Terrorism Awareness Project

Islamo-Fascist Bigotry: The Persecution of Fellow Believers

Islamic jihad violence has captured worldwide attention when focused on unbelievers – in the Twin Towers, as well as in London, Madrid, Bali, and in so many other places. But the jihadists don't hesitate to target fellow Muslims as well, when they regard them as insufficiently Islamic.

The most notorious example of this throughout Islamic history is the Sunni-Shi'ite strife that has broken out in many times and places – and today in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. Sunni suicide killers and Shi'ite death squads have targeted one another since the removal of Saddam Hussein in Iraq. Nor have they hesitated to target holy sites: Sunni jihadists destroyed the tenth-century Shi'ite Al-Askari Mosque in Samarra, Iraq, in a two bombings in 2006 and 2007. Some estimate that 4,000 have been killed in Sunni-Shi'ite strife in Pakistan since the late 1980s, and in Afghanistan, while the Taliban was in power they waged relentless jihad warfare against the Shi'ite Hazaras.

The Qur'an forbids a Muslim to kill a fellow believer intentionally (4:92), but both sides justify these conflicts by appealing to the Islamic practice of *takfir*: the declaration that, because of some doctrinal deviation, some group of Muslims are not actually Muslims at all, and their blood can lawfully be shed. One of the chief characteristics of modern day Salafist movements – that is, movements to restore the purity of Islam – is their frequent use of *takfir* and subsequent targeting of those whom everyone in the world except they themselves would regard as their fellow Muslims. This phenomenon is playing out all over the world today, as Wahhabis and other Salafist preachers take an Islamic hardline into areas where a more relaxed cultural Islam has long prevailed. The result is often violent. In fact, the Algerian sociologist Marieme Helie Lucas explains that the controversial term "Islamo-Fascism" was "initially coined by Algerian people struggling for democracy, against armed fundamentalist forces decimating people in our country, then later operating in Europe, where a number of us had taken refuge." These pro-democracy Algerians were, of course, Muslims – Muslims who were massacred by jihadists in the 1990s for being insufficiently Islamic. Over 150,000 were killed.

In November 2003, a Somali journalist named Bashir Goth complained in the Addis Tribune about a group of Islamic clerics, the "Authority for Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice," who were "trying to impose draconian moral codes on Somaliland citizens." Goth was himself a Muslim, but he objected to the Wahhabi Islam that Saudi preachers were bringing into Somalia.

Wahhabism, said Goth, was "an austere and closed school of thought," deviating from the established schools of Islamic jurisprudence. "Wahhabism," according to Goth, "is the only school that compels its followers strictly to observe Islamic rituals, such as the five prayers, under pain of flogging, and for the enforcement of public morals to a degree unprecedented in the history of Islam." He characterized it as "a closed mind sect that turned Islam into a fragile creed that lives in constant fear of children's toys and games such as Barbie dolls and Pokemon." Wahhabi clerics, Goth noted, were challenging Somali Muslims: "They want to tell us that over the LAST 14 CENTURIES, our people have been practicing the wrong religion; that since the dawn of Islam, Somali people had lived in vain, worshipped in vain and died in vain. God help them, they all will be burned in hell because they did not follow the correct path -- Wahhabism."

Their devotion to this "correct path" led them to despise numerous manifestations of Somali culture, despite its Islamic character. "These people," Goth continued, "are out to eradicate our culture, our traditions, our songs, our poetry and our folklore dances....If we let them have their way, these prophets of 'purity' would soon be on a mission to destroy what has remained of our culture." He listed several female Somali singers, warning that "the cassettes of their songs will be burned in the streets. Just remember Taliban." Goth went on to explain that the jihadists also wanted to eliminate co-ed schools and compel Somali girls to go out only "fully shrouded with black from head to toe."

The Wahhabi-influenced Islamic Courts Union that held power in Mogadishu for seven months in 2006 bore out Bashir Goth's fears. It criticized indigenous Somali practices as not sufficiently Islamic. One militia commander, Mohamed Ali Aden, explained: "We've neglected God's verses for so long. We want our women veiled and we want them at home. We men have to grow our beards." The Courts forbade music (which is prohibited according to strict Islamic law), dancing and soccer within days of taking power. Women began to don Saudi dress, which covered their faces, rather than traditional Somali garb, which did not.

