



Dr. Fred Schwarz

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Bill Ayers: Domestic Terrorist

Bill Ayers was born in December 1944 and was raised in a Chicago suburb. In the mid-1960s he taught at a radical alternative school—part of the “free school movement”—where students addressed teachers by their first names, and where no grades or report cards were given. By age 21, Ayers had become the director of that school. In 1968 he earned a B.A. in American Studies from the University of Michigan.

In the late Sixties, Ayers became a leader of the Weather Underground (WU), a splinter faction of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). Characterizing WU as “an American Red Army,” Ayers summed up the organization’s ideology as follows: “Kill all the rich people. Break up their cars and apartments. Bring the revolution home, Kill your parents.” One of Ayers’ fellow WU leaders was Bernardine Dohrn, the woman who would later become his wife.

In a July 29, 1969 speech which he delivered at the University of Oregon, Ayers boasted of SDS’s role in the Venceremos Brigades, a project initiated by the Cuban intelligence agency to recruit and train American leftists as “brigadistas” capable of waging guerrilla warfare.

Ayers was an active participant in the 1969 “Days of Rage” riots in Chicago, which were led by WU’s antecedent group, Weatherman. In the mayhem, nearly 300 members of the organization engaged in vandalism, arson, and vicious attacks against police and civilians alike. Their immediate objective was to spread their anti-war, anti-American message. Their long-term goal, however, was to cause the collapse of the United States and to create, in its stead, a new communist society over which they themselves would rule. With regard to those Americans who might refuse to embrace communism, Ayers and his comrades—including Bernardine Dohrn, Mark Rudd, Linda Evans, Jeff Jones, and numerous others—proposed that such resisters should be sent to reeducation camps and killed. The terrorists estimated that it would be necessary to eliminate some 25 million people in this fashion, so as to advance the revolution.

In his 2001 memoir *Fugitive Days*, Ayers recounts his life as a Sixties radical and boasts that he “participated in the bombings of New York City Police Headquarters in 1970, of the Capitol building in 1971, and the Pentagon in 1972.” Of the day he bombed the Pentagon, Ayers writes, “Everything was absolutely ideal . . . The sky was blue. The birds were singing. And the bastards were finally going to get what was coming to them.” He further recalls his fascination with the fact that “a good bomb” could render even “big buildings and wide streets . . . fragile and destructible,” leaving behind a “majestic scene” of utter destruction.

All told, Ayers and the Weather Underground were responsible for 30 bombings aimed at destroying the defense and security infrastructures of the US. “I don’t regret setting bombs,” said Ayers in 2001, “I feel we didn’t do enough.” Contemplating whether or not he might again use bombs against the US sometime in the future, he wrote: “I can’t imagine entirely dismissing the possibility.”

In 1970, Ayers’ then-girlfriend Diana Oughton, along with Weatherman members Terry Robbins and Ted Gold, were killed when a bomb they were constructing exploded unexpectedly. That bomb had been intended for detonation at a dance that was to be attended by hundreds of Army soldiers at Fort Dix, New Jersey. Ayers himself attested that the bomb would have done serious damage, “tearing through windows and walls and, yes, people too.” Notably, Ayers’ fingerprints were found at the bomb-making site, along with an assortment of anti-personnel weapons, stabbing implements, C-4 plastic explosive, and dozens of Marxist-Leninist publications.

After the death of his girlfriend, Ayers and Bernardine Dohrn spent the rest of the decade as fugitives running from the FBI.

Years later, Ayers would claim: “We [Weatherman] made a decision while we were willing to engage in extreme tactics, we would not harm human life We never hurt or harmed anyone. We destroyed property.” But this claim was contradicted by Larry Grathwohl, a United States Army veteran and an FBI informant during the 1970s, who in 1974 testified before the United States Senate Subcommittee on Internal Security and reported that in 1970:

“Bill [Ayers] was the person who directed the ‘foele’ [a four-person task force, small in size to evade detection] that I was part of to place the bomb at the DPOA [the Detroit Police Officers Association] Building. He designed the bomb and told me that he would get the necessary materials, the dynamite, et cetera, and 4 days later Bill broke that foele that I was part of up . . . and we were directed to go to Madison, Wisconsin.”

