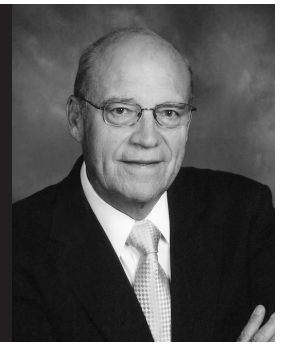




Dr. Fred Schwarz

# The Schwarz Report



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Volume 54, Number 11

November 2014

## Where America?

by Charles Scaliger

*The Communist Manifesto* once shocked American readers with its version of radical socialism, called communism. Now, it's nearing complete implementation in America.

One hundred seventy years ago, Europe was a continent in ferment. Dissatisfied with the feudal/monarchical system that had sustained most of the continent since the collapse of the Roman Empire, many European intellectuals and agitators wanted to completely overturn the old order. The French Revolution had spawned many imitators, and a number of movements, known collectively as “socialists,” worked to sow unrest and urge their fellow Europeans toward revolution. The most extreme of these was the “scientific socialism” of Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, and a circle of leftist intellectuals and malcontents who called themselves the League of the Just. In seeking to differentiate themselves from the many brands of “Utopian socialism” then in vogue, Marx and his collaborators eventually hit on a new name for their program: communism. Before long, the term was on the lips of every informed European, and young Karl Marx soon produced a statement of the communist ideology, *The Communist Manifesto*.

*The Communist Manifesto*, a brief and very accessible piece of political pamphleteering, was once required reading in high-school civics classes across the land—in a day when many of its claims still had the power to shock. But nowadays, the *Manifesto* is seldom read except by political science majors. The reason for this is not hard to discern: *The Communist Manifesto*, indisputably one of the most influential pieces of writing ever produced, no longer offends or surprises, because nearly all of its philosophical underpinnings have been accepted, and nearly all of its program adopted, in whole or in part, in the formerly free nations of the West, including the United States.

The *Manifesto* was published in 1848, a time of social upheaval across Europe (1848 was Europe’s famous “year of revolutions,” which saw socialist uprisings in dozens of states large and small, including the many Italian states, France, Ireland, the Hapsburg Empire, Poland, the German states, Denmark, western Ukraine, Switzerland, and Belgium). Monarchies, including the Capetian dynasty in France, were overthrown, and other reforms that allegedly broke with Europe’s feudal, aristocratic past were instituted. But it was not so much against the entrenched political elites that *The Communist Manifesto* was directed; instead, it aimed to abolish the “bourgeoisie,” the rough equivalents of the entrepreneurial and mercantile classes that constituted Europe’s budding capitalist classes, whom Marx termed “the middle class owner[s] of property.” These were the men who had brought about the Industrial Revolution, with its exquisite division of labor and productive factories and mills, as well as the shopkeepers, merchants, and traders who found markets for the fruits of Europe’s miraculous new productivity. They were also the people and corporations who fomented international trade, beginning the process of enriching and improving the lot of the entire human race through such trade—a process that continues apace in our day, with Western modes of manufacture and capital accumulation now being spread to the nations of Asia and Africa. The *Manifesto* rejected all of these things, proclaiming instead the ascendancy of the so-called working class, and railing against the material blessings of what Marx termed capitalism. In an age of optimism, prosperity, and relative freedom—at least, in contrast with what Europe had known for centuries—the *Manifesto*’s ranting pessimism did not sit well with many enlightened minds.

Marx’s central talking point, the need to abolish private property, had little appeal in a Europe and America where private property had formed the base for the greatest surge of economic growth the world had ever seen. Inequalities in ownership there were, and remain, but the critical right to own and control property (including one’s own person) is the legal doctrine

upon which a free-market economy is founded. It allows men to take ownership of their lives and work to improve their situation, instead of expecting masters to provide for them. Private property, in other words, is one of the most important discoveries of Western Civilization, and is the basis for the progress we have enjoyed for five centuries.

The 19th century, though it did not aspire to medieval levels of piety, was still an age of faith (at least relative to the 21st) when even the brightest skeptics were reluctant to embrace atheism (the great French mathematician and physicist Pierre Simon Laplace, when asked whether he believed in God, replied coyly that he had “had no need of that hypothesis” in his work). But Marx’s *Manifesto* raged against God and religion, assuring his readers that a future communist order would eradicate them altogether.

If such talking points were shocking to most mid-19th-century readers, they are no longer. In our day, Christianity has become all but extinct in many parts of Europe, and not only in former redoubts of Soviet Communism. For while atheism was official policy in nearly all of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (and remains so today in Communist China, Cuba, and North Korea)—a policy that effectively secularized countries from Central Europe to the Asian Far East—the former and current communist regimes in Europe, Asia, and elsewhere are little less secular than those European nations that were not drawn into the communist sphere. While many recent surveys have attempted to gauge the degree of religiosity in European countries, with somewhat varying results, the overall picture is stunning: Irreligiosity and outright atheism are close to becoming the norm across much of formerly Christian Europe. For example, according to a 2010 Eurobarometer poll, as many as 34 percent of all Swedes, 37 percent of Czechs, and 40 percent of French do not believe “there is any sort of spirit, God, or life force.” The same poll reported that 30 percent of Dutch, 27 percent of Belgians, 29 percent of Estonians, 25 percent of residents of the U.K., and 20 percent of the EU overall, believed likewise.