ICU militiamen were ready to enforce Islamic law with an iron fist: after banning all movies and television viewing, jihadists shot and killed two people who were watching a World Cup soccer match in early July. Raids in Mogadishu led to sixty arrests for the crime of movie-watching. Islamic Courts militiamen also raided a wedding reception in Mogadishu because men and women were attending the celebration together and music was playing. "We had warned the family," explained Sheikh Iise Salad of the ICU, "not to include in their ceremony what is not allowed by the sharia law. This includes the mixing of men and women and playing music. That is why we raided and took their equipment. What was going there was un-Islamic." In September 2006, the ICU closed down Radio Jowhar, a station in a town about fifty miles from Mogadishu, because it was playing love songs. ICU Sheikh Mohamed Mohamoud Abdirahman explained that the programming was "un-Islamic." The station was later allowed to return to the airwaves, without music. The Islamic Courts even decreed that Muslims who did not perform the five daily prayers would be executed.

Salafists target Muslims they regard as insufficiently Islamic also in Darfur, where Arab Muslims attack non-Arab Muslims whose Islam is closer to the cultural version that prevailed in Somalia than to Wahhabi austerity. Dr. Hassan Al-'Audha of the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood explained in July 2007 that "we are not zealous for this land because of the rivers that flow in it. We are zealous for it because it is the land of Islam." Another Sudanese leader situation the activities of the brutal Janjaweed militia within the larger struggle of the Muslims against the infidels: "Those scumbags want to play with us? They want to come to the children of Darfur? The children of Darfur will eat them alive. By Allah, there are some ferocious tribes there. They call them Janjaweed, and they want to attack them. There is a tribe called 'Al-Masiriya.' Are they men or not? By Allah, when we ride horses and make these battle cries... By Allah, the infidels die of fear. They die of fear." In 2004, Sudanese President Omar al-Beshir charged that international efforts to aid Darfur were actually targeting Islam. Referring to the 1990s Sudanese jihad against the Christians in the southern part of the country, he said: "The door of the jihad is still open and if it has been closed in the south it will be opened in Darfur."

That jihad in Darfur features Muslims targeting Muslims. Such episodes, whether in Somalia, Darfur, or anywhere else, emphasize the need for peaceful Muslims to stand up strongly, in deed as well as word, against global jihadist violence. The sword of *takfir* ought to cut both ways, with peaceful Muslims willing to distinguish themselves from their bloody-minded coreligionists, and to repudiate their murders not just of fellow Muslims but of non-Muslims also.

Meanwhile, Islamic jihadists and Sharia supremacists continue, with increasing confidence and brutality, to impose – violently – their vision of Islam upon their coreligionists.

Robert Spencer is a scholar of Islamic history, theology, and law and the director of **Jihad Watch**. He is the author of seven books, eight monographs, and hundreds of articles about jihad and Islamic terrorism, including the New York Times Bestsellers ***The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam (and the Crusades)*** and *The Truth About Muhammad*. His latest book is *Religion of Peace?*.

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Daily News Opinion

COMMUNITY VOICES: *A guest columnist's view*

Permanent Fund could be used to fight genocide in Darfur

SHAWN POWERS
COMMUNITY VOICES

In my more cynical moments, I complain that Alaskans are too parochial — that the only issues that seem to matter here are Alaska issues. Fortunately, it never takes long for a caring Alaskan to prove me wrong.

One particularly memorable incident took place on a bitter October morning in Noorvik, an Inupiaq village north of the Arctic Circle. I met an elder in that village who had fallen on hard times. However, she didn't want to talk about her own troubles. Knowing that I worked for an anti-hunger agency, she asked me what I knew about the hungry children in Darfur, the long-suffering region in western Sudan. Her eyes welled up with tears as we discussed the plight of the victims of genocide in a desert land on the other side of the planet.