Grathwohl talked about the case again at a 2012 conference sponsored by America’s Survival, where he said: “During the meeting with Bill Ayers [in 1970] we were told that our objective would be to place bombs at the Detroit Police Officers Association . . . and at the 13th precinct. Furthermore, Bill instructed us to determine the best time to place these explosive devices that would result in the greatest number of deaths and injuries” When Grathwohl, at that time, pointed out to Ayers that a Red Barn restaurant next door would most likely be destroyed and the customers killed during the explosion, Ayers replied that “sometimes innocent people have to die in a revolution.”

In 1974 Ayers co-authored—along with Dohrn, Jeff Jones, and Celia Sojourn—a book titled *Prairie Fire: The Politics of Revolutionary Anti-Imperialism*. This book contained the following statements:

- “We are a guerrilla organization. We are communist women and men . . . deeply affected by the historic events of our time in the struggle against US imperialism.”
- “Our intention is to disrupt the empire, to incapacitate it, to put pressure on the cracks, to make it hard to carry out its bloody functioning against the people of the world, to join the world struggle, to attack from the inside.”
- “The only path to the final defeat of imperialism and the building of socialism is revolutionary war.”
- “Revolutionary war will be complicated and protracted. It includes mass struggle and clandestine struggle, peaceful and violent, political and economic, cultural and military, where all forms are developed in harmony with the armed struggle.”

- “Without mass struggle there can be no revolution. Without armed struggle there can be no victory.”

- “We need a revolutionary communist party in order to lead the struggle, give coherence and direction to the fight, seize power and build the new society.”

- “Our job is to tap the discontent seething in many sectors of the population, to find allies everywhere people are hungry or angry, to mobilize poor and working people against imperialism.”

- “Socialism is the total opposite of capitalism/imperialism. It is the rejection of empire and white supremacy. Socialism is the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the eradication of the social system based on profit.”

The title *Prairie Fire* was an allusion to Mao Zedong’s 1930 observation that “a single spark can start a prairie fire.” Ayers and his co-authors dedicated the book to a bevy of violent, America-hating revolutionaries—including Sirhan Sirhan, the assassin who had killed Robert F. Kennedy.

In 1980 Ayers and Dohrn surrendered to law-enforcement authorities, but all charges against them were later dropped due to an “improper surveillance” technicality—government authorities had failed to get a warrant for some of their surveillance. Said Ayers regarding this stroke of good fortune: “Guilty as sin, free as a bird. America is a great country.”

Next, Ayers embarked on a quest to radicalize America by working within, rather than outside of, the nation’s mainstream institutions. In particular, he sought to embed himself in a position of influence within the education establishment. In 1984 Ayers earned a master’s degree in Early Childhood Education from Bank Street College. Three years later he received a doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction from Columbia University’s Teachers College.

In 1987 Ayers was hired as a professor of education at the University of Illinois, a post he would hold until 2010. As of October 2008, his office door at the university was adorned with photographs of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Che Guevara, and Malcolm X.

In 1994 Ayers, Bernardine Dohrn, and Michael Klonsky were among those listed on a “Membership, Subscription and Mailing List” for the Chicago Committees of Correspondence, an offshoot of the Communist Party USA.

In 1995, Ayers and Dohrn hosted a fundraiser at their home to introduce Barack Obama to their neighbors and political allies as Obama prepared to make his first run

for the Illinois state senate. (This fundraiser was likely organized by the socialist New Party.) Also present at the meeting were Alice Palmer and Quentin Young.

There is strong evidence suggesting that Ayers wrote *Dreams from My Father*, Barack Obama's 1995 memoir.

In 1995, Ayers—whose stated educational objective is to “teach against [the] oppression” allegedly inherent in American society—founded a “school reform organization” called the Chicago Annenberg Challenge (CAC), which granted money to far-left groups and causes such as the community organization ACORN. Ayers' teacher-training programs, which were funded by CAC, were designed to serve as “sites of resistance” against an oppressive social system.

