

Ayatolla Jallal Ganjei

On Terrorist Fundamentalists' Characteristics: The Solutions

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Ladies and Gentlemen, Brothers and Sisters in faith. Allow me to start by expressing my apologies for not being able to be with you in person. We are gathered here today on the second anniversary of the London bombings, at a time that Britain is witnessing again acts of terrorism perpetuated in the name of Islam.

Let me start this address by emphasising that such acts and attitudes have nothing to do with Islam. Islam has absolutely no common grounds with such false interpretations. The reason is quite obvious. Islam is a monotheistic religion. It believes in one God ; a God who obviously is the Creator of all, and one who loves and cares for all of mankind.

Therefore Islam which is founded on this cornerstone, on the one hand seeks to devise the parameters for human relations and coexistence and so therefore encourages acts of love, charity and kindness to all its followers. Because in Islam all people of all faiths are equal in the eyes of God, we are all equal and in essence Brothers and Sisters. Therefore respect, friendship, kindness and generosity are the virtues that matter, and that is why in Islam, Muslims are asked to be active and pioneers in creating better relationships, better living conditions, and to be strong advocates for peace and co-existence. However, contrary to Islam, exists the evil and wicked extremist interpretation, which I will refer to here as 'terrorist fundamentalism'. This is a twisted political movement whose only objective is to take power and to impose its self-made regulations upon others. They will use any means whatsoever to reach this objective even if it means murder. So the characteristics of these fundamentalists are :

1. To gain political power in the name of religion, they will go to any lengths
2. They falsely try to impose dogmatic backward regulations which they name laws of 'Sharia'. Laws that will govern all aspects of people's private and social lives. These regulations have absolutely nothing to do with Islam. They are essentially dogmatic traditions which were devised in the middle ages.

In observing the various terrorist-fundamentalist currents we come to realise that all these groups have these two characteristics in common. In other words, whether the Shia Mullas of Iran and their proxy-organisations or the Sunni Taliban of Afghanistan, and other Sunni organisations, they share these fundamental characteristics.

Let us look at an example which is still in existence. I come from Iran which as you all know went through a revolution which we all supported in the hope of achieving freedom and prosperity. This regime, as you know, is the only remaining model which has institutionalised this un-Islamic behaviour in the name of Islam. In this example we can well see that ever since they took power they have given material, inspirational and other forms of support; recruiting other Muslims to this mindset ; to the extent of creating a whole corps within the Revolutionary Army to coordinate these affairs. It acts in support of all such organisations all over the world ; Sunni and Shiite alike allocating Billions to finance and inspire them.

Therefore as Muslims we need to understand that this is not just a threat to the West ; it is an active threat to world peace, and it is the biggest plague to hit all Muslims and their communities. One only comparable to the time of the 'Inquisition' in Christianity.

From my personal experience, the sectarian violence in Iraq under Iranian influence; the polarisation of the Muslim communities in Palestine, Lebanon, Yemen, and the West and Britain are all results of the spreading of this mindset.

We have all seen Muslims killing Muslims ; people of all walks of life being murdered; devastation and destruction. This is the true face of 'terrorist fundamentalism'. Here I would like to point to two important facts.

Firstly, regulations being imposed on these nations and communities as the laws of Sharia do not come from the Qura'n ; were not endorsed by the prophet or even his disciples. When we study these laws we realised that they have essentially been added to Islamic laws through despotic Islamic monarchs in and around the 3rd century after Islam ; and have been pushed into Islamic literature by bought-over Muftis and Mullahs of the day. Research and historical documents that we have can vividly prove that what is preached as Sharia by such people has no backbone and history in Islam whatsoever.

The second and the most important point is: what brings hope to this entire situation. This is the emergence of a democratic, tolerant and genuine Islam which has been stopping the movement of the fundamentalists. This has become more organised and forms the solution to this problem. Nothing other than genuine Islam and Muslims has the power to overcome this extremism.

So my brothers and sisters, there is good news. The glory and the power of Islam through its rightful bearers is the solution to the problem. As I looked at the Iranian example earlier, allow me to also expand on the fact that the harshest brutalities of the Iranian mullahs have been towards moderate and genuine Muslims, in particular the People's Mujahidin of Iran. Now we in the West have heard the negative connotations which follow words like Jihad and Mujahid. But is this not ironic that the only triumphant model of fundamentalism in today's Islamic world ; the inspirer of many extremist groups and movements ; the inspirer of evil groups and movements, the godfather of this evil trend is most scared by the Mujahidin. If the governments of the West seek to stop this evil trend, they must both at an International and National level, especially in relation to countries like Iran. Instead of spending millions on arms and perhaps another war, to invest in supporting and empowering those Muslims whose creed and past allows them to contest these false interpretations.

This is the experience that people like me who have experienced fundamentalist rule first-hand, can pass on to people like you whose communities are going through it now. In one word, we need to impress on the government the need to invest more in Islam and true Muslims to be able to address extremism in the name of Islam.

Allow me to end my talk here in prayers for peace and prosperity in the world, but also with spreading this good news that the antidote to this extremism does exist. It is peace-loving progressive muslims that need to be given the opportunity and the support. I pray for the success of your gathering and apologise again for not being able to be there with you in person.

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