposal very much includes working with available Islamic national, folk, and culture leaders who will be ready to join our rest of the world in a new conception of the sacredness of human life. So now I am again politically incorrect with the Bush and Rumsfeld people or the tough guys who count so much on military-police-legal power that they are uninterested and scoff at soft-hearted people who will try to talk with Islamic society and win them over.

In further fact, I am not even sure that all my academic colleagues are going to be happy about my wanting to launch a creative dialogue *with* Islamic culture, because some of them will also charge me with being an ethnocentric meddler who does not respect the rights of another culture to seek its own evolution and development from within its own self, and not from the efforts of another culture that regards itself as superior to them in seeking to influence them.

Altogether, I really have to thank my publisher for going with this book. Those who hate wars will dislike us. Mental health and other intellectuals who are convinced that mental health concepts need to be value free, and that we should not judge the values of another culture (in this case, the violence of Islam), or define suicide bombers as "pathological," will dislike us. Cultural relativists who romanticize primitive, fundamentalist cultures will hold us in low regard. Conservatives who believe only in strong actions and don't trust efforts to bring about culture change will be contemptuous of us. Is there anyone left?

The truth is that I do believe there are millions of people who are left who really want peace. I believe that even many opponents of this book will agree that it is built sensibly and with an effort at fairness on a careful and interesting assembly of information. I also believe that there will be many people who will like this book very much: first because we seek to be true to the facts of the killer suicide bombers in our world today; second because, surprisingly we are empathic to the terrorists as fellow human beings; third we stand clearly against the suicide bombers and are willing to use tough means to fight them; and fourth

because, more than anything else, we are committed to a larger culture battle for a culture of life rather than a culture of death for all us human beings in all our societies.

In short, I think that many, many common sense thinkers, who care about living and letting other people live as full lives as possible, will genuinely respect and like this book.

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because she felt that I did not achieve the latter goal as fully as she believed I must. The second felt I had achieved the goal and asked his publishing house to publish the work, but for whatever reasons was not successful. In the case of both editors, I felt that I benefited from a deep, probing, and very thoughtful concern with the basic issues of this work, as well as the wonderful sound advices of accomplished literary mentors.

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Finally, as I say in another way in the Dedication, this book is a further expression of my lifelong quest to contribute to some measure of greater protection of our human lives on this planet. It is clear to me, including from the deeply helpful psychoanalysis I underwent many years ago, that the key personal source of my concern with protecting human life was my childhood experience of seeing my beloved mother suffer over eight years and then die from cancer. But from my personal grief and anger have come a firm conviction that the ultimate purpose of science, knowledge, and indeed all our civilization is to protect human life. For me the readiness of peoples and groups to destroy other human lives en masse is a collective malignant process, where one part of our shared humanity turns against and seeks to destroy en masse the others of us. We are nothing, and we stand a good chance of being destroyed as a species if we do not put a stop to such malignancy. I think that by the time this book will have appeared it will have become all too clear that our world is on the verge of endless threats to life everywhere on this planet, among them prominently the growing development of what I call "transnational genocidal terrorism," and that *we must fight back*!

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Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI). I have drawn on the databanks of the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) many times and am pleased to express my appreciation for the thoroughness and accuracy of their data and for their standing permission to quote their materials. "The Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) is an independent, non-profit organization that translates and analyzes the media of the Middle East." For further information: Middle East Media Research Institute, P.O. Box 27837, Washington, DC 20038-7837, phone 202-855-9070, fax 202-955-9077, e-mail: memri@memri.org. All citations from MEMRI have been retrieved from the Web site memri.org.