

Appendixes

1) Statements of His holiness Grand Ayatollah Makarim Shirazi criticising Pope's utterances regarding Islam

Recently, cartoonists in Denmark insulted Islam and Islam Prophet (S) and faced with worldwide protest by Muslims. Now, Pope, leader of Catholics, deluded world, and questioned Islamic Jihad and accused Muslims with violence and faced with severe and widespread protest by Muslims.

Of course, such movements were expected after the heroic victory of Hezbollah in Lebanon over Israel (thanks to the ruling of Islamic Jihad), but why was a great Christian leader deceived by tyrant and cruel politicians and this was proof that he is unaware of Islamic rulings. Is it acceptable for the great leader of Catholics to be so uninformed of a great religion like Islam with more one billion and four hundred million followers?

Condemning this big insult to Islam and Muslims resulting in more insecurity in world, we remind that Qur'an explicitly says:

وَإِنْ جَنَحُوا لِلسَّلْمِ فَاجْنَحْ لَهَا

"And if they incline to peace, do thou incline to it." (8:61)

وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ

"And fight in the way of God with those who fight with you, but aggress not: God loves not the aggressors." (2:190)

Does Pope expect Palestinians to keep silent while Zionists dispossess them of their country, Palestine, and expatriate them? Or Hezbollah to keep silent while Zionists transgress Lebanon and ruin everything

and massacre all including infant, old and young?

O Pope! Instead of assaulting Muslims in the world, you have better to admonish your cruel and bloodthirsty politicians that the time of colonisation has expired and you shall respect the independency of Islamic countries and Muslims to be respected.

Following the ideas of imperialist politicians, you committed a big sin. Try to compensate it as soon as possible, and be sure that your illogical assault to Islam and Muslims has no effect save more solidarity among them.

16.09.2006

Peace be upon the one who follows guidance.

2) Invitation from Pope to a scientific and logical debate

On 20.09.2006, His holiness Grand Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi invited Pope to a scientific and logical debate and added: The debate could be in a live broadcast at any time and place with no restriction. I am sure that at the end of debate, people in the world will judge that Islam is a herald of peace, amity and truce, and Jihad is a defensive shield against the enemies, but not for imposition of belief and idea.

In his Kharej Fiqh lesson in the seminary on the occasion of end of course before the blessed month of Ramadan, His holiness expressed: Many Christians are living with Muslims from centuries ago, and it is never heard that one is obliged to convert to Islam.

Then, he added: Pope's hard-bitten utterances are the clear instance of spreading violence throughout the world. Unfortunately, it endangered the peaceful coexistence between Muslims and Christians, while at present, we need invitation to peace, security and truce more than ever.

His holiness called all esteemed seminary students and preachers to explain for people the pacific attitudes of Islam according to the Qur'anic verses and Islamic narrations.

Text of His holiness's letter to Pope

Your Excellency Pope Benedict XVI

With greeting,

Considering your utterances in Germany rebuking and reproaching Islam and the ruling of Islamic Jihad (Holy War), hurting the feelings of all Muslims, I, as one of the Muslims' religious authorities, having many followers all around the world, and the writer of more than 130 books in various Islamic sciences, including more than 40 books about commentary of Holy Qur'an, invite you to participate in a scientific and logical debate in a live broadcast with me to discuss about two issues:

1) Does Islam advocate violence or it invites to peace, amity and kindness?

2) Did Islam spread throughout the world through the force of sword or the extreme logic, reasoning and attraction of Islamic culture?

I will be glad to declare that I leave the time and location to you, and do not have any condition for it. I hope you would declare your agreement with this.

Wishing your ever success,

Nasser Makarim Shirazi

25.09.2006

Islamic Seminary of Qom

Islamic Republic of Iran

The invitation letter was sent to Vatican embassy in Tehran in Persian and English, but we have not received any reply yet.

3) The remonstrant letter by representative of Iranian Assyrians to Pope

The utterances of Pope Benedict XVI was so illogical and weak that even his impartial and fair coreligionists could not keep silent, and many of them stood against it. For instance, we refer hereunder to the reasonable and logical letter of MP of Iranian Assyrians in the Islamic Consultative Parliament:

In the name of God

His Eminence Pope Benedict XVI

It was very astounding for the Assyrian Christian society that you criticised harshly all beliefs of Islam and Muslims with a different and of course hostile conception. We know that you are in the same position that Pope John Paul II as the symbol of peace and dialogue among religions, not only did he not mention anything unreasonable against Islam and Muslims, but he also forgave the Turkish Muslim who shot him.

Jesting Jihad and calling Islam violent is a questionable judgment which you utter carelessly in this critical time. Didn't your predecessor remind the Christians in an impressive statement that they shall learn religious zeal and support as well as sincerity and servitude from Muslims?

It is very surprising for the Christians in the world that why you revive the divisive utterances of the Christian Byzantine emperor, Manuel II Palaeologus in the recent centuries and renew the old wounds of Crusade Wars dressed by present civilised world?

If you renew the old wounds, Muslims too will naturally talk about the crimes committed by Crusade fighters of Catholic Church during the Middle Ages against other Christians, Jews and Muslims.