Outside of Europe, other modern “Western” countries show similar trends, with Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay (three of South America’s four most-developed countries) reporting rates of irreligiosity or outright atheism of 25, 11, and 17 percent, respectively. Results in Canada vary, but rates of atheism north of the border have been reckoned at anywhere from a quarter to a third of the population. In the United States, the picture is not quite so bleak, with slightly less than 10 percent of Americans self-identifying as atheists, although around 20 percent have no religious affiliation as such. Still, for the billions of residents of

Europe, East Asia, North America north of Mexico, the wealthier nations of South America, Australia, and New Zealand, godlessness has become mainstream.

Urged on by articulate advocates such as biologist Richard Dawkins, who have used the Internet to amplify their message, atheism is on ever surer footing in the United States and elsewhere, especially among the young, while traditional religiosity of every kind is routinely ridiculed in the media and marginalized by legislators and policymakers. Karl Marx, were he alive today, would no doubt be pleased.

Another part of Marx’s program was—and remains—abolition of the family. Marx saw the “bourgeois” institution of the family as indissolubly connected with capital and private property. When the latter disappeared, he argued, so would the former:

“On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based? On capital, on private gain. In its completely developed form, this family exists only among the bourgeoisie. But this state of things finds its complement in the practical absence of the family among the proletarians, and in public prostitution.

“The bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the vanishing of capital.

“Do you charge us with wanting to stop the exploitation of children by their parents? To this crime we plead guilty.”

The decline of marriage and the traditional family is so universally acknowledged as to be almost cliché. Even as divorce rates have risen, the number of unmarried couples cohabiting and bearing children has skyrocketed across the Western world. The number of American children born out of wedlock is now higher than 40 percent, a figure that was in the single digits until the end of World War II. At the same time, the drive to legalize, legitimize, and make ubiquitous “same-sex marriage” is turning millennia-old Judeo-Christian culture on its ear. Similar trends are in evidence across the formerly Christian West, from Catholic Latin America to Orthodox Eastern Europe. And for those who, in Marx’s day or our own, protest the calculated destruction of the traditional family and the Judeo-Christian morality associated with it, the *Manifesto*, echoing modern secularists, dismisses their “disgusting” concerns as “bourgeois claptrap about the family [and] about the hallowed co-relation of parents and child.”

But the abolition of God, church, marriage, and family are, in Marx’s view, subordinate to the overarching goal of Marxism, the radical leveling of society by the elimination of private property and the middle class (the

“bourgeoisie”). This Marx justified by claiming that, under bourgeois capitalism, private property was already a fiction for the proletariat or working classes:

“You are horrified at our intending to do away with private property. But in your existing society, private property is already done away with for nine-tenths of the population; its existence for the few is solely due to its non-existence in the hands of those nine-tenths. You reproach us, therefore, with intending to do away with a form of property, the necessary condition for whose existence is the non-existence of any property for the immense majority of society.

“In one word, you reproach us with intending to do away with your property. Precisely so; that is just what we intend.”

Not only that, but the bourgeois concept of “freedom” was nothing more than a justification for an unjust system of property rights:

“The abolition of this state of things is called by the bourgeois, abolition of individuality and freedom! And rightly so. The abolition of bourgeois individuality, bourgeois independence, and bourgeois freedom is undoubtedly aimed at.

“By freedom is meant, under the present bourgeois conditions of production, free trade, free selling and buying.

“But if selling and buying disappears, free selling and buying disappears also. This talk about free selling and buying, and all the other “brave words” of our bourgeois about freedom in general, have a meaning, if any, only in contrast with restricted selling and buying, with the fettered traders of the Middle Ages, but have no meaning when opposed to the Communistic abolition of buying and selling, of the bourgeois conditions of production, and of the bourgeoisie itself.”

While private property has not yet been altogether abolished, private property rights have become so diluted as to render almost meaningless once-robust legal protections on the formerly sacrosanct private sector. From confiscatory taxes on income, property, and capital and corporate gains, to ever-expanding regulatory regimes controlling every conceivable aspect of commercial activity and property use, the modern world has become, for the most part, implacably hostile to the principles of laissez-faire economics that once inspired Western governments to deregulate commerce and broaden property rights. That Americans have not yet been herded into full-blown Soviet-style kolkhozes is hardly the issue; American farms are already largely collectivized in the name of environmental and occupational safety, gov-

ernment control of farm prices and food supplies, and countless other rationales. To the extent that they still operate on American soil, factories and corporations are already owned by the state in that they pay the highest corporate taxes in the Western world and are subject to constant oversight and control by a welter of government agencies on the lookout for the slightest perceived breach of politically correct etiquette or any whiff of what our government overlords can characterize as unfair competitive practices. The modern American workplace is literally papered with communist-style government edicts warning of the penalties for any unfair employment or workplace practices, for safety violations, or any of countless other crimes against the regulatory Nanny State. These types of things have become accepted because we cannot imagine a workplace in which, for example, we are not warned of the consequences of “unequal employment practices,” but such things are as much in the spirit of Marx’s program as they are antithetical to individual liberty and private property rights.