Ayers also created, in collaboration with longtime communist Mike Klonsky, the so-called “Small Schools Movement” (SSM), where individual schools committed themselves to the promotion of specific political themes and pushed students to “confront issues of inequity, war, and violence.” A chief goal of SSM is to teach students that American capitalism is a racist, materialistic doctrine that has done incalculable harm to societies all over the world. One of the more infamous students to attend an SSM school (Mountain View High School in Arizona) was Jared Lee Loughner, the gunman who—on January 8, 2011 in Tucson—shot Rep. Gabrielle Giffords in the head, leaving her in critical condition. Loughner also sprayed gunfire at others in the vicinity, wounding thirteen and killing six.

In 1999 Ayers joined the Woods Fund of Chicago, where he served as a board member alongside Barack Obama until December 2002, at which time Obama left. Ayers went on to become Woods' board chairman.

Notwithstanding his radical past, Ayers in 2001 rejected the claim that he and his fellow Weather Underground members had ever been terrorists. “Terrorists destroy randomly,” he wrote, “while our actions bore . . . the precise stamp of a cut diamond. Terrorists intimidate, while we aimed only to educate.”

Also in 2001, Ayers expressed his enduring hatred for the United States: “What a country. It makes me want to puke.”

At a 2007 reunion of former members of the Weather Underground and Students for a Democratic Society, Ayers reemphasized his contempt for the US, asserting that the nation's chief hallmarks included “oppression,” “authoritarianism,” and “a kind of rising incipient American form of fascism.” Moreover, he claimed that the US was guilty of pursuing “empire unapologetic[ally]”; waging

“war without end” against “an undefined enemy that's supposed to be a rallying point for a new kind of energized jingoistic patriotism”; engaging in “unprecedented and unapologetic military expansion”; oppressing brown- and black-skinned people with “white supremacy”; perpetrating “violent attacks” against “women and girls”; expanding “surveillance in every sphere of our lives”; and “targeting . . . gay and lesbian people as a kind of a scapegoating gesture . . .”

In November 2007, Ayers spoke at a Movement for a Democratic Society (MDS) “Convergence” in Chicago. Though not officially listed as a member of MDS, he has referred to the organization's activities as “our work.”

In March 2008 Ayers was elected (by a large majority of his peers) as Vice President for Curriculum Studies at the American Educational Research Association (AERA), putting him in a position to exert great influence over what is taught in America's teacher-training colleges and its public schools. Specifically, Ayers seeks to inculcate teachers-in-training with a “social commitment” to the values of “Marx,” and with a desire to become agents of social change in K-12 classrooms. Whereas “capitalism promotes racism and militarism,” Ayers explains, “teaching invites transformations” and is “the motor-force of revolution.” According to a former AERA employee, “Ayers' radical worldview, which depicts America as “the main source of the world's racism and oppression,” thoroughly “permeates” AERA.

Ayers has also contributed money to Teaching for Change and Rethinking Schools, groups dedicated to turning K-12 students into social and political activists.

In a December 2012 speech at New York University, Ayers emphasized the importance of using the education system, among other things, to indoctrinate young people and thereby transform American society. Said Ayers: “If we want change to come, we would do well not to look at the sites of power we have no access to; the White House, the Congress, the Pentagon. We have absolute access to the community, the school, the neighborhood, the street, the classroom, the workplace, the shop, the farm.”

Ayers' influence in education is not limited solely to his work in the United States. Indeed, he currently sits on the board of the Miranda International Center, a Venezuelan government think tank dedicated to bringing Cubastyle education to Venezuelan schools. (Ayers greatly admires Venezuela's Marxist President Hugo Chavez.)