This elder's grief was well-founded: More than 200,000 people have died and 2.5 million more been displaced in Darfur since the Sudanese government began sponsoring military attacks on their own civilians in 2003. Whether you live in Noorvik or New York City, it is hard not to be distressed and angered by stories of burned villages, raped women and murdered children. The situation in Darfur — the first to be declared a genocide by the U.S. government while the atrocities were ongoing — pleads to the sense of common humanity in all of us.

We may be a world away from Darfur, but there is something very concrete that we Alaskans can do to help. Thirteen other states have taken a stand against genocide through a promising strategy called targeted divestment. These states have divested their pension funds of holdings in a handful of "highest offending" foreign companies that are indirectly funding or otherwise enabling genocide through their relationship with the Sudanese government. Seven additional states have divested using different strategies but with similar aims. Alaska could be doubly influential by divesting both the Permanent Fund and our state pension funds from companies that are accomplices to genocide.

> *At negligible or no cost to Alaska, we can join a growing and successful movement against the first genocide of the 21st century. All it will take is a few courageous legislators who will introduce a targeted divestment bill.*

Under these divestment policies, only companies that meet very stringent criteria become targets for divestment: they must have a business relationship with the government of Sudan, impart minimal benefit to the country's underprivileged, and have shown no substantial corporate governance policy regarding the Darfur genocide. Since the United States has had sanctions on Sudan since 1997 (Sudan is a state sponsor of terror), there are no American businesses operating in the country that would meet these criteria. Most state divestment laws have several sunset clauses, which would deactivate the law if divestment ever became obsolete or went against U.S. foreign policy interests.

Alaskans may rightly be concerned about the financial impact of targeted divestment, especially with those $1,654 dividends coming next month. Fortunately, we can look to the experience of the 13 states that have already divested using the targeted strategy. In every case, the states' holdings in the highest-offending companies amounted to less than 0.5 percent of total assets. In other words, target divestment would involve simply selling a tiny fraction of the funds' shares and buying other financially equivalent assets to take their place.

You might also wonder if divestment would actually work. Once again, the experience to date is encouraging. Since the targeted divestment movement began, several major companies have either changed their problematic practices or withdrawn from Sudan, citing divestment as a factor in their decisions. The movement has also caught the attention of the Sudanese regime, which has gone so far as to purchase a six-page New York Times ad for more than $1 million in an attempt to counteract the divestment tidal wave. Sudan has shown responsiveness to economic pressure in the past, as it did when it deported Osama bin Laden under threat of U.S. sanctions in 1996.

At negligible or no cost to Alaska, we can join a growing and successful movement against the first genocide of the 21st century. All it will take is a few courageous legislators who will introduce a targeted divestment bill and a critical mass of compassionate and globally minded Alaskans to make sure the Legislature does the right thing. I know that if my friend from Noorvik is reading, she will do her part.

Shawn Powers is a Community Voices columnist. He lives in Anchorage and is a member of Save Darfur Anchorage. His e-mail is shawn.m.powers @gmail.com.

Daily News Opinion

Letters to the Editor

Alaska should boycott investment in Sudan and Darfur genocide

Massachusetts and New Mexico became the 21st and 22nd states to pursue policies of targeted Sudan divestment. These policies require that each state sell its holdings in foreign companies currently engaged in business with the government of Sudan and complicity in the Darfur genocide.

I believe Alaska should waste no time in becoming the 23rd state to require investments that are genocide free. We Alaskans would know then that our state funds are not in any way helping finance Khartoum in its ongoing genocidal campaign of murder, torture, rape and forced displacement.

Targeted divestment focuses the financial impact on the government of Sudan and its chief financiers, while minimizing the impact on Sudan's citizens and investment returns. This strategy has already proven to be effective. The government of Sudan took out a multi-page ad in the New York Times to try to combat divestment campaign efforts, and several companies, including Siemens, Schlumberger and Rolls Royce, have either left Sudan or substantially altered their business operations to benefit the marginalized populations in Sudan. This policy is responsible and safe for investments.

We Alaskans do not condone the Darfur genocide and we certainly don't want to help finance it. Genocide should not occur on our watch and it should not occur on our dime!

