

Suicide Bombings in Pakistan and the Mullahs

By Muhammad Zafrullah at Pocatello

“A suicide Bomber blew himself up at ...” is common news these days. But when a public figure dies as a result, condemnations pour in, along with sympathy for the deceased. I do understand that it is a great tragedy that Ms. Bhutto died at the hands of a terrorist, but I wonder if it is any lesser tragedy when some common folks die as a result of a terrorist attack. I am not alone in saying that. Three of the greatest religions of the world, Judaism, Christianity and Islam preach that unjust killing of one person amounts to killing the whole of humanity. But when it comes to killing innocent people, the followers of each religion forget all that religion teaches and follow the dictates of their desires.

Sadly, some Muslims whose religion (Islam) literally means peace and submission are very active in the area of killing innocent people these days. This is going on in spite of the teachings of the Quran and in spite of the teachings of the Holy Prophet. How do they do it? The answer is easy; they take some Quranic verses and historic events out of their context and play on the ignorance and the gullibility of ordinary folks. There are indeed promises of rewards, in the Quran, for people who die defending Islam, but not for killing their own Muslim brothers and sisters nor for killing non-combatant non-Muslims. In fact the Prophet, peace be upon him, said that if two Muslims fight and one gets killed both of them would go to hell. He was asked as to why the one who got killed and he replied that if he had a chance he too would have killed his brother.

The Prophet, peace be upon him, was so worried about Muslims killing each other that in his last address he declared sacrosanct the life and property of a Muslim for other Muslims. But when one is bent upon mischief one finds a way. Some mullahs decided that any Muslim who did not follow their particular creed was a non-Muslim and hence could be murdered; ignoring the fact that unjustified killing of any human was forbidden. Islam does not permit force in matters of faith. When the Quran talks about killing the infidel it talks about it in the context of war. But of course only those who have read and understood the Quran would know this.

So, now the state of affairs is that some mullah or pseudo mullah sits down “indoctrinates” someone who is completely ignorant of Islam and prepares the person to go and blow himself up to uphold the banner of Islam; ignoring the fact that suicide is forbidden in Islam. There is a tradition that talks about a person who was fighting fiercely against the enemies of Islam. The narrator commented on this man’s bravery, but the Prophet, peace be upon him, said that the man was an inmate of hell. Curious, the narrator was on the lookout to see what this warrior would do to deserve hell. The man got wounded, fell down and took his own life because he could not bear the pain. The moral that one draws is that committing suicide even in the face of imminent death earns you the displeasure of God. This man was doing Jihad! In other words taking your own life is a sin, Jihad or no Jihad.

Now the question is, is the mullah solely responsible for the current suicide bombings and chaos in Pakistan? Looking closely at how the mullah has fared in politics we find that Pakistani mullah wants respect more than power, respect that the mullah commanded before the British Raj and the respect that mullah did not get even in Pakistan. One way of gaining that respect in these materialistic times is to gain power. For power the only rallying point that the mullah has is religion. This caused the religious fine tuning. Mullahs declared that the marriage out of sect was forbidden. There was so much throwing out of the pale of Islam that if you look closely there is no Muslim sect that is comfortably in the pale of Islam. In any case, as a result of fine tuning Islam what mullah could achieve were a few much localized riots. So, there could be other players that may be stirring the things to cause the current turmoil in Pakistan.

When there is talk of other players, people usually think of other government agencies. It is hard to deny the possibility that other governments may be interested in creating law and order situation in Pakistan, in order to offer “their help”. But they would need some medium, as (a) they do not speak the language of the mullah and (b) the mullah may not wish to betray his country. Political leaders and government officials are very good candidates for becoming the medium for instruction and the conduit for funds. There is evidence of that kind of activity in the past when Pakistan government served as a conduit for aid to the Mujahidin in their fight against the Russian Army in Afghanistan.