At a May 18, 2009 rally organized by the Committee for a Just Peace in Israel and Palestine, Ayers joined Rev. Jeremiah Wright in addressing a crowd of more

than 400 people at the First United Church of Oak Park (a Chicago suburb) just prior to participating in an annual walk designed to call attention to Israel’s alleged crimes against the Palestinian people. Today Ayers is an affiliated activist of the anti-Israel organization Free Gaza, along with such luminaries as Bernardine Dohrn, Jodie Evans, Noam Chomsky, Naomi Klein, and Adam Shapiro. Ayers is also an endorser of the US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel.

In August 2010, Ayers announced that he was retiring from his teaching post at the University of Illinois. However, he continues his work with AERA and serves also as an editorial-board member of *In These Times*, a Chicago-based socialist journal.

Beginning in the fall of 2011, Ayers was a strong supporter of the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement, which he described as a “North American Spring,” akin to the “Arab Spring.” Said Ayers: “These kinds of movements expand our consciousness of what’s possible.” On October 19, 2011, Ayers led a “teach-in” for members of “Occupy Chicago” (that city’s OWS contingent) on the tactics and history of “non-violent direct action.” He lauded the Chicago activists for their “brilliance”; condemned America’s “violent culture”; and derided the Tea Party movement as a bastion of “jingoism, nativism, racism.”

In March 2011, Ayers addressed an Occupy Wall Street contingent in New York City and told them: “I get up every morning and think, today I’m going to make a difference. Today I’m going to end capitalism. Today I’m going to make a revolution. I go to bed every night disappointed but I’m back to work tomorrow, and that’s the only way you can do it.”

In November 2011, Ayers was a keynote speaker at the National Association for Multicultural Education’s (NAME) international conference in Chicago, along with critical race theorist Patricia Williams and several others. In December 2012, Rick Ayers, a teacher-education professor at the University of San Francisco, was elected as NAME’s co-president.

Bill Ayers has authored a series of books about parenting and educating children, including: *A Kind and Just Parent*; *The Good Preschool Teacher*; *Zero Tolerance: Resisting the Drive for Punishment in Our Schools*; and *Teaching Towards Freedom: Moral Commitment and Ethical Action in the Classroom*.

Ayers and Bernardine Dohrn raised three children. One is named Malik (the Muslim name of Malcolm X). Another is named Zayd (after Zayd Shakur, a Black Liberation Army revolutionary who was killed while

driving the cop-killer JoAnne Chesimard—a.k.a. Assata Shakur—to a hideout). The third, a boy named Chesa Boudin, was raised by Ayers and Dohrn after his natural parents, Kathy Boudin and David Gilbert, were sentenced to lengthy prison terms for their roles in the 1981 Brinks murders, a joint Weatherman and Black Liberation Army operation that resulted in the killing of two police officers and an armed guard.

—*discoverthenetworks.org*, June 29, 2014



Presbyterian Church (USA)

Moves Left

by David Paulin

What has happened to America’s Presbyterians? Leaders of Presbyterian Church (USA) have joined ranks with the radical left in recent years. They vilify Israel, apologize for Islamic terrorists, and cheer on the Palestinian cause.

Now, these leftist elites are savoring an important victory, having pushed through a resolution to divest from US companies operating in Israel: Caterpillar, Motorola Solutions, and Hewlett Packard. The contentious vote in the church’s general assembly passed by a narrow 310-to-303, and was a long-time goal of leftist Presbyterians, who since 2006 had submitted four divestiture resolutions that failed to muster sufficient votes.

Divestiture is largely symbolic: The companies in the portfolio of America’s largest Presbyterian denomination represented a pittance of its investments, about \$21 million. But leftist Presbyterians saw divestiture as a way to shame the companies and ostracize Israel over what they believe is its humiliation of Palestinian Arabs and illegal occupation of their lands—a situation they claim begets terrorism. They conveniently forget that Israel has been ready to trade land for peace since its birth in 1948. As for the companies they vilify: Caterpillar’s bulldozers are used in anti-terror operations; and Motorola Solutions and Hewlett Packard provide electronic security systems.

More than a few rank-and-file Presbyterians were outraged over the June 20th divestiture vote; tens of thousands have left the church in recent years as it drifted left. “We stand in full support of Israel’s right to protect its citizens and of all American companies to engage in honest free enterprise,” said Rev. Paul deJong, senior pastor of First

Presbyterian Church of Fort Myers, the oldest Presbyterian church in Lee County, Florida.