#### **Planks to Build a Marxist Society**

Marx’s *Manifesto* is more than just a screed, however. It sets forth 10 specific measures—often known informally as the “Ten Planks of Communism”—for bringing about communism. In our day, these “planks” no longer appear radical to most, because all but one of them have now been implemented, in whole or in part, by the United States of America. The “Ten Planks” are:

1. Abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes.
2. A heavy, progressive, or graduated income tax.
3. Abolition of all rights of inheritance.
4. Confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels.
5. Centralization of credit in the hands of the state, by means of a national bank with State capital and an exclusive monopoly.
6. Centralization of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the State.
7. Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the State; the bringing into cultivation of waste-lands, and the improvement of the soil generally in accordance with a common plan.
8. Equal liability of all to work. Establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.
9. Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; gradual abolition of all the distinction between town and country by a more equable distribution of the populace over the country.
10. Free education for all children in public schools.

Abolition of children's factory labour in its present form. Combination of education with industrial production, etc.

Plank #1 we have already discussed. While property taxes have long been a feature of American law, current levels found in many parts of the United States have not. According to the Tax Foundation, the heavily populated states of New York and New Jersey have the highest property taxes in the United States. An average resident of Westchester County, New York, for example, paid \$9,044 in property taxes in 2009—the highest in the country. Many other counties in the urban northeast were not far behind, however, with Nassau County, New York, exacting an annual tribute of \$8,940 and Bergen County, New Jersey (where this writer's ancestors first settled in the mid-1600s to find freedom from religious oppression in Holland) shaking down property owners to the tune of \$8,708. Overall, New Jersey has the highest median property taxes (\$6,579), followed by Connecticut, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Illinois, Vermont, Wisconsin, and California (\$2,893).

Added to such impositions are the innumerable federal, state, and local regulations controlling everything from excavating a new pond, building a treehouse for children, and repairing a porch roof. Permits for even mundane house repairs and upgrades have become so routine that few Americans can now imagine a time when a homeowner, contemplating the need for a new patio, would simply build it, or wanting to construct a clubhouse or treehouse for his children and their friends, would take no thought except to purchase the lumber and nails. Treehouses and clubhouses are among the many by-products of private property rights that have all but disappeared from American neighborhoods, because, in most places, they are no longer legal in a nation where private property rights have become a fiction.

Plank #2, a heavy, progressive income tax, has been with us since 1913. Originally urged upon Congress and the American people as a new and innovative way to raise revenue for necessary state functions, the permanent, heavy, graduated income tax was originally inspired by communist and socialist theorists such as Marx as a handy tool for wealth confiscation and redistribution. And the income tax, enforced by the authoritarian and almost unaccountable IRS (and its counterparts in other Western countries), has lived up to Marx's expectations, subjecting Americans to inquisitorial annual or quarterly tax returns that are scrutinized by agents unrestrained by any legal presumption of innocence. The IRS and the income tax have ruined the lives of countless Americans and continue to make the month of April a time of fear and loathing,

especially for the most productive and heavily-taxed among us. As no doubt intended, income tax levies are most onerous for those who choose to be self-employed, since the FICA exaction is double what an employee is required to pay. This has had the effect of encouraging more and more Americans to seek employment with large corporations or in the public sector rather than to start their own businesses. And for many plucky entrepreneurs who do persist in being self-employed, being in permanent debt to the IRS is a fact of life.

Planks #3 and #4 are likewise being carried out via heavy taxation. While the right of inheritance has not been abolished outright, the confiscatory levels of state and federal inheritance taxes on estates of any significant size are having a comparable effect. The first permanent federal estate tax (better known colloquially as the "death tax") was instituted in 1916, just three years after the permanent income tax. In its original form, the estate tax law permitted the federal government to harvest a 10-percent impost on all estates exceeding \$50,000. Subsequent legislation extended taxation to gifts, so that wealthy estate holders could not avoid taxes by giving away their assets before death. As of 2011, federal estate taxes were levied on all estates valued at \$1,000,000 or more, with a mind-boggling maximum rate of 55 percent, while a paltry \$11,000 per year is subject to exclusion from the gift tax. This means, in principle, that the federal government now has the power to confiscate more than one-half of all the property of wealthy decedents. This has created a strong disincentive for the wealthy and successful to save money and other capital assets (the true basis for economic growth, as every free market economist understands), and strong incentives to spend their wealth (in keeping with the Keynesian bias for spending over saving).

The confiscation of the property of emigrants is being accomplished by heavy "expatriation taxes" now inflicted on any American who seeks to renounce his American citizenship and transfer his assets abroad. Current US law imposes very heavy exactions on any American with assets of \$2 million or more who seeks expatriation.

The confiscation of the property of "rebels" has taken the form of applying noxious "asset forfeiture" laws—whereby the federal government has the power to seize assets from anyone suspected of drug trafficking, money laundering, racketeering, and other criminal offenses—to individuals or institutions suspected of involvement with financing terrorism. In 2001, the Patriot Act spelled out sweeping new federal powers to confiscate money, real estate, and other assets from terrorist suspects and their enablers, including banks and other financial institutions.

As with other types of asset forfeiture, such things once seized by the state are seldom if ever relinquished, even if charges are dropped or overturned. Moreover, the definitions of “terrorism” and “terrorist-related activities” are sufficiently nebulous that, in the near future, it is not at all improbable that such provisions will be used to confiscate the property of people labeled as “anti-government”—the Newspeak version of “enemies of the state.”

