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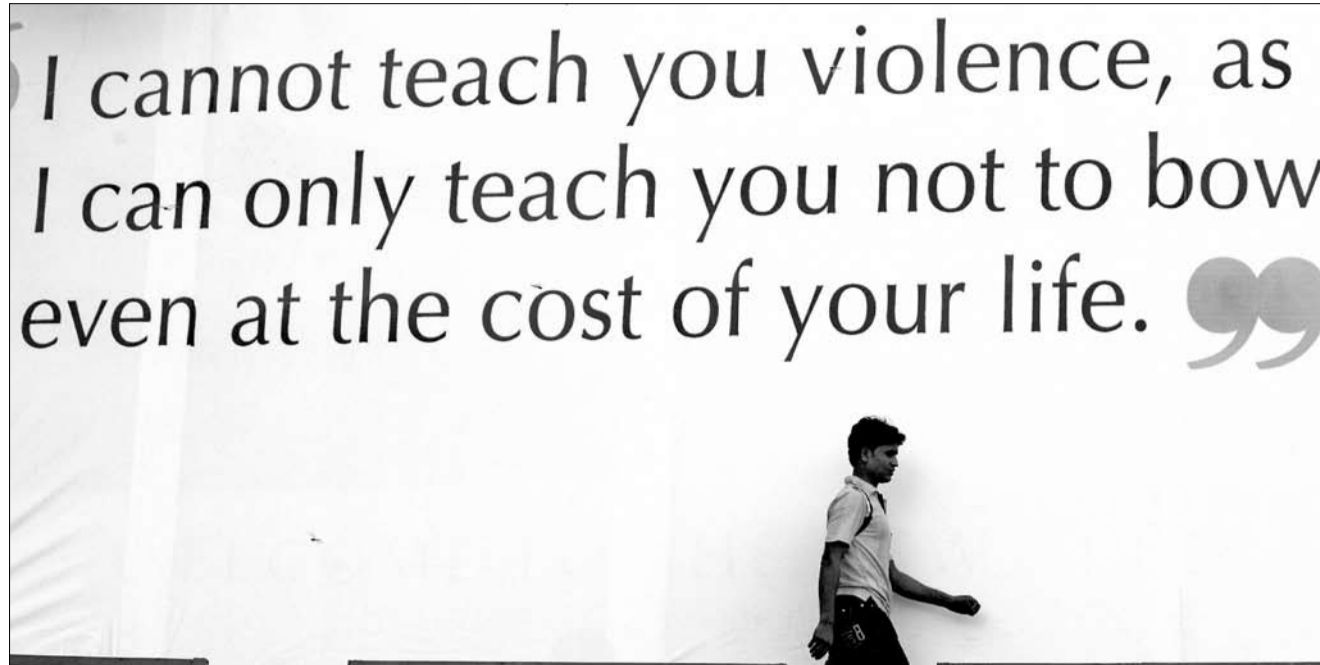
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NONVIOLENCE: A worker walks past a billboard featuring a quote from Mahatma Gandhi, known as the father of the nation of India, near the Oberoi Trident hotel—one of the sites of the recent terror attacks—in Mumbai on Dec. 5. INDRANIL MUKHERJEE/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

India envies Israel's response to terror

By SHASHI THAROOR

NEW DELHI—As Israeli planes and tanks exact a heavy toll on Gaza, India's leaders and strategic thinkers have been watching with an unusual degree of interest—and some empathy.

India's government has—no surprise—joined the rest of the world in calling for an end to the military action, but its criticism of Israel has been muted. For, as Israel demonstrates anew its determination to end attacks on its civilians by militants based in Hamas-controlled territory, many in India, still smarting from the horrors of the Mumbai attacks in November, have been asking: why can't we do the same?

For many Indians, the temptation to identify with Israel was strengthened by the terrorists' seizure of Mumbai's Jewish Center (the Lubavitcher Chabad house) and the painful awareness that India and Israel share many of the same enemies.

India, with its 150-million strong Muslim population, has long been a strong supporter of the Palestinian cause and remains staunchly committed to an independent Palestinian state. But the Mumbai attacks confirmed what has become apparent in recent years: The forces of global Islamist terror have added Indians to their target list of reviled "Jews and crusaders."

Just as Israel has frequently been attacked by rockets fired from across its border with Gaza, India has suffered repeated assaults by killers trained, equipped, financed, and directed by elements based next door in Pakistan. When President George W. Bush's press secretary equated members of Hamas with the Mumbai killers, her comments were widely circulated in India.