“The church has been infected,” a Presbyterian seminary student in Texas once told me, a woman in her 30s who became a minister. She was referring to a pro-Palestinian conference hosted several years ago by Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, an affiliate of Presbyterian Church (USA). At the time, leftist Presbyterians were calling for a divestiture resolution.

Israel is not perfect, of course; no country is. But the venom of Israel-bashing Presbyterians has been troubling because of how it negates anything positive about the Middle East’s only democracy. Israel is singled out as a rights abuser.

What accounts for this moral confusion?

Israel-bashing didn’t used to be fashionable, including among Presbyterians. Indeed, Israel was widely admired in the years after its birth and miraculous growth. Upbeat news articles spoke of those “plucky Jews.” But no more. Now Israeli Jews are denied credit for their nation’s economic and democratic miracle, growing out of a region that American writer Mark Twain—passing through as a travel writer in 1867—had described as an unpopulated and “desolate country.”

Now, Israel’s story has a new twist, one put forth by left-leaning Presbyterians and fellow-travelers in other Christian denominations. Jews achieved what they did because they exploited somebody else: Palestinian Arabs. In this view Palestinian Arabs, not Jews, are now the chosen people.

This Israel-bashing narrative also bristles with anti-Americanism, and over the years it has become popular in America’s universities. That’s an old story. But what’s less well known is that this same narrative has gained currency at many Christian seminaries. Many seminary professors have adopted a world view similar to the post-modern left; what for them is a strange hybrid of Christianity, Marxism, and Edward Said. (Said, of course, was the high-profile Columbia University professor who popularized the idea of Palestinian victimhood within an anti-Western context.) At some Presbyterian seminaries, students in their early 20s—future ministers and church leaders—have been indoctrinated for years with the ideological poison of the post-modern left, albeit within a Christian context.

Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

One Presbyterian seminary that I’m familiar with is in Texas: a 112-year-old institution whose idyllic grounds are near the University of Texas campus in Austin, the

state capital. I’m not a Presbyterian, incidentally. I’m not even a regular church-goer, although I regularly attended a mainline Protestant church as a youngster. Eight years ago, however, I took a greater than usual interest in religion, after noticing Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary was hosting a thought-provoking conference: “American Churches and the Palestinians.” The theme of the two-day event was inspired by a line from Isaiah 58:6: “To Loose the Chains of Injustice . . .”

I briefly visited the conference, and that passage’s subordination to a political view quickly became clear: Israeli Jews were colonial oppressors; and Palestinian Arabs were their victims. The event’s main sponsors were hardly friendly toward Israel: The Interfaith Community for Palestinian Rights; Friends of Sabeel-North America; and Pax Christi USA. Hundreds of religious leaders from around the country, representing various denominations, attended along with seminary faculty.

Consider three high-profile guest speakers:

Robert Jensen, a radical left-wing University of Texas journalism professor, discussed what he claimed was biased media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—biased, that is, against Palestinian Arabs. Jensen was hardly unbiased himself, however. Days after the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks, he gained national notoriety for his inflammatory Op-Ed in the *Houston Chronicle*, “US Just as Guilty of Committing Own Violent Acts.” The attacks, Jensen argued, were “no more despicable than the massive acts of terrorism . . . that the US government has committed during my lifetime.”

Two years earlier, Jensen published an Op-Ed in the *Houston Chronicle* and *Palestine Chronicle*. Its title and first sentence were the same: “I Helped Kill a Palestinian Today.”

“If you pay taxes to the US government, so did you,” Jensen explained. He went on to say that “the current Israeli attack on West Bank towns is not a war on terrorism, but part of a long and brutal war against the Palestinian people for land and resources.” He said nothing about billions of US dollars of international aid flowing over the years into the Palestinian territories—only to be squandered, pocketed by corrupt officials, or used to fund terrorism.