Plank #5 was accomplished in full with the creation of the Federal Reserve, America’s central bank, which has enjoyed a monopoly over the money supply since December 1913. The Fed, along with other comparable central banks abroad, such as the Bank of England and the European Central Bank, is arguably the most powerful tool for central economic planning and wealth redistribution ever devised. Since the economic collapse of 2008, for example (a catastrophe encouraged by Fed policies), the Federal Reserve has presided over the largest transfer of wealth in human history, from the more than 99 percent of Americans who do not own controlling interests in the megabanks and other financial corporations that constitute the Fed’s “primary dealers” into the pockets of the few thousand oligarchs who do. That such a consummate tool of revolutionary Marxism should now be hailed as the very linchpin of the entire US “free market” economy is without doubt one of the supreme ironies of our age.

Not many years ago, few Americans aside from economists and bankers had any notion of what the Federal Reserve is or how it works, and fewer still appreciated the threat it poses. Nowadays, things have changed, with popular and congressional awareness of the Fed and anger over its destructive activities at an all-time high. Thanks to the tireless labors of former congressman Ron Paul to expose the Fed for what it is, bills to audit the Fed and curtail its powers are now a fixture in the House, and criticism of the organization is par for the course in congressional debate and in the mainstream news media. While abolition of the Fed does not appear imminent, it is under scrutiny and on the defensive as never before.

Plank #6 has been mostly accomplished as well, at least as far as the mainstream media are concerned. However, with the arrival of the Internet (ironically, a government creation), it has become much more difficult for the American establishment to “control the narrative,” so to speak. The Internet has made possible many things that were once unthinkable, such as the diffusion of the doctrines of liberty and the disclosure of news that the government-controlled media ignore or actively try to stifle.

Of course, lest we forget, the US government retains the power to shut down the Internet should it become too

much of a threat. The Internet has also become an instrument of comprehensive and essentially unchecked state surveillance. As we have but lately found out, no e-mail is sent unremarked, no Facebook post unnoticed, and no forum posting truly anonymous in a day when the federal government no longer acknowledges any restraints on its authority to spy on its own citizens. And other media are just as surely under the federal government’s thumb, with television, radio, telephone, and cable networks all under government control, if not outright ownership (yet). Since 1934, the FCC has tightly regulated all forms of electronic media, allegedly to ensure that use of the airwaves was equitably allocated. But in 2006, the FCC dispelled any doubts about whose interests it truly serves when it declined to investigate allegations (later revealed to be true) that the NSA had been compelling telecommunications corporations to assist them in illegal espionage on American citizens.

But in the meantime, Americans still enjoy the freedom of the press, and nearly unfettered access to the great writings of all ages that constitute our heritage. The Internet continues to be exploited by the private sector to magnificent effect, bringing about marvelous new means to buy and sell products, to create and maintain social and professional networks, and to store, disseminate, and access information.

Planks #7 and #9 have been implemented piecemeal since the late 19th century, when the newly formed Department of Agriculture (USDA) began subsidizing farming and farm research. Beginning with the Great Depression and FDR’s New Deal, the USDA became one of the federal government’s most important instruments for promoting socialism via massive farm subsidies, price controls, and manipulation of commodity supplies. Today, nearly all commercial farmers accept government subsidies in exchange for government control over their fields and their harvests. Moreover, ranchers in the West must graze their cattle on federal lands, subject to federal rules and regulations that, over the last several decades, have been directed at driving cattle off government lands altogether and putting an end to ranching in the name of environmental concerns. For all intents and purposes, then, both ranching and farming is altogether under the micromanagement control of the federal government’s social engineers, just as Marx had advocated.

Moreover, the distinction between country and city has been blurred by the creation of vast sprawling suburbs made possible by massive freeways (the interstate highway system) created by the federal government under President Eisenhower. The rise of the “burbs” and the people who

live in them (while mostly working in the city) has contributed to the dilution of rural and small town America and its distinctive culture by city values. Big cities generally have been centers of government growth (New York City passed the first modern American gun control law, the Sullivan Act, in 1911, for example, generations before such legislation could ever be contemplated in more rural areas), because with the much larger concentrations of people living in cities, the demands for government dispute mediation and controls are correspondingly greater. For this and other reasons, city dwellers tend to be much more “liberal” than their rural counterparts; would-be social engineers within government are therefore constantly trying to impose urban values and lifestyles on rural and small-town America, which has always been instinctively hostile to Big Government.

Plank #10 has been fully realized for generations. Government schools have been around since the 19th century, and since the creation of the Department of Education by President Jimmy Carter, all public schools have effectively been under federal government control. The implementation of national curricular standards often hostile to traditional values and tried-and-true methods of effective pedagogy—such as the controversial Common Core being foisted upon public schools right now—shows just how important government control over education is to carrying out the social revolution Marx and his epigones advocate. It is public schools whose anti-American curricula now militate against religion (especially Christianity), family values, and sexual restraint, and which regularly distort American history and slander many of our noble forebears, such as the Founders, whose views do not square with the agenda of messianic Marxism. American public schools have been at the vanguard of the effort to indoctrinate Americans in the beliefs of the Marxist counterculture.

Fortunately, Americans still have options for educating their children. Private and online schools offer a range of alternatives to public school, and homeschooling, once illegal across the land, is now legal in all 50 states. Many homeschooling families can now take advantage of online education programs such as FreedomProject Education, whose online student body numbers nearly 600 after only a few years of operation. And government-sponsored initiatives to consolidate control over public school curricula, especially Common Core, have been met with strong resistance from a public finally awakened to the fact that our school system is slipping from our control.

Even the child-labor legislation contemplated by the 10th plank has long since become the law of the land,

in many cases preventing responsible young adults from entering the workforce when they wish.

