

Scholar: Jihad A Real Threat

By LEE ZION
Daily News-Record

A scholar visiting James Madison University warned that Arab violence in the Palestinian territories is no aberration, but part and parcel of the Islamic faith.

Andrew Bostom, editor of the book "The Legacy of Jihad and the Fate of Non-Muslims," spoke Wednesday night at JMU. He said disingenuous Islamists and their Western apologists misinterpret the concept of "jihad."

Despite recent attempts to re-brand jihad as internal struggle, it is in the main an Islamic war of conquest. It started with the military activities of Muhammad himself, described in the Muslim sacred texts, he said.

According to Bostom, in September of the year 622, Muhammad and his followers fled from Mecca to Medina, a city that had been founded by Jews. These Jews became oasis farmers, and they were eventually joined by some Arab tribes who co-existed with them, he said.

When Muhammad came, he won over these tribes, then attacked the Jews and eventually drove them from the town.

"Some were banned from the towns, others were executed," Bostom said.

Bostom went on to say that their property and wealth was divided among Muhammad's followers. That wealth also became a substantial war chest, which enabled him to expand his conquest elsewhere. This was the first jihad, Bostom said.

Muhammad not only attacked Jews, but also began wars with Christians, he added.

"The true religion could only be Islam as he laid it down, and acceptance of it meant acceptance of his divinely inspired authority," Bostom said. "Unless Christians were prepared to accept his dictation ... conflict was inevitable, and there could have been no real peace while he lived."

Christians, Jews Were Enslaved

Once Islam reached Palestine, Jews and Christians alike were subject to forced conversions, kidnappings, and murder, he said.