Yet there the parallels end. Israel is a small country living in a permanent state of siege, highly security-conscious, and surrounded by forces hostile to it; India is a giant country whose borders are notoriously permeable, an open society known for its lax and easy-going ways.

Whereas many regard Israel's toughness as its principal characteristic, India's own citizens view India as a soft state, its underbelly easily penetrated by determined terrorists. Whereas Israel notoriously exacts grim retribution for every attack on its soil, India has endured with numbing stoicism an endless series of bomb blasts, including at least six major assaults in different locations in 2008 alone.

Terrorism has taken more lives in India than in any country in the world after Iraq, and yet, unlike Israel, India has seemed unable to do anything about it.

Moreover, whereas Israel's principal adversary is currently Hamas, India faces a slew of terrorist organizations—Lashkar-e-Toiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad, Jamaat-ud-Dawa, and more. But, whereas Hamas operates without international recognition from Gaza—its legitimacy questioned even by the Palestinian Authority—India's tormentors function from Pakistan, a sovereign member of the United Nations. And that makes all the difference.

Hamas is in no position to repay Israel's air and ground attacks in kind, whereas an Indian attack on Pakistani territory, even one targeting terrorist bases and training camps, would invite swift retaliation from the Pakistani army.

Israel can dictate the terms of its military incursion and end it at will, whereas an Indian military action would immediately spark a war with a well-armed neighbor that neither side could win.

And, at the end of the day, one chilling fact would prevent India from thinking that it could use Israel's playbook: The country that condones, if not foments, the terror attacks on India is a nuclear power.

So India has gone to the international community with evidence to prove that the Mumbai attacks were planned in Pakistan and conducted by Pakistani citizens who maintained contact with handlers in Pakistan throughout the operation.

While India's government had briefly hoped that the proof

might enable Pakistan's weak civilian government to rein in the malign elements in its society, the Pakistani authorities' reaction has been one of denial.

Yet no one doubts that Pakistan's all-powerful military intelligence has, over the last two decades, created and supported terror organizations as instruments of Pakistani policy in Afghanistan and India. When India's embassy in Kabul was hit by a suicide bomber last July, American intelligence sources revealed that not only was Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence behind the attack, but that it made little effort to cover its tracks.

The ISI knew perfectly well that India would not go to war with Pakistan to avenge the killing of its diplomatic personnel.

The fact is that India knows that war will accomplish nothing. Indeed, it is just what the terrorists want—a cause that would rally all Pakistanis to the flag and provide Pakistan's army an excuse to abandon the unpopular fight against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda in the west for the more familiar terrain of the Indian border in the east. India's government sees no reason to play into the hands of those who seek that outcome.

Yet, when Indians watch Israel take the fight to the enemy, killing those who launched rockets against it and dismantling many of the sites from which the rockets flew, some cannot resist wishing that they could do something similar in Pakistan.

India understands, though, that the collateral damage would be too high, the price in civilian lives unacceptable, and the risks of the conflict spiraling out of control too acute to contemplate such an option. So Indians place their trust in international diplomacy and watch, with ill-disguised wistfulness, as Israel does what they could never permit themselves to do.

Shashi Tharoor, an acclaimed novelist and commentator, is a former under-secretary-general of the United Nations. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2009.

Iran abuses doctors' rights

By CÉSAR CHELALA

NEW YORK—Cyrus the Great, the first Achaemenid Emperor and founder of Persia would be ashamed by the actions of the Iranian government regarding two Iranian doctors, experts on AIDS. The uncalled-for detention of the two physicians in June 2008 in a flagrant abuse of their basic human rights, would have been roundly condemned by the Emperor, who declared the first Charter of Human Rights known to mankind.

Academic institutions and human rights activists worldwide have protested the detention of the two brothers, Dr. Arash Alaei and Dr. Kamiar Alaei. Among over 3,000 people worldwide and organizations protesting their detention are Physicians for Human Rights, Professor Michel Kazatchkine, executive director of the Global Fund, and Dr. Paul Farmer, an AIDS expert and co-founder of Partners in Health, who is doing valuable public health work in Haiti, one of the countries most punished by the AIDS pandemic.

The Alaei brothers were indicted this month on charges that they were communicating with an "enemy government." The doctors' detention for seven months violates the tenets of the Iranian penal code. According to their lawyer, Masoud Shafie, articles 30-34 of the Code of Penal Procedure of the Islamic Republic of Iran allow for detentions but require that the judge investigating the case issue detention orders for one month at a time and for no longer than four months.

