

**Is the sky about to fall?
That's because we are too PC
to ask Islamists, "how do you
know?"**



by Lev Tsitrin

To mark the recent anniversary of America's withdrawal from Afghanistan, the *New York Times* published a story titled "[Taliban Fighters, Unsettled by Peace, Seek New Battles Abroad](#)" which focused on two young Taliban fighters, "Mr. Wahdat and Mr. Malang" assigned by Taliban to a boring police task in Kabul. They "expressed a sense of duty unfilled after coming of combat age just as the war they trained for came to an end [but] were determined not to let their dreams of martyrdom pass them by. "Everywhere that Muslims are in trouble we must help them," Mr. Malang said. "Like Palestine and Myanmar." Mr. Wahdat added: "Even America."

A few days later, Carl Bildt, “Sweden’s foreign minister from 2006 to 2014 and prime minister from 1991 to 1994” chimed in, [in Project Syndicate](#), with his assessment of implications of the recent coup in Niger. Mr. Bildt is clearly worried: “Previously relatively stable and democratic, Niger was seen as the last bulwark against the spread of violence and political turmoil across the region, much of it incited by jihadist movements tied to al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. ... A gradual breakdown of governance in West Africa would open the door for a further expansion of Islamic State and al-Qaeda affiliates, and these groups’ influence would give rise to humanitarian, security, and migration challenges for which there would be no easy answers.”

And meanwhile, [“Women’s Rights Activists Rounded Up in Iran as Protest Anniversary Nears”](#) per yet another *New York Times*’ headline.

Simply put, Islamism is either deeply entrenched, or is on the march. The question is, can anything be done to stop it?

As least when it comes to Niger, the diplomatic and military solutions hang in balance, according to Mr. Bildt – who, perhaps surprisingly, is clearly willing to countenance the latter: “cascading coups pose a profound threat to West Africa’s remaining democracies. The region’s largest power, Nigeria, has been spearheading the wider response, with its recently elected president, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, going so far as to threaten a military intervention against the Niger coup-makers. While diplomacy is to be preferred, the Nigerians’ interest in their neighbor is understandable. They have too much at stake to be indifferent. ... if diplomacy fails, other options, such as a contested military intervention, will become more likely, bringing still more problems to an already fraught region.”

But why is the only solution to encroachment of Islamism (when any is offered at all – for we seem to have completely given

up on Iran and Afghanistan), is military force? Islamism is, after all, an ideology, a set of ideas – and as such, its claims can be examined, and errors in the reasoning of its adherents exposed, for all to see – and shun. No one willingly follows a doctrine that had been proven wrong, because no one wants to be in the wrong. Show the falsehood of Islamism – and there will be far fewer Islamists around.

After all, Islamism is not a particularly complicated doctrine. It runs about as follows: God created us to follow His will. God's will has been revealed to Mohammed and is recorded in the Koran. Hence, the only proper behavior is that which is sanctioned by the Koran – and therefore, it must be enforced at all costs. Not doing so is blasphemy – a rebellion against God, to be punished by death.

This is a logically structured argument, the conclusion properly following from premises – except that, in one key respect, it doesn't. The rules of logic demand that every premise must be made explicit. There should be no "hidden premises" as logicians call them. This is of key importance, because any logical conclusion is true only when all premises are factually true (and the argument is put into a correct form); a false premise will ruin the whole structure, turning the conclusion into an error. A "hidden premise," needless to say, does not get to be examined for factual accuracy – precisely because it is "hidden".

And there is indeed a hidden premise in the Islamist logical structure: it assumes, without stating so, that one can know whether God talked to Mohammed.

This premise is factually false. The two-step communication between three parties is, by its very nature, completely unreliable (since it is subject to what I called "the problem of the third party" – in the relay of information from the first party to the second, and from the second to the third, the third party can never know whether the first party ever

talked to the second one, or whether the message has been correctly passed on.) Islamic “revelation” to Mohammed follows this, completely unreliable, pattern. One can, of course, legitimately say “I like the Koran” – this is strictly a matter of one’s personal taste – but this does not translate into “Koran is God’s word” because this is unknowable. In religious terms, unequivocally saying so is what is called “idol-worship” – worshiping an object of one’s own manufacture. The Koran may be – or equivalently, may not be – God’s word. In that respect, it is no different from any other word ever uttered on this planet: everything ever said by anyone is either God’s word, or not. There are no exceptions to this rule at all.

The end result of all this is, that there is a different way of fighting Islamism – by telling an Islamist “you don’t know what you are talking about. You are an idolater.” Or, if one wishes to be polite, one can simply ask, “and how can you know that God talked to Mohammed? You can’t.”

Why don’t we do it? I don’t know. Perhaps it is just politics – our Moslem allies, Egyptians, Emiratis, and Saudis, may take offense. Or we see “culture” as sacred, being beyond considerations of truth and falsehood – and so we shy away from what we proactively perceive as denigration of another’s culture.

Be it as it may, it is only because we are shy to point to the glaring logical error in Islamist thinking that Afghanistan’s Talibaners are still talibanning, and Iran’s ayatollahs are still ayatolling. Because our intellectuals are too polite to fight Islamist ideas, our soldiers have to fight Islamists by the force of arms. It strikes me as truly bizarre that we would rather kill people (and be killed by them) than point to a clear error in their thinking. Islamists are in the wrong – but we are in the wrong too, simply because we refuse to tell them that they are wrong. End result is the hellish strife that claimed tens of thousands of lives starting on 9/11, with

no end in sight.

Political Correctness that forbids us to fight wrong ideas when they are linked to “culture” is, it seems to me, but a Western idol, a Moloch that demands (and gets) human sacrifices. Isn't it high time we choose factual truth over Political Correctness – that is nothing but a blood-thirsting lie?

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