Only the eighth plank, with its call for industrial armies, has not been implemented in any significant degree, it being one of the final steps undertaken in the transition from socialism to unalloyed communism.

### **Retreat From the Marxist Rabbit Hole**

In very many respects, American government and society are now aligned with the vision of *The Communist Manifesto*. Unlike the former Soviet Union, Red China, Cuba, Cambodia, North Korea, and other nations that can or could truly be characterized as communist, we have not reached the ultimate phase. Instead, we are in a transitional phase, which we might term “American socialism,” in which our political leaders pretend to uphold individual liberty, free markets and trade, and the rule of law, but do precisely the opposite. Like the many flavors of socialism that Marx identified near the conclusion of the *Manifesto* as ideological allies and necessary precursors to true communism (such as “German socialism,” “feudal socialism,” bourgeois socialism,” and “critical-Utopian socialism”), American socialism tries to subvert liberty and Christian culture via appeals to nationalism, patriotism, humanitarianism, and class equality—socialism wrapped in the American flag, as it were.

Appearances to the contrary, the consummation of the communist program in America is not inevitable. But nothing less than a veritable American Renaissance will prevent it. Such a national rebirth would entail a restoration of constitutional federal government, confining it to its limited, defined powers. It would mean a repudiation of destructive, nonsensical social innovations such as same-sex “marriage” and abortion on demand. It would require the abolition of the Federal Reserve, the IRS, and myriad other unconstitutional federal agencies and departments. And it would require a return to sound money and liquidation of the national debt by deep cuts in government spending. If these things do not soon come to pass, we may soon find out just how far our leaders are willing to take us down the Marxist rabbit hole.

Fortunately, Americans still have the means to reverse the trend toward Marxist absolutism. We still have the freedom to express and disseminate our political opinions and to practice our religious faith. The Internet has proven more powerful even than the printing press for making our voices heard and changing hearts and minds about liberty. Americans are still very well armed (unlike the countless captive millions who have endured Marxist totalitarianism), and, despite an energetic campaign by media and government in recent years to rethink our right to self-defense enshrined in the Second Amendment, show more devotion than ever to this right—a powerful disincentive for would-be putsch-

ists in Washington, who have perhaps so far refrained from imposing martial law, under one pretext or another, because they still fear the wrath of a well-armed citizenry. As perilous as our state has become, we do not yet reside in Stalinist Russia or modern North Korea.

But we must not be lulled into complacency. After all, few of the denizens of states where communists seized control imagined such a thing happening to them. And as Arthur Thompson, the CEO of The John Birch Society, notes, the government that a people has is a reflection of the attitudes that the people hold:

Government is always a reflection of society and will change as its society changes. The communists understand this better than anyone, and it is why they are working to change American society away from being based on morals and constructed around individual freedom. If this process should be successful, our government would follow. Civic as well as individual morality is important. If we lose a moral society, we will not be able to stop a communist style government. This is why Marx always called for social revolution.

Since the days of Marx and Engels, the drive toward communism has been orchestrated by men and women with subtlety, enormous patience, and a long-range plan. If we wish to restore freedom to our shores, we must be no less organized, dedicated, and zealous.

—*The New American*, September 22, 2014, p. 10f

## Islamic Islam

by Dennis Prager

President Obama declared in his recent address to the nation that “ISIL is not Islamic.”

But how does he know? On what basis did the president of the United States declare the a group of Muslims that calls itself “Islamic State” “not Islamic”?

Has he studied Islam and Islamic history and concluded that ISIL, Boko Haram, al-Qaida, Hamas, Hezbollah, the Taliban, Jamaat-e-Islami, Lashkar-e-Taiba (the group that slaughtered 166 people in Mumbai, most especially guests at the Taj Hotel, and which tortured to death a rabbi and his wife), the various Palestinian terrorist groups (all

of which have been Muslim, even though there are many Christian Palestinians), and the Muslim terror groups in Somalia, Yemen, Libya, and elsewhere are also all “not Islamic”?

Has he concluded that the Muslim Brotherhood, which won Egypt’s most open election ever, is “not Islamic”?

And what about Saudi Arabia? Is that country “not Islamic,” too? Oh, and what about Iran? Also “not Islamic”?

Isn’t that a lot of Muslims, Muslim groups, and even nations—all of whom claim Islam as their religion—to dismiss as “not Islamic”?

To be fair, these baseless generalizations about what is and what is not Islamic started with his predecessor, President George W. Bush, who regularly announced that “Islam is a religion of peace.” And it is equally unlikely that his assertion came from a study of Islam and Islamic history.

The fact is that a study of Islamic history could not lead any fair-minded individual to conclude that all these Muslims and Islamic groups are “not Islamic.” Neither Islamic history, which, from its origins, offered vast numbers of people a choice between Islam and death, nor Islam as reflected in its greatest works, would lead one to draw that conclusion.

Killing “unbelievers” has been part of—of course not all of—Islam since its inception. Within 10 years of Muhammad’s death Muslims had conquered and violently converted whole peoples from Iran to Egypt and from Yemen to Syria. Muslims have offered conquered people death or conversion since that time.

The Hindu Kush, the vast, 500-mile long, 150-mile wide mountain range stretching from Afghanistan to Pakistan, was populated by Hindus until the Muslim invasions beginning around the year 1000. The Persian name Hindu Kush was proudly given by Muslims. It means “Hindu-killer.” At least 60 million Hindus were killed by Muslims during the thousand years of Muslim rule. Though virtually unknown, it may be the greatest mass murder in history next to Mao’s.