— Kelley Nixon
Anchorage

The New York Times

January 1, 2008

Bush Signs Bill Allowing Sudan Divestment

By SHERYL GAY STOLBERG

CRAWFORD, Tex. — President Bush signed legislation on Monday allowing state and local governments to cut investment ties with companies doing business in Sudan, even as he expressed concerns that the bill could interfere with his right to set foreign policy.

The measure, called the Sudan Accountability and Divestment Act, is aimed at pressuring Sudan to end the violence in the Darfur region, where 200,000 people have been killed and more than two million driven from their homes in a four-year conflict that Mr. Bush has termed a genocide.

The bill, which passed both houses of Congress unanimously, makes it easier for mutual funds and private pension fund managers to sell their investments and allows states to prohibit debt financing for companies that do business in Sudan. It also requires companies seeking contracts with the federal government to certify that they are not doing business in Sudan.

“I share the deep concern of the Congress over the continued violence in Darfur perpetrated by the government of Sudan and rebel groups,” Mr. Bush said in a statement issued from his ranch here, where he planned to celebrate the new year with his wife, Laura, and some friends.

But the administration has expressed reservations about the bill, and Mr. Bush’s signature was accompanied by a proviso known as a signing statement, in which he said he was reserving the authority to overrule state and local divestment decisions if they conflicted with foreign policy. The statement said the measure “risks being interpreted as insulating” state and local divestment actions from federal oversight.

Mr. Bush has long sought an effective way to press Sudan to end the violence in Darfur, and he has been under intense pressure from human rights advocates to do more. The administration imposed stiff economic sanctions on the Sudanese government at the end of May, trying to force it to accept a United Nations-led peacekeeping force.

On Monday, formal authority was transferred from the current African Union peacekeeping force to a joint United Nations-African Union mission. But advocates complained that the deployment was delayed for months because of bureaucratic foot-dragging by the Sudanese government.

The peacekeeping force will be staffed far below the levels set by the United Nations Security Council when it voted unanimously in July to deploy 26,000 troops to try to stop the violence in Darfur.

As planned, the peacekeeping force would have been the largest such effort in the world, costing about $2 billion in its first year and drawing on military and police forces from the African Union and the United Nations.

Instead, after months of wrangling, the force that made its debut on Monday had 9,000 troops, United Nations officials said. Experts worry that it may never get to the level where it will make any difference in the region's troubles.

"What we are seeing and hearing is a reprisal of their same stall-and-delay tactics," said Allyn Brooks-LaSure, a spokesman for the Save Darfur Coalition.

The coalition, an umbrella group of more than 170 organizations, has been waging a "Divest in Darfur" campaign aimed at big investment companies like Fidelity and Vanguard, highlighted by the question "Is your mutual fund funding genocide?" After a State Department official testified that the divestment bill might not be necessary, the coalition put together a letter-writing campaign urging Mr. Bush to sign it.

"The Congress passed this measure unanimously in both chambers, and I think that sent a strong message to the White House," Mr. Brooks-LaSure said. "We believe they were right to heed that message."

Maria Newman contributed reporting.

responsible investor

Darfur: The economic lifeline to genocide

How can institutional investors ensure they are not supporting death in Sudan?

by **Scott Wisor** | December 8th, 2007

In early 2003, rebel groups in Darfur, the western region of Sudan, took up arms over their systematic exclusion from political power and development. The government of Sudan responded with a brutal counter-insurgency campaign targeting non-Arab civilian populations in Darfur. By conservative estimates, 2.5 million people have been displaced and over 200,000 killed, but numbers are likely much higher. The conflict is known as the first genocide of the 21st century.

In 2004, several institutions identified divestment as a possible tool to exert pressure on the government of Sudan. While the Government of Sudan in Khartoum has been resistant to political and diplomatic pressure, it previously has been sensitive and responsive to economic pressure. It has to be; the government carries a debt burden as large as its GDP and garners 80% of its export revenue from oil. Sudan lacks the internal expertise or capital to extract resources itself and is therefore completely dependent on foreign companies to exploit its oil reserves. Furthermore, the majority of the oil revenues received by the Khartoum regime are spent on military expenditures.

Firms like China National Petroleum Corporation, Oil and Natural Gas Company of India, and Petronas of Malaysia provide the economic lifeline for a genocidal regime. They have the leverage with the government necessary to change the situation on the ground in Sudan. Unfortunately, these major players have proven reluctant to do so.

