

Republican Perspective

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“99.9 Percent” Peaceful---redux

In America today and in parts of Western Europe, any who speak out against radical Islamists are accused of Islamophobia and of lumping peaceful Muslims in with the jihadis. And in some European venues, to speak against Islam is even illegal.

In the not-too-distant past, criticism of Islam itself was not condemned---and no effort was made to differentiate peaceful from violent Muslims.

Consider what Winston Churchill offered in 1899. He described “...the fanatical frenzy, which is as dangerous in a man as hydrophobia in a dog...improvident habits, slovenly systems of agriculture, sluggish methods of commerce, and insecurity of property exist wherever the followers of the Prophet rule or live.” Churchill continued “The fact that in Mohammedan law every woman must belong to some man as his absolute property...must delay the final extinction of slavery until the faith of Islam has ceased to be a great power...” And “Mohammedanism is a militant and proselytizing faith...raising fearless warriors at every step...and were it not that Christianity is sheltered in strong arms of science...the civilization of modern Europe might fall, as fell the civilization of ancient Rome.”

Consider also a 1786 letter jointly written by John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, American diplomats at the time, reporting on their conversation with the ambassador from Tripoli regarding piracy by the Barbary States: “We took the liberty to make some enquiries concerning...their pretensions to make war upon nations who had done them no injury, and observed that we considered all mankind as our friends who had done us no wrong, nor had given us any provocation. The Ambassador answered us that it was founded on the laws of their Prophet; that it was written in their Koran; that all nations who should not have acknowledged their authority were sinners; that it was their right and duty to make war upon them wherever they could be found, and to make slaves of all they could take as prisoners; and that every Mussulman [Muslim] who was slain in battle was sure to go to Paradise.”

The sentiments expressed by Churchill and the ambassadorial conversation reported by Adams and Jefferson are not surprising. They reflect some 14 centuries of intermittently simmering and blazing warfare between Islamic and Christian forces---including the Crusades, the Muslim occupation of Spain, and the near-conquest of Vienna as late as 1683.

But the wisdom of the past and of our tribal elders is no longer in vogue. We are now steeped in the broth of political correctness, which requires that we constantly declaim that 99.9 percent of Muslims are peaceful and reject jihad.

It’s unlikely that Winston Churchill and the Tripoli ambassador would have

found much common ground. But they both held that Islam's mission is conquest, not peace.