The groups named above are following some dictates of the Quran.

A few of many such examples:

“I will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbe-

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 (CACC 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](http://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](http://www.thunderontheright.wordpress.com).

lieve. Therefore strike off their heads and strike off every fingertip of them” (8:12).

“When the sacred months are over slay the idolaters wherever you find them. Arrest them, besiege them, and lie in ambush everywhere for them. If they repent and take to prayer and render the alms levy, allow them to go their way. God is forgiving and merciful.” (9:5)

“Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth.” (9:29).

There is also a different admonition in the Quran: “In matters of faith there shall be no compulsion” (2:256).

So a Muslim can also cite the Quran if he wishes to allow non-Muslims to live in peace.

The problem is that Muslim theological tradition, affirmed by many scholars, holds that later revelation to Muhammad supersedes prior revelation (a doctrine known as “abrogation”). And the Quranic verses ordering Muslims to fight and slay non-believers came after those admonishing Muslims to live with non-believers in peace and without religious compulsion.

The problem is that Muslim history, in keeping with the doctrine of abrogation, has far more often practiced the violent admonitions.

The problem is that more than 600 years after Muhammad, Ibn Khaldun, the greatest Muslim writer who ever lived, explained why Islam is the superior religion in the most highly regarded Muslim work ever written, “Muqaddimah,” or “Introduction to History”:

“In the Muslim community, the holy war is religious duty, because of the universalism of the Muslim mission and (the obligation to) convert everybody to Islam either by persuasion or by force.”

In other words, Ibn Khaldun boasts, whereas no other religion commands converting the world through force, Islam does. Was Ibn Khaldun also “not Islamic”? And so much for the president’s other claim that “no religion condones the killing of innocents.”

None of this justifies bigotry against Muslims. There are hundreds of millions of non-Islamist Muslims (an Islamist is a Muslim who seeks to impose Shariah on others), including many “cultural” or secular Muslims. And individual Muslims are risking their lives every day to provide the intelligence needed to forestall terror attacks in America and elsewhere.

It is only a call to clarity amidst the falsehoods coming from the president, the secretary of state, and especially the universities.

As the courageous Ayaan Hirsi Ali, the Somali-born

woman who leads a worldwide effort on behalf of Muslim women and for reforming Islam, asked in a speech at Yale University this month: If Islam is a religion of peace, why is there a sword on the Saudi flag?

If the president feels he has to obfuscate for the sake of gaining Muslim allies, so be it. But the rest of us don’t have to make believe what he said is true.

—*FrontPage Magazine*, September 26, 2014

## On the Origin of ISIS

by Lee Smith

The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, the terrorist army many thousand strong now rampaging through the Levant, embraces such an extreme, violent ideology that it makes even al Qaeda squeamish, argue many Western experts. On this reading, al Qaeda leader Ayman al Zawahiri was forced to distance himself from ISIS’s bloody practices. In reality, the notion that ISIS’s gory campaign turns the stomach even of an arch-terrorist, America’s public enemy number one, is colorful but inaccurate.

To be sure, ISIS—or the Islamic State, as it now calls itself—is an extremist movement, attracting militants from all over the world eager to help build the new caliphate. Given the thousands of foreigners—including Chechen snipers, Saudi car bombers, and Western misfits like American Douglas McArthur McCain—who have signed on to fight alongside ISIS, security officials are right to fear that the United States will become an ISIS target. The group kidnaps and murders American journalists. It threatened the existence of the Yazidi community in Iraq, and it slaughtered at least 700 members of the Sheitat, a tribe in Syria, last month. It regularly employs the vicious hudud punishments to enforce sharia law in the areas it controls in Syria and Iraq.

None of this, however, is outside the norms of a region where governments regularly incite hatred of America and Israel, wage wars against their own populations, and kidnap, imprison, and kill foreign nationals. Cutting off the hands of criminals, as prescribed by sharia, is hardly out of the ordinary; the Islamic Republic of Iran hangs gay teenagers from construction cranes, and the legal authorities of Saudi Arabia—an American ally—regularly separate accused criminals from their heads in public executions in what is popularly known as Chop-Chop Square.

What’s extraordinary about ISIS is not the violence. Indeed, the reason Zawahiri denounced the group was not its cruelty but its refusal to follow his orders and merge with another extremist organization. In other words, the



dispute between ISIS and al Qaeda was not about the conduct of the former but about who was in charge, a regular feature of regional power dynamics.

Nor are ISIS's money-raising schemes especially novel in the Middle East. As the *Wall Street Journal* reported last week, the organization's key source of income is oil, especially in the Syrian provinces of Deir al-Zour and Raqqa and the Iraqi province of Nineveh. "They sell it to opposition groups, to the tribes, back to the Syrian regime, or on the Iraqi black market," says Faysal Itani, an ISIS expert at the Atlantic Council. The other main source of revenue is taxation, or rather, extortion. As one source in the city of Raqqa, ISIS's so-called capital, explained to us, merchants pay 3,000 Syrian pounds (close to \$20) every two months. The kidnapping of foreigners or wealthy Syrians for ransom also brings in millions.