Developed by the Sudan Divestment Task Force, a project of the Genocide Intervention Network, the targeted model of divestment encourages shareholders to exert pressure only on companies that have a truly problematic presence in Sudan, encouraging them to adopt a substantial policy in response to the Darfur genocide. Problematic companies, particularly those involved in Sudan's oil, power, mining, and defense sectors provide significant support to Khartoum and fail to benefit Sudan's marginalized populations. Rather than necessarily asking these companies to leave Sudan completely, shareholders should encourage companies to remain in Sudan and to use their considerable leverage to contribute to positive change. Shareholder divestment should

only be used as economic incentive for the company to change if they are unresponsive to engagement.
Targeted Sudan divestment will have two immediate outcomes. First, divestment can influence key foreign companies to cease their operations in problematic industries in Sudan, thereby increasing economic pressure on Khartoum. Reports indicate that the departure of Rolls Royce earlier this year specifically commanded the attention of the Sudanese government. Second, companies that remain in Sudan can use their leverage to push for peace, expand their humanitarian programs, and implement improved corporate social responsibility policies (specifically focusing on security, revenue transparency, corruption, labor standards, and environmental practices). These companies will contribute to an end to the Darfur conflict, and help assure a sustainable peace throughout the country.
Fiduciary duty, a paramount concern of investors, requires that financial risk be managed appropriately. Investors that hold securities in companies with links to problematic industries in Sudan face substantial material risk. These companies are subject to operational risk from spreading violence in the country, an unstable business environment created by political crisis, and substantial reputational risk posed by public campaigns highlighting their financial ties to a genocidal regime.
A widespread divestment campaign also has the ability to affect share price negatively. It has been argued that there always is a buyer for a sold share. However, if a critical mass of investors begins to sell a company, its share price will depress relative to peer competitors.
Furthermore, a number of countries have threatened to sanction Sudan if the situation continues to deteriorate. Notably, a piece of legislation pending in the US Senate would prohibit companies with scrutinized operations in Sudan from receiving US federal contracts.

> *"By conservative estimates, 2.5 million people have been displaced and over 200,000 killed, but numbers are likely much higher."*

Some fund managers have mistakenly argued that they cannot divest because of legal restrictions or fiduciary obligations. First, it is consistent with prudent management of financial risk to exclude targeted companies because of the substantial material risk they present to investors. Second, no single market, sector, or asset class within Sudan is excluded categorically from a portfolio; therefore, financially equivalent alternatives are available. Targeted ex-Sudan market indices will have a tracking error of less than 0.3%, and the total percentage of most portfolios invested in Sudan-linked companies is less than 0.2%. Third, it also is important to consider the interests of funds' beneficiaries, particularly whether they want their money invested in companies that subsidize a genocidal regime when financially equivalent alternatives exist. For companies in Sudan, the business case is also strong.
The absence of peace and equitable development increasingly poses a threat to profitability in Sudan. Twenty-two US states have adopted Sudan divestment policies for their public pension funds, as have 54 university endowments, both in the US and abroad. Investors outside the United States are also beginning to address Sudan-linked companies. Many of the Dutch pension funds currently are engaging Sudan-linked companies, and PGGM has committed to exclude Sudan-linked companies that prove unresponsive to shareholder engagement. Several major mutual fund families in the US are under increasing client pressure to address Sudan-linked companies. In addition, a number of asset managers based in the UK, France, the US, and elsewhere in Europe are developing collective engagement strategies to influence company behavior. Berkshire Hathaway and Fidelity recently cut stakes in PetroChina in the midst of Sudan-related pressure, though both denied that it was because of PetroChina's parent company's operations in Sudan.
Investors and activists have seen the tangible results of the pressure they place on companies. A number of companies have responded to the targeted divestment campaign. Rolls Royce, CHC Helicopter, ICSA of India, and others left Sudan completely, citing as a reason the humanitarian crises in the country. Schlumberger and La Mancha Resources continue their operations, having adopted and implemented responsible business plans in

Sudan. Tremendous opportunities for mainstream and SRI investors exist to engage with problematic Sudan-linked companies, and ultimately to bring about positive change for the people of Sudan.

