

[Due to a typesetting error in the last issue, a line of text was omitted from Dr. Pipes's letter to the editor. The letter is reproduced in its entirety below, along with two responses.]

To the Editor—

I wish to reply to Richard B. Parker's letter in the Winter 1994 issue of *Journal of Palestine Studies* and Shaw J. Dallal's in the Spring 1995 issue. Both of them are responding to my challenge that those who accuse me of harboring bias against Islam should "produce a single piece of my writing where I express anti-Muslim sentiments."

Ambassador Parker concedes that he may be wrong about my being biased, but he then goes on to report about an "informal sounding" he conducted at the Middle East Studies Association in Phoenix, where he found a "unanimous reply" to the effect that I am not "a friend of Muslims."

This reminds me of a distinction that S. Abdallah Schleifer of the American University in Cairo likes to draw between American and Arab journalists. When an event takes place, he says, the American goes to the scene to make inquiries and get first-hand information. In contrast, his Arab counterpart goes to a cafe and asks the habitués for their opinions about what happened. Rather than read my writings, Mr. Parker chose instead to go to the MESA cafe. That's no way to do research.

As for Shaw Dallal, I commend him for taking up the challenge and actually looking at my writings. He has come up with a book review I wrote in *The Wall Street Journal* of John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* Unfortunately, Mr. Dallal then proceeds selectively to quote this book review in a fashion that makes it appear I subscribe to the sentiments that I am merely reporting. Here is the full text of the section he has quoted,

with the words Mr. Dallal excluded underlined:

Mr. Esposito says not a word about low Western birthrates and the millions of Muslim immigrants to Western Europe and North America. Yet the prospect of cultural submergence is the Islamic threat that alarms European right-wingers even more than Muslim missiles and hostage-takers. Writing in *The Spectator*, for example, Charles Moore recalled T.S. Eliot's caution of "hooded hordes": "Because of our obstinate refusal to have enough babies, Western European civilisation will start to die at the point when it could have revived with new blood. Then the hooded hordes will win, and the Koran will be taught, as Gibbon famously imagined, in the schools of Oxford." Jean-Marie Le Pen, the French fascist leader, expresses his fears more pungently: "I don't want the French to become like the Red Indians—annihilated by immigration."

Such xenophobia ranks today as probably the single most divisive social issue in Western Europe. It resonates less here, but that may yet change. Patrick Buchanan has already written fearfully about "the whimper of a Moslem child in its cradle" spelling the end of the West. We can look for the issue to grow before long.

Mr. Esposito offers an informed and reasoned discussion of Islam in politics. But he fails to recognize the hostility and ambition of radical fundamentalists and to consider the implications of growing Muslim populations in the West. *The Islamic Threat*, in other words, provides little guidance to the Islamic threat.

Is it mere coincidence that all the words distancing my views from those of "right-wingers" and "fascists" fell out of Mr. Dallal's quotation? I suspect not.

I should add that Mr. Dallal has selectively quoted this passage once before, in the February-March 1993 issue of *The Link*. I protested then, but to no avail, for now, two years later, he distorts my intent once again.

On a more profound level, I ask Mr. Dallal why he quotes my writings in a way

that would turn me into an opponent of Islam? Does he wish to increase the number of Islam's enemies in the United States? Is he, in fact, the one quietly trying to harm Islam's standing in this country?

Daniel Pipes  
Middle East Quarterly  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

To the Editor—

I had not meant to imply that my informal sounding of opinions at the MESA cafe (actually the bar) was a scientific survey or the last word on the subject of Dr. Pipes's attitude toward Islam. Rather, I was reporting that he has an image problem and might want to do something about it. Unfortunately for all of us, perceptions in the cafe or bar often outlast the facts that Abdullah Schleifer's model American journalist is out seeking. (I should note that in my time American journalists in the Middle East got much of their "firsthand" information from people hanging out in bars at places like the American Colony in Jerusalem or the Commodore in Beirut. Perhaps that has changed, but I doubt it. Bars and cafes are where you find people with time to talk.)

The denizens of the MESA bar last fall generally agreed with each other that the problem was one of innuendo and tone in Dr. Pipes's writings and remarks rather than of direct attack. For instance, the sentence in his review of Kaplan, "Against all evidence, Arabists quixotically sought to show the 'essential harmony of Western and Islamic culture,'" says to me that Dr. Pipes believes there is no such harmony, that anyone who thinks there is is an impractical romantic, and that Pipes himself probably subscribes to Samuel Huntington's thesis that conflict between the two cultures is inevitable. That view is respectable in some academic circles today and one is free to hold it, but it is not very sympathetic to Islam. To publish it in the *Wall Street Journal* is to invite conclusions accordingly. (If Dr. Pipes was merely quoting Kaplan and not expressing his own views, he should make that clear, but I can't find the quote.)