At the conference’s dinner, the main speakers were Cindy and Craig Corrie, parents of Rachel Corrie. At age 23, Rachel Corrie died when she stood in front of an Israeli Defense Forces bulldozer conducting anti-terror operations—clearing tunnels utilized by Palestinian terrorists. The driver failed to see her, and she was run over.

Corrie is now a martyr to her supporters—their very own Joan of Arc. But the more accurate description of her would be “terror advocate.” A memorable photo shows her clad in Muslim garb—her face contorted with rage as she holds a burning American flag drawn on a piece of paper.

Corrie’s parents head the Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice, a non-profit “that conducts and supports programs that foster connections between people, that build understanding, respect, and appreciation for differences, and that promote cooperation within and between local and global communities.”

The conference’s star speaker was the Rev. Naim Ateek, a Palestinian Episcopal priest who founded and directs the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Jerusalem. He has questioned Israel’s right to exist, and like his Presbyterian counterparts apologizes for Islamic terrorists. He distributed a thought-provoking scholarly paper he’d written: “What is theologically and morally wrong with suicide bombings? A Palestinian Christian Perspective.” The subject was timely. Suicide bombings were more common at the time: Israel’s “separation barrier”—which has saved lives by thwarting suicide bombers, but that leftist Presbyterians widely criticized—was not finished at the time.

Ateek’s paper navigated a thicket of theological issues, but its conclusion was fairly simple: Suicide bombers do indeed violate Christian doctrine—but the desperation fueling their misguided actions is understandable: It’s Israel’s fault. Neither Ateek nor his Presbyterian supporters, incidentally, have ever given credence to three other “root causes” of Palestinian Arab terrorism: Islamist ideology; the culture of hate permeating Palestinian culture; or an “honor-shame” mentality that undermines efforts for peace which the overwhelmingly majority of Israelis desire.

Visiting the conference, I walked down hallways lined with exhibits outside classrooms where “workshops” were held. The exhibits bristled with pro-Palestinian political literature and books. One focused on Palestinian culture, displaying clothing and other items. (Not included were suicide vests or a replica of the Sbarro pizzeria suicide

bombing; such an exhibit was displayed by clever Hamas student activists at al-Najah University in Nablus).

Rev. Ateek, of Sabeel, must have felt right at home. He was clearly a favorite speaker—a veritable celebrity. Conference-goers eagerly repeated his stories of alleged Israeli terrorism against Palestinians, including when, he says, his family was forcibly removed by Israeli troops on May 12, 1948. This, of course, was days before Arab armies tried to wipe Israel off the map. Perhaps Ateek’s personal stories are true; perhaps not. However, what’s clearly false about these stories, revolving around Israel’s creation, is that Ateek presents them as normal and everyday occurrences, the result of Israel’s aggression; the defining narrative of what Israel was and became.

The conference was a sold-out event; and no doubt it and similar events in recent years have persuaded increasing numbers of Presbyterians to support divestiture. The conference’s main organizer, Whitney S. Bodman, must have been pleased. A high-profile professor at Austin Seminary, he is an expert on Islam. He’s an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, and holds a doctorate in comparative religion from Harvard University. His research interests, he says, includes “Christian theology in an Islamic context.” Politically active, Bodman has praised terror group Hezbollah as a nation-building organization that fends off Israel’s aggression. He has worked closely with the Council of American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the problematic Muslim group. Above all, he has been a prominent figure on the “inter-faith dialogue” circuit that attempts to bridge differences with Muslims. That effort kicked into high gear after the 9/11 attacks.