We, Assyrians, as a Christian society converting to Christianity at the time of its appearance in the east, have been living many centuries in the Islamic territories and especially in our home country, Iran. We have never been transgressed or offended by Muslims for our religious beliefs. Rather, we have been laudably honoured and respected by our countrymen.

We, Assyrians, had most cultural and scientific transactions and deals with Muslims at the beginning of Islam, and have rendered valuable services to Islamic caliphs and Muslims. Now, it is the time of dialogue and our deals at the beginning of appearance of Islam could be a live notation for our dialogue. Regretfully, your attitude is far from the dynamic civilisation

We are living with our Christian beliefs and ideas, and our eastern religion is still alive with remembrance of Eastern Church in our country, Iran. Our language and script is also alive in the territory where Islam is ruling for centuries. We have never heard nor seen the violence you are talking about, and we believe that it is not true. We too like other believers and particularly Muslims expect your excellence to apologise the dynamic one billion society. This is the same instruction of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who says: Share with your neighbor in happiness and grief.

We too like these one billion believers are grieved by this hostile judgment.

With regards,

Jonathan Betkellia

Representative of Iran's Assyrian and Chaldean Christians in the Majlis and Director of the Asian branch of the World Union of Assyrians

19.09.2006

4) Is it a mistake or something else?

A conference for studying and reviewing the causes and consequences of Pope's utterances was held in the presence of tens of eminent professors and scholars from seminary and university from 18 to 22 on Monday, 9.10.2006 in the office of Political and International Studies of Foreign Ministry, a part of which will be quoted hereunder:

Mostafa Boroujerdi, the latest ambassador of Iran in Vatican referred to parts of biography of Pope Benedict XVI and his scientific and political background, and expressed: Benedict XVI was the head of Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which can select the next Pope. However, as he was the head of Congregation, he selected himself as new Pope after demise of Pope John Paul II.

Referring to his concern about appearance and spread of Islam in Europe, especially Italy, he remarked: During the recent 40 years, number of Muslims in Europe has doubled, and this causes concern for the political, security and religious departments of European rulers.

According to Boroujerdi, Christianity has failed to fulfill the expectations of church despite of all facilities it has applied for mission. This has increased Pope's concern.

Indicating spread of Islam in Italy, he expressed: The area of Italy is half of Iran, and its population is 57 million. 437 Catholic radio channels are evangelizing in this country. However, as confessed by church authorities, the people are referring less to church. On the other hand, according to the studies, the Muslim population of this country may reach 50 million within the next 10 years. This has concerned the new Pope.

Expressing that west introduces Al-Qaida as the symbol of Islam to create hatred in Europeans against Islam, the latest ambassador of Iranian Vatican said: Another point concerning the Pope and church is that despite of growth in Islamism; Catholic Church is suffering from increase in Christians' irreligiousness.

In this congress, stating that Pope's insult against Islam is not start of Crusade War and rather it is its continuation, the scholar, Mr. Khosroshahi, the previous ambassador of Iran in Vatican stipulated: In the project of encounter with Islam, Pope is assigned with the cultural and religious part of the project, as we see that Mr. Bush too has exactly confirmed his utterances.

Referring to the biography of new Pope, he said: He was a member of the Nazi Youth organization when he was young, and then, he joined church and became a priest.

He added: It is a vulgar idea if we say that Pope's utterances have resulted from his lack of knowledge about Islam. Be sure that a Pope knows more than others about the positive points of Islam.

Khosroshahi stressed: Pope has the record of relation with Fascism in Italy and Nazism in Germany. His correspondence with Hitler and Mussolini is a published document.

Stating that precedent Pope had a close cooperation with imperialism of U.S., he expressed: It was published in the Left dailies in Italy at the lifetime of John Paul Pope II that when he is going to comment about the critical global issues, first he studies CIA reports.

Then, Mohaghegh Damad, the great professor, head of Islam Encyclopedia stated: I beseechingly propose to select a practical strategy for replying Pope.

Stating that Pope has introduced Islam as an irrational religion, he said: For replying this question, Pope shall be reminded to study the contents of 1400 years of Islamic literature.

Many of western thinkers have confessed that Islam is the religion of rationalism. The great Islamic

thinkers have been a model for the western civilisation, and the western civilisation is indebted to Islamic rationalism. This is a good reply to Pope's claim.

According to Mohaghegh Damad, regardless of physical spread of Islam during the last two centuries, concerning Christianity, conversion of great and famous western thinkers and philosophers have dealt a deathblow to western civilisation. For better understanding, can you imagine what happened to Muslims and Islamic society if, for instance, a great philosopher like Allamah Tabataba'i (as) converted to Christianity?

According to the heads of Islam Encyclopedia, like Walter and Corbin who were rationalists were astonished by Islam, and Corbin says: I love the rational Iranian Islam, and dies as a Muslim.

Referring to the narrations and verses concerned with Jihad, he said: The Islamic scholars shall study these verses and narrations to clarify the issue of Jihad for the Islamic society. [1](#)

[1](#). Keyhan daily.

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