And yet it's true that ISIS is not exactly what we've become accustomed to seeing in the Middle East of late. "This is not a classic insurgency," says Itani, "or a non-state actor. Rather, it's a state-building organization." ISIS's effort right now is to secure borders and lines of communication. Comparing ISIS's project with al Qaeda's, Itani notes that bin Laden's logic was to draw the United States into conflict with the Muslim world in the hope of making the people so disgusted with their regimes that al Qaeda could take over. ISIS is different: It aims to take territory, hold it, and build a state. That is, at a moment when much of the rest of the Middle East is moving toward chaos, the Islamic State is consolidating.

ISIS's leader, Ibrahim Awwad al-Badri, is the self-proclaimed caliph, also known as Abu-Bakr al-Baghdadi, a 43-year-old jihadist from the Iraqi city of Samarra. During the American occupation, he was arrested on unclear charges, but deemed a low security threat and released after six months. Once out of jail, he joined Al Qaeda in Iraq, then under the leadership of the Jordanian Abu Musab al Zarqawi. Long before he proclaimed his caliphate, Baghdadi came to understand something that was lost on Zarqawi. As a member of the Banu Badr clan, Baghdadi saw that he needed to court the tribesmen on both sides of the Iraqi-Syrian border.

His strategy was greatly facilitated by the Obama administration's December 2011 withdrawal from Iraq and the anti-Sunni policies pursued by the Shiite-dominated government in Baghdad. ISIS's project was further aided by the Syrian uprising, which began in March 2011. Over the last three and half years, it has evolved into a civil war in which Syrian president Bashar al-Assad has slaughtered Sunnis. The White House and the rest of the

international community have done nothing to stop him.

In other words, any policy addressing ISIS also has to address the root problem: What gave ISIS room to take hold and blossom is the Iranian-backed order of the Levant, consisting of Hezbollah in Lebanon, Bashar al-Assad in Syria, and Nuri al-Maliki and his successor, Haidar al Abadi, in Iraq. All these are sustained by the Shiite Islamic revolutionary regime in Tehran. And the White House has virtually signed onto this regional security apparatus. It is the tacit agreement the Obama administration has made with Tehran that has not only galvanized ISIS but also made foes out of former allies. Sunni Arab tribes that sided with the United States during the surge to defeat Al Qaeda in Iraq less than a decade ago are now joining the Sunni extremists of ISIS.

Western commentators often marvel that ISIS, unlike other terrorist organizations, is capable of mounting serious military campaigns. For instance, in a June 10 blitzkrieg, ISIS units stormed Iraqi military bases and police stations in the country's second-largest city of Mosul. The fighters swept through Nineveh, most of Salaheddine, and parts of Diyala provinces. They linked up with tribal fighters from Anbar Province who had been in revolt against the government of Nuri al-Maliki for months. The reason ISIS and its allies seem to operate like a real army is that their military council is made up of former officers from an Arab army—Saddam Hussein's.

Accordingly, it might be most useful to see the current sectarian conflagration tearing through the Middle East as an extension of the Iran-Iraq war. After that nearly decade-long conflict (1980-1988), Saddam Hussein, ever fearful of coups, liquidated senior army officers who'd emerged from the war as heroes. One such officer was his cousin, childhood friend, and brother-in-law, Defense Minister Adnan Khairallah Talfah. Having thus hollowed out the Iraqi army, Saddam built special units, like the Republican Guards and Fedayeen Saddam, that were well trained in espionage work and explosives. After the US-led invasion in 2003, some of these officers, along with others from Saddam's M4 directorate of the Iraqi intelligence service, joined the insurgency against coalition forces and Iraq's new Shiite-dominated ruling order, which from their perspective was a collaborative American and Iranian affair.

On the other side, Tehran's first order of business in 2003 after Saddam had been toppled was to take revenge on the Iraqi military and intelligence personnel the Iranians had fought in the 1980s. Many of Iran's allies in Iraq—including, some say, former prime minister Maliki—formed death squads to go after these officers. Saddam's onetime officer corps went into hiding and used their expertise and money to wage war against the regime that had replaced them.

When the United States, in partnership with major Sunni tribes, defeated the Sunni insurgency, American officials pleaded with Maliki to stop hunting the former Baathists and allow them to resettle peacefully in a post-Saddam Iraq. Maliki didn't, nor did his allies. Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps officers like Quds Force commander and Iran-Iraq war veteran Qassem Suleimani as well as Iranian-backed militias like Asa'ib ahl al-Haq continued to prosecute their war against Iraq's Sunni community. Eventually the Sunnis came to see ISIS as one of their few lines of defense against this Shiite persecution.

Today, some of these former Iraqi officers constitute ISIS's core military leadership. As the *New York Times* reported last week, the last two heads of ISIS's military council were officers under Saddam, as was the current head of ISIS's military operations, Adnan al-Sweidawi, also known as Abu Ayman al-Iraqi, who worked as a colonel in Saddam's air defense intelligence unit. Other former Saddam loyalists have fought alongside ISIS. They include Jaysh Rijal al-Tariqah al-Naqshbandiyah (JRTN), a well-trained group of former Iraqi intelligence and army officers, led by Ibrahim Izzat al-Douri, a former high-level Baath party official. Douri was the king of clubs in the US-led coalition's deck of playing cards of most-wanted Iraqi officials, yet he evaded American forces. It was reportedly JRTN that provided the main muscle in ISIS's takeover of Mosul in June.

The other key players in the ISIS-led Sunni rebellion are the Arab tribes on both sides of the Syrian-Iraqi border. Indeed, the map of ISIS's new caliphate, with its so-called capital in Raqqa and encompassing Deir al-Zour in Syria and Nineveh, Anbar, Salaheddine, and Diyala in Iraq, overlays a much older map of tribal lands forming a contiguous territory with a total area of around 168,000 square miles, bigger than Great Britain (143,000 square miles). To see how ISIS has succeeded, it is of paramount importance to understand the tribal politics behind its achievement.