Speaking at a “religious diversity” symposium not long after Europe’s infamous “cartoon riots,” Bodman belittled the idea that Muslims alone were responsible for Islamic-inspired terrorism and mayhem, and endeavored to smooth over the hurt feelings of Muslims. He explained: “First, remember that no incident happens in a vacuum and the violence and hatred exploding throughout the world today is not really about one event or something as seemingly trivial as a cartoon. It is an accumulation of hurt over months and years. It is Iraq and Palestine, suicide bombings and Abu Ghraib, and Gitmo and 9/11, and this whole sense that there

Founded in 1953, the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade, under the leadership of Dr. Fred C. Schwarz (1913-2009) has been publishing a monthly newsletter since 1960. *The Schwarz Report* is edited by Dr. David A. Noebel and Dr. Michael Bauman and is offered free of charge to anyone asking for it. The Crusade’s address is PO Box 129, Manitou Springs, CO 80829. Our telephone number is 719-685-9043. All correspondence and tax-deductible gifts (CACCC is a 501C3 tax-exempt organization) may be sent to this address. You may also access earlier editions of *The Schwarz Report* and make donations at www.schwarzreport.org. Permission to reproduce materials from this Report is granted provided that the article and author are given along with our name and address. Our daily blog address is www.thunderontheright.wordpress.com.

really is a clash of civilizations, an insidious danger to our way of life.”

What must the learned professor have thought about an Islamic terror plot in Canada that made headlines around this time—one involving 17 young Muslim men and youths? Their roots were not in the Middle East but Canada—home to anti-Americanism, multiculturalism, and unlimited tolerance. Yet they wanted to blow up Canada’s landmarks and behold the prime minister.

In their eagerness to appease Muslims, some Presbyterians have put themselves in even more compromising positions. In October, 2004, Ronald Stone, a retired professor of Christian and social ethics at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (affiliated with Presbyterian Church (USA)), met in southern Lebanon with Hezbollah commander Sheikh Nabil Kaouk, while on an official “fact-finding mission” to the Middle East.

Stone caused a furor when he told an Arab television channel that “relations and conversations with Islamic leaders are a lot easier than dealings and dialogue with Jewish leaders.”

“We treasure the precious words of Hezbollah and your expression of goodwill towards the American people,” he added. It was an odd way to describe Hezbollah, which Washington has designated a terror group for killing hundreds of Israeli and Americans. This included 200 US Marines in the 1983 suicide bombing of their Beirut barracks and deadly attacks on the Israeli Embassy in Argentina in 1992 and Israeli cultural center in Buenos Aires in 1994.

Stone was part of the lead group of the church’s Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. The church repudiated his remarks. But the controversy didn’t stop the head of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in the Chicago area, Rev. Robert Reynolds, from meeting nearly one year later with a Hezbollah commander, much to the outrage of Chicago-area Jewish leaders.

Subtle Indoctrination

It’s hardly coincidental that these Presbyterian leaders and activist echo the political and theological line that’s promoted at more than a few Presbyterian seminaries. Sometimes, the political indoctrination of young seminary students can be insidious.

A few weeks before its pro-Palestinian conference, Austin Seminary hosted a photography exhibition related to the conference’s theme: Palestinians as victims; Jews as their exploiters. Dozens of heart-rending photos adorned hallway walls outside classrooms. For future ministers and religious leaders, the photos were there to see, ponder,

and absorb. The exhibit was from left-leaning documentary photographer Alan Pogue, a Vietnam War-veteran specializing in political and social issues from a “social justice” angle.

The exhibition’s theme was unmistakable: European Jews displaced by World War 2 had created Israel—and ejected Palestinians from their ancestral homes. In fact, this was the caption of one photo. There were no positive photos of Israel or Israeli-Jews.

Two photos arranged side by side impressed me for the subtle anti-Americanism and moral equivalence suggested by their juxtaposition. One was a photo from New York City after the September 11 attacks—a poignant scene of a make-shift sidewalk memorial. It was a still life of sorts: flowers, photos, and mementos left by friends and family members.

Beside it was a strikingly similar photo—one of a Baghdad sidewalk memorial. It remembered the approximately 300 mostly women and children killed by a US precision-guided bomb during the US-led liberation of Iraq. They died in an underground shelter that US military planners presumed was one of Saddam Hussein’s command-and-control centers. Just before the war, however, it was converted into an air-raid shelter—one Saddam’s military men avoided. This of course is a common tactic among Middle Eastern terrorists and “insurgents”—putting civilians in harms way, and then when they are killed blaming and shaming the enemy.

Pogue saw things differently. His caption referred to the photos’ “similarities.” The subtle impression was that Americans now knew the same horrors their government had visited upon foreign lands.

Curiously, the photo exhibit was removed the day before a rare event at the seminary: a colloquium of Presbyterian ministers and rabbis held two weeks after the pro-Palestinian conference. The event’s title: “A Difficult Friendship: Divestment, Dialogue, and Hope.”

It was a revealing title. Seminary professors have gone out of their way in recent years to bridge “differences” with Palestinian Arabs and Muslims—even to the extent of excusing Islamic terrorism or apologizing for Judeo-Christian culture and history. Yet their “difficult relationship” is with Jews—not Muslims.

No wonder that a generation of seminary students has been infected with the poison of the postmodern left: a poison that vilifies Israel, America, and even the West. In casual conversations I had with young and idealistic seminary students, I noticed a common thread: They couldn’t

bring themselves to condemn other cultures—especially those they considered underdogs. You’ve heard of self-hating Jews. They were self-hating Christians.

One Austin Seminary student in her early 20s, an honor student, told me about participating in an “interfaith” function with Muslim men at Austin Seminary; and after the Muslims broke their fast she offered to shake hands with one man in a flowing robe. Yet he only reluctantly grasped her hand, she recalled.

She wasn’t shocked or put off.

She made excuses for him, explaining it was important to “understand” his culture. Yet this was in a Christian seminary—and a Muslim holy day was being celebrated there.

In explaining Arab rage against the West, this same student mentioned the “crusades”—no matter that quite a few Jews had their heads lopped off by crusaders; or that the crusades were a delayed response to Muslim aggression. Now, Islamic aggression is on the march again—and some of its religious underpinnings are making inroads into the Christian faith, judging by what’s being taught at more than a few Christian seminaries.

One seminary student even spoke of terror master Yasser Arafat as a freedom fighter. “You know, he won a Nobel Peace Prize,” he reminded me.

Recently, Austin Seminary got a new dean, a long-time theology professor at the seminary named David H. Jensen. One of his more interesting scholarly articles pondered the cultural imperialism fostered by America’s most famous hamburger: the Big Mac. In “The Big Mac and the Lord’s Prayer,” Jensen argued that McDonald’s and its all-American mean were emblematic of the dark underbelly of globalization—and even at odds with Christian values. “The McMeal is . . . a parody of the Eucharist, extending an invitation to all, but embodying only one culture,” he wrote. Interestingly, McDonald’s strongest sales at the time were in none other than anti-American

France and former Cold War enemies China and Russia. All of which underscores the perception gap that exists between leftist elites and ordinary people—a gap now reflected in the battle between rank-and-file Presbyterians and leftist elites in Presbyterian Church (USA).

Years ago, the Presbyterian church was part of the venerable WASP establishment. It had produced many presidents over the years. Its parishioners were well-heeled, well-educated, and very successful. They believed in America. Those days are gone.

Now that divestiture is finally a reality, the soul of Presbyterian Church (USA) may have been lost forever to the left. Decent Presbyterians, like those at First Presbyterian Church of Fort Myers, will face an uphill battle to reclaim it.

The left is in charge, for now.

—*FrontPageMagazine*, July 7, 2014



Important Announcement

Trevor Loudon’s *The Enemies Within: Communists, Socialists and Progressives in the US Congress* is to be turned into a “game changing” movie.

Timed for release in August 2015, “The Enemies Within” will be like no other film ever released in America.

Production standards will be **Hollywood** quality.

Guiding values however, will be 100% **American**.

The Enemies Within will name names and go where no one has gone in modern times in its quest to awaken Americans to the enemies within their own government.

Help restore America by exposing its internal enemies.

Our goal is to raise \$400,000 minimum, partially from investors and partially from our grassroots support base through crowd sourcing.

Go to www.indiegogo.com/projects/the-enemies-within and **help** fund this movie.



Don’t miss a minute of the news and analysis by David Noebel.
Check out our blog at:

www.thunderontheright.wordpress.com