Richard B. Parker  
Middle East Institute  
Washington, D.C.

To the Editor—

I believed that Daniel Pipes was sincere when he challenged Richard B. Parker to "Produce a single piece of my [Pipes's] writing where I express anti-Muslim sentiments." [JPS 24, no. 2 (Winter 1995), pp. 199-200]. I also took Pipes at his word that he would then "duly apologize." I accepted Parker's statement that he, Parker, did "not have time now to take up Dr. Pipes's challenge to pore through his writings in search of anti-Muslim sentiments." I thought that by producing excerpts of Pipes's 30 October 1992, *Wall Street Journal* review of John L. Esposito's book, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?*, the issue would be settled and Pipes would apologize. Unfortunately, I was wrong. In his letter to the editor in JPS [25, no. 1 (Autumn 1995), p. 204], not only does Pipes defend the racist character of his review, he attributes bad motives to me for having produced his review.

To end this argument once and for all I think that the *Journal of Palestine Studies* would serve its readers well to publish Dr. Pipes's review in its entirety. I am enclosing it for that purpose.

Shaw J. Dallal  
Syracuse University  
Utica, New York

Daniel Pipes, "Fundamental Questions About Muslims," *Wall Street Journal*, 30 October 1992, p. A11.

In "The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?" (Oxford University Press, 243 pages, \$22), John L. Esposito, Loyola professor of Middle Eastern studies at College of the Holy Cross and one of America's foremost interpreters of Islam, wastes no time getting to the heart of the matter. His first sentence asks, "Are Islam and the West on an inevitable collision course?" He wonders: Has fundamentalist Islam replaced Marxism-Leninism as our main enemy?

In the last paragraph, Mr. Esposito finally offers his clearest answer: "Islam and most Islamic movements are not necessarily anti-Western, anti-American, or anti-democratic. . . . they do not necessarily threaten American interests. Our challenge is to better understand the history and realities of the Muslim world." With this plea, Mr. Esposito closely anticipated U.S. policy. Edward P. Djerejian, the chief American diplomat dealing with the Middle East, recently announced that "the U.S. government does not view Islam as

the next 'ism' confronting the West or threatening world peace."

Are they right? Or do Messrs. Esposito and Djerejian represent that familiar breed of establishment specialist unable to see an enemy until he lands a fist in his face?

Well, yes and yes. They are right in so far as nearly one billion Muslims are deeply divided among themselves. "Muslim governments cooperate with the West more often than they threaten it: think of Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Indonesia. Further, as the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait confirmed, Muslims are not politically unified and never will be," Mr. Esposito writes. Therefore, anything like a unified jihad against the West lies outside the realm of the plausible.

But the establishment is wrong to soft-pedal the dangers of fundamentalist Islam, the radical elements of which espouse the world's most virulently anti-American ideology. Mr. Esposito argues that fundamentalists merely resent our policies: in fact, they hate the entirety of our civilization. Theorists such as Sayyid Qutb (an Egyptian) and Abul Ala Maududi (a Pakistani) go beyond politics to condemn the very essence of the West—its culture, customs and institutions—as the source of the problem. The ever-pithy Ayatollah Khomeini captured the sentiment this way: "We are not afraid of economic sanctions or military intervention. What we are afraid of is Western universities." Symbolic of this sentiment, just last month an influential Iranian religious figure attacked Tehran's doctors for wearing neckties.

Some radical fundamentalists even boast they will battle and overcome Europe and America. A Tehran daily claimed in 1990 that "the world movement of Islam" can defeat the West. In a speech to the French judge handling his case, a Tunisian convicted of setting off bombs that killed 13 people in France in 1985 and 1986 declared: "I do not renounce my fight against the West, which assassinated the Prophet Mohammed. . . . We

Muslims should kill every last one of you." These hair-raising views are hardly exceptional. But they are notably absent from "The Islamic Threat."

Instead, Mr. Esposito focuses on the milder aspects of fundamentalist Islam. That's akin to excusing communism by praising the benign qualities of Swedish social democracy. If the intent is to reconcile, the effect is to mislead.

This book lacks something else too. Mr. Esposito says not a word about low Western birthrates and the millions of Muslim immigrants to Western Europe and North America. Yet the prospect of cultural submergence is the Islamic threat that alarms European right-wingers even more than Muslim missiles and hostage-takers. Writing in *The Spectator*, for example, Charles Moore recalls T.S. Eliot's caution of "hooded hordes": "Because of our obstinate refusal to have enough babies, Western European civilisation will start to die at the point when it could have revived with new blood. Then the hooded hordes will win, and the Koran will be taught, as Gibbon famously imagined, in the schools of Oxford." Jean-Marie Le Pen, the French fascist leader, expresses his fears more pungently: "I don't want the French to become like the Red Indians—annihilated by immigration."

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