The Jihad in Afghanistan also brought in other players. Osama Bin Ladin and a whole lot of foreign fighters and I am sure some Arab money found its way into Pakistan in the form of aid to Madrasahs, some of which were nothing more than training camps for terrorists or Mujahidin, whatever you may want to call them. One prominent example of such a Madrasah was Lal Masjid (Red Mosque http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lal_Masjid also look up <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1640138,00.html>). Now money must have come from some place for the Madrasah at the Red Mosque to acquire such arsenal. They must have had some connections with people who provided them with the weapons and training. Those folks must be some highly placed officials or some leaders. Indeed, as the author of the article in the Time mentions such trained warriors do not really need Taliban to fight for them.

Now the question is how to deal with the situation, or who will bell the cat? I believe a concerted effort is needed here. I suggest two types of goals, the immediate and the long term. The immediate goal should be to make sure that illegal fire power is reduced as much as possible. This can be attained by introducing legislation that allows hard sentences for those found in possession of illegal explosives and firearms. Some mosques such as the Red Mosque in Islamabad, as mentioned above, have been found to have stocked weapons and explosives. So, a routine inspection of mosques is in order. (If anyone thinks of this as sacrilege he/she should know that a mosque that is hoarding weapons that could be used against Muslims is an enemy mosque (masjid Zarrar) and every mosque that we hold dear should be cleared of being masjid Zarrar.) Since no one is ready to give up his/her life without assurances there must be a mullah behind every suicide bomber. So, keeping an eye on mullahs and religious leaders is in order. Of course the government would have to keep an eye on officials who seem to go out of

their way to go to a certain mosque. Another, long-term, goal is education. By education I mean religious as well as secular education. (It is ironic that I have to use the word “secular” for education, if you listen to the Prophet, pbuh, all education is religious.) The other, long-term, goal is economic stability. Decrease poverty and there will automatically be a lesser number of people willing to die before their time.

The next question is: will that solve the problem? This will hopefully solve the problem only temporarily, because the approach that I suggest has not tackled the problem of providing the mullah the respect that his religious leadership role in the society demands. For this we would probably have to produce a new breed of mullahs who are conversant with both religious and secular knowledge. We can then give capable mullahs mosques with madrasahs attached. The madrasah may be staffed by mullahs who will teach not only the Quran, Hadith and other religious topics but also will teach topics that will prepare their students for success in these modern times..

Of course, it is sad that Benazir Bhutto died such a tragic death. But let us make sure that no one else in Pakistan has to suffer in that manner. Let us make sure also that, miscreants do not use her death as an excuse for dismantling Pakistan. I hear that some elements have even damaged the Railways, burned banks, gas stations and other means of public service. Now I grew up in Pakistan and I do not recall having seen or heard of any ordinary Pakistanis looting or destroying public property, in anger or for any other motive. The people who are causing disruption are either not Pakistanis or they are brain-washed Pakistanis who think that they are serving Islam by letting some foreigners take control of Pakistan, in the name of Islam. By foreigners, I mean the Taliban and the Arabs.

I have seen Arabs from close quarters. A great number of them do not even consider Pakistanis full Muslims. (A very common jeer that they use for us non-Arabs is “thalatha yom Muslim”. It is used to tell us that we non-Arabs have been Muslims only for three days, so we do not know what Islam is. I would let you figure out how much it hurts when you hear that.) If I go by my experiences, some of our Arab brothers will sell us dirt cheap, only to make a name for themselves in the West. So bid good bye to Mr. Ladin and Dr. Al-Zawahiri, as their interest in disrupting Pakistan may well be due to the fact that Arabs do not like the lowly Pakistanis having the atomic bombs that they cannot produce. Of course there is no denying the fact that there are good Arabs too and I salute them and pray for them, but the Arabs that are pouring in money to disrupt Pakistan are certainly bad Arabs. About the Taliban, they are Afghans and traditionally Afghans have looked down upon Indian and hence Pakistani Muslims as weaklings. So, say good-bye to mullah Omar, for if you ever gave control to him (God forbid) he would rip you apart. God preserve Pakistan, my childhood home and home to a lot of good and peaceful Pakistanis.