Scott Wisor is a senior field organizer with the Sudan Divestment Task Force

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The oil factor

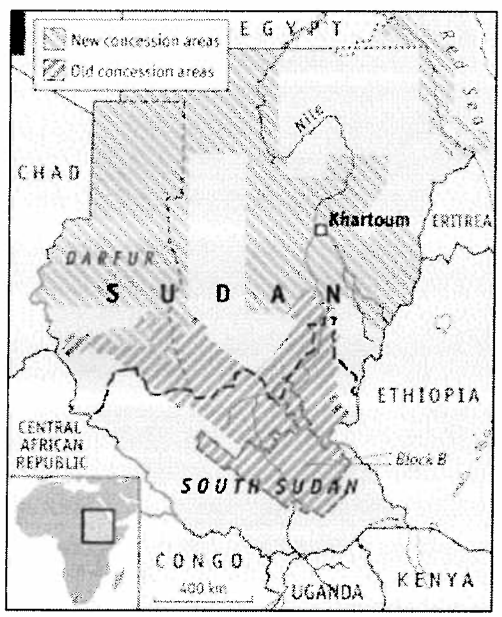
Jun 21st 2007
From The Economist print edition

The oil may not be enough to protect Sudan's government for ever

Get article background

FEW countries owe so much, over so little time, to the magic of black gold as does Sudan. From near-bankruptcy in the early 1990s, Sudan has trebled its GDP in the past seven years thanks to the discovery and exploitation of oil; it is now one of Africa's fastest-growing economies. Sparkling office blocks are beginning to crowd the skyline of Khartoum, the capital. Oil has also brought vital political dividends. China, which buys about 80% of Sudan's oil exports, has proved a loyal friend at the UN when Sudan has been criticised for murder and mayhem in its Darfur region.

With so much resting on oil, the government of President Omar al-Bashir likes to talk up the industry's prospects. Production now stands at 480,000 barrels a day, with proven reserves estimated at 1.6 billion barrels. The bullish oil minister, Awad Ahmed al-Jaz, often says he expects output to rise to about 1m b/d next year.



But this scenario may be too rosy. The country's original and most reliable oilfields, which produce valuable low-sulphur crude marketed as Nile Blend, are maturing. Their output dropped from a peak of 300,000-odd b/d in early 2005 to 254,000 b/d in the first quarter of this year. Prospects for pushing production back up using better oil-recovery techniques are poor, and this dip will be only partly offset by output from new fields that have begun to be exploited in Sudan's south (see map).

For though oil from a number of new fields began to flow last year, there have been setbacks. Much of the new oil is of inferior quality, selling for less than a third of average international prices. Sudan has some scope to raise production from these fields, but it has less incentive to do so. So exploration for further reserves (and even for offshore gas) is being conducted across the country. In recent months, a flurry of new oil concessions have been awarded.

But many of them have been granted to small and inexperienced operators, often partners of local companies tied to the government. A consortium exploring one southern block is made up wholly of Sudanese firms. A new concession in north Darfur was also given last year to six companies from Arab countries. In both, a substantial stake is held by Hi-Tech Petroleum Group, a company set up by a former oil minister, Abdel Aziz Osman. This firm, in which a brother of President Bashir has a senior post, was recently named as a target of new American sanctions against Sudan.

Many of the big Western oil companies are being scared off by the prospect of more sanctions and humanitarian divestment campaigns over Darfur. In 2003 a Canadian firm, Talisman, was forced out by pressure from campaigners. Similar reasons were cited for the departure of the Cliveden Group, a Swiss firm, last year. There is speculation that Marathon, an American oil company, may dispose of its 32.5% share in Block B, in southern Sudan.

Without the big internationals' wealth and experience, smaller local and regional players may struggle. If, for example, they have to build export facilities, the lengths of pipelines in a country the size of western Europe are daunting. And any company wanting a secure export route in case the southern half of the country chose to secede in a referendum promised in 2011 would have to lay a pipeline to the Kenyan port of Lamu—another huge challenge.