Dr. Kamiar Alaei is a doctoral candidate at the State University of New York (SUNY) School of Public Health in Albany, New York. He planned to resume his studies there this fall. In 2007, he received a Master of Science degree in Population and International Health from the Harvard School of Public Health in Boston.

His brother, Dr. Arash Alaei, is the

former director of the International Education and Research Cooperation of the Iranian National Research Institute of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease. For the last 10 years, the brothers have been carrying out HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention activities, particularly aimed at reducing the harmful effects of the infection among injecting drug users.

After they finished their medical training, the Alaei brothers have been working on AIDS research in Iran. They contributed to the creation of Iran's HIV/AIDS prison program, widely considered to be among the best in the region. The doctors have expanded their activities into other countries, and have held training workshops for Afghan and Tajik health professionals.

Iran's work in the HIV/AIDS and public health arena has earned the country the recognition as a model of best practice by the World Health Organization (WHO).

"Iran's HIV/AIDS program has been acclaimed internationally for seriously addressing the AIDS epidemic. ... The detention without charges of the Alaei brothers has a chilling effect on all those efforts," declared Joe Amon, HIV/AIDS program director at Human Rights Watch.

As part of their work on HIV/AIDS, the Alaei brothers have traveled extensively outside Iran, including the United States, both to participate in professional events and to share their country's experience in fighting the epidemic. To detain them for communicating with an "enemy government" is nothing short of absurd.

Dr. César Chelala is an international public health consultant and a covinner of an Overseas Press Club of America award for an article on human rights. He is the foreign correspondent for The Middle East Times International (Australia).

THE READER'S TURN

Re: B.C. villagers rally to rescue stranded horses (Jan. 1 edition)

The man who abandoned two horses in the Renshaw area to die of starvation wants them back. Frank MacKay, a lawyer from Edmonton, said he made two attempts to retrieve the animals and made "every effort possible" to save them.

I am appalled. Volunteers spent a week freeing the emaciated, trapped horses under extreme weather conditions, and he expects to just get them back?

I am not blaming MacKay for losing his horses or getting into trouble in the backcountry. Things like that happen. However, not putting in more effort to find the animals, and, when he finally did locate them, leaving them for dead, that, to me, is completely unacceptable.

MacKay abandoned his two pack horses on Sept. 12 after hitting rough terrain and didn't come back to look for them until the last week in October, because he was too busy. What about the volunteers' time who put their lives on hold to rescue the two horses? Is his time more valuable than everybody else's?

And why didn't MacKay ask locals for help to find his horses? He definitely had enough time to do so, and it would have been a lot easier to get the horses out of the mountains

before the snow hit and while the animals were still in decent condition. MacKay said he doubts locals would have helped a stranger. Well, he didn't even try, and seeing how the community came to the rescue of the two horses, I beg to differ.

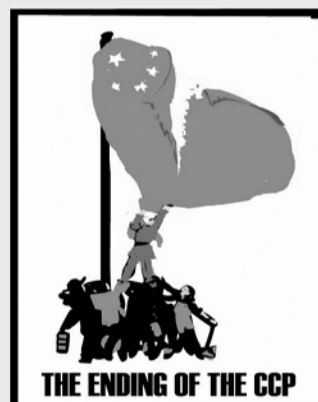
When MacKay eventually did locate the horses, he left them to die a slow, agonizing death of starvation. MacKay claims he didn't go up the mountain to kill the horses and that he didn't have a gun. That may be so, but that is still no excuse to "let nature take its course."

As well, MacKay's lack of participation in the rescuing of the horses shows a complete lack of commitment. Where was he when the rescue mission was underway? MacKay claims he was too injured to participate. I am sure he could have helped out in other ways, informing sledders down at the parking lot about the rescue effort, providing hot drinks for the volunteers, or buying them supper.

I think I can speak for the majority of the volunteers that we don't want to see these horses returned to MacKay. He abandoned the two equines, giving up ownership, and left them to die. They are no longer his.

Birgit Stutz
Dunster, B.C.

QUITTING THE CCP



Inspired by the 'Nine Commentaries,' As of 20:52 EST, January 14th, 2009

48,327,730

Chinese people have announced their intentions to quit the Chinese Communist Party and its affiliated organizations on a special Web site established by The Epoch Times. Many others, unable to break through the Chinese Internet blockade, have posted their withdrawal statements on poles or buildings. Others have written them on Chinese currency. Read recent statements of Chinese quitting the Party, the latest news on the "Nine Commentaries," and more at

<http://www.NineCommentaries.com>

The 'Nine Commentaries' is the book that is disintegrating the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and changing China. This award-winning Epoch Times editorial series discloses the true history and nature of the CCP. Now it is serialized here.

Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party

Commentary Six (cont.)

On how the Chinese Communist Party destroyed traditional culture

The Cultural Revolution began in May 1966. It was in fact "revolutionizing" Chinese culture in a destructive way. Starting in August 1966, the raging fire of the campaign to "cast away the four olds" burned the entire land of China.

Regarded as objects of "feudalism, capitalism, and revisionism," the Buddhist temples, Taoist temples, Buddha statues, historical and scenic sites, calligraphy, paintings, and antiques became the main targets for destruction by the Red Guards.

Take the Buddha statues for example. There are 1,000 colored, glazed Buddha statues in relief on the top of Longevity Hill in the Summer Palace in Beijing. After the campaign to "cast away the four olds," they were all damaged. None of them has a complete set of the five sensory organs any more.

The capital of the country was like this, and so was the rest of the country. Even the remote county seats did not escape.

"There is a Tiantai Temple in Dai county in Shanxi Province. It was built during the Taiyan time period of the Northern Wei Dynasty 1,600 years ago and had precious statues and frescos.

"Although it was situated on a hillside quite a distance away from the county seat, the people who participated in the campaign to 'cast away the four olds' ignored the difficulties and made a clean sweep of the statues and frescos there. ...

"The Louguan Temple, where Lao Zi gave his lecture and left his famous "Tao Te Ching" 2,500 years ago, is situated in the Zhouzhi County of Shaanxi Province. Centered around the platform where Lao Zi lectured, within a radius of 10 "li," there are over 50 historical sites, including the Temple Venerating the Sage (Zongsheng Gong) that Emperor Tang Gaozu Li Yuanⁱⁱⁱ built to show respect for Lao Zi over 1,300 years ago.

"Now the Louguan Temple and the other historical sites have

been destroyed, and all Taoist priests have been forced to leave. According to the Taoist canon, once one becomes a Taoist priest, one can never shave one's beard or have one's hair cut.

"However, now the Taoist priests are forced to have their hair cut, take off their Taoist robes, and become members of the People's communes." Some of them married daughters of the local peasants and became their sons-in-law. ...

"At the sacred Taoist places in Laoshan Mountain in Shandong Province, the Temple of Supreme Peace, the Temple of the Highest Clarity, the Supreme Clarity Temple, the Doumu Temple, the Huayan Nunnery, the Ningzhen Temple, the Temple of Guan Yu, the statues of the divine, sacrificial vessels, scrolls of Buddhist sutras, cultural relics, and temple tablets were all smashed and burned down." ...

"The Temple of Literature in Jilin Province is one of the four famous Temples of Confucius in China. During the campaign to 'cast away the four olds,' it was severely damaged."^v

A Special Way to Destroy Religion

Lenin once said, "The easiest way to take a fortress is from within." As a group of children and grandchildren of Marxism-Leninism, the CCP naturally and tacitly understands this.

In the "Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra,"^{vi} Buddha Shakyamuni predicted that after his nirvana, demons would be reincarnated as monks, nuns, and male and female lay Buddhists to subvert the Dharma.

Of course, we cannot verify what Buddha Shakyamuni was referring to exactly. However, the CCP's destruction of Buddhism indeed started with forming a united front with some Buddhists.

They even sent some underground Communist Party members to infiltrate the religion directly and subvert it from within. In a criticism meeting during the Cultural Revolution, someone questioned Zhao Puchu, vice president of the Chinese Buddhist Association at the time, "You are a Communist Party member, why do you believe in Buddhism?"

ⁱThe Summer Palace, located 15 kilometers (9 miles) from Beijing, is the largest and best-preserved royal garden in China, with a history of over 800 years.

ⁱⁱ"Li" is a Chinese unit of length (1 li is 0.5 kilometer or 0.3 miles).

ⁱⁱⁱEmperor Gaozu of the Tang Dynasty, alias Li Yuan, (ruled 618-626) was the first emperor of the Tang Dynasty.

^{iv}People's communes (Renmin Gongshe) were formerly the highest of three administrative levels in rural areas in the period from 1958 to around 1982 in China. The communes had governmental, political, and economic functions. They were the largest collective units and were further divided into production brigades and production teams. After 1982, they were replaced by townships.

^vSee note 31. ^{vi}The "Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra" purports to be the Buddha's final Mahayana sutra, delivered on the last day of his earthly life. It claims to constitute the quintessence of all Mahayana sutras.