ISIS's first success in tribal politics was in Raqqa, which it snatched from the hands of the Assad regime and turned into its capital. Until the middle of 2013, Raqqa remained loyal to Assad. Although few Syrian security forces were present in the city, and the capital, Damascus, is nearly 300 miles away, making it virtually impossible to maintain communications and supply lines, Raqqa remained in Assad's control because the city was run by the Sharabeen tribe.

In the tribal world, the Sharabeen are not part of the elite. They are a cattle-raising tribe, considerably less prestigious than, say, the camel-raising Shammar, one of the biggest tribes in the Middle East, whose members are

known for their valor. When the founder of modern Saudi Arabia, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud, defeated the Shammar in 1910, the tribe pledged allegiance to him. Even as the British and French forced Ibn Saud to relinquish much of the Shammar territory he'd won, the Saudi king issued many Shammar Saudi passports.

Former Syrian president Hafez al-Assad, father of Bashar, well understood the significance of the ties between the Shammar and the Saudis. To counter Saudi influence in Raqqa, he propped up the Sharabeen, funding them, arming them, and giving them government jobs. All this came at the expense of the Shammar, many of whom picked up and moved to Saudi Arabia. When the anti-Assad rebellion erupted in 2011, Riyadh sent some Shammar tribal leaders back to Syria, like onetime head of the Syrian National Council Ahmed al-Jarba. The potential return of the powerful Shammar became a pressing concern not just for the Sharabeen, but for other tribal groups as well, which is what prompted 14 Raqqa clans to pledge allegiance to ISIS in November 2013. This is how Raqqa turned, quickly and peacefully, from an Assad stronghold into ISIS's capital.

Baghdadi repeated the same exercise in Syrian border towns like Al-Qaim and Bou Kamal, as well as Al-Omar, which is Syria's largest oil field, in Deir al-Zour Province. The Iraqi native had an even easier time with tribal politics on the Iraqi side of the border.

When British diplomat Gertrude Bell assembled modern Iraq, it was with an eye to securing a pipeline that linked the oil fields of Basra, in southern Iraq, to the Port of Haifa, in northern Palestine. This required integrating the Dulaim, an enormous tribe of around three million people today, and its territory, Dulaim Province, into Iraq. The Dulaimis would produce two Iraqi presidents, the last of whom was deposed by the Baathists, who changed the name of Dulaim Province to Anbar. Between 1993 and 1996, the CIA reportedly encouraged the Dulaimis to revolt against Saddam, which they did, and, losing, paid dearly. Nonetheless, one of the leading clans of the Dulaim, the Abu Risha, came to ally itself with the United States during the occupation, and without them, the coalition forces almost certainly would not have won the surge.

Maliki alienated the tribes that the surge had won over. He refused to share power with them. After the Obama administration's December 2011 withdrawal, the tribes—including the Dulaim—defied Maliki by holding anti-government rallies inspired by the Arab Spring. When Maliki cracked down on protesters and his forces ejected Sunni leaders from the government, the tribes went into open revolt.

To be sure, not all the Iraqi tribes have pledged allegiance to the new caliph, though they are fighting government forces alongside ISIS. Even as Baghdadi tried to woo some clans from the Dulaim, the tribe's leader, Sheikh Ali al-Hatem, a former Awakening Council member and a staunch opponent of the Iraqi government, stood up to Baghdadi and kept him out of most of Anbar's towns, including the biggest, Ramadi.

Perhaps eventually, the various components of the Sunni rebellion—the Dulaim, the Shammar, JRTN, ISIS, and the rest—will turn on each other. Already clashes have erupted between them, over booty or territory. But it is still too early for them to fall into open conflict. With ISIS spearheading the effort, the Sunni rebellion will likely continue to grow.

Last week President Obama announced that the White House has no policy to deal with ISIS. The revelation came as no surprise since it was the administration's handling of Iraq and Syria that gave ISIS room to grow. Before tackling the problem of Sunni extremism, the administration needs to address the pro-Shiite, pro-Iranian extremism that led to it. Even if the administration wanted to address the root causes of the Sunni rebellion, it has little power to affect facts on the ground: It took its troops and went home in 2011. The Iranians, by contrast, through their allies and through the military assets they are willing to use, from Hezbollah to the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, have lots of leverage. Iraq's new prime minister, Haidar al-Abadi—named to the post by Quds Force commander Suleimani—is every bit as much an Iranian asset as Maliki was.

But the reality is that Obama doesn't want to change the equation. As the president has explained in a series of interviews over the last year, he wants to build a new geopolitical equilibrium that would bring Iran back into the community of nations. And to do that, the White House has to respect Iranian regional interests—which amounts to signing off on Iranian hegemony across the Levant, at the expense of America's traditional regional partners, the Sunnis.

What's most extraordinary about the Middle East at present isn't ISIS and the rest of the Sunni rebellion. Rather, it's the Obama administration's inability to formulate a policy that would protect American interests by pushing back against Iran's project for the region. Instead, the White House is squared off against traditional American allies in a way we've never seen before—with the Sunnis now galvanized by a 4,000-year-old tribal code and led by a caliph.

—*The Weekly Standard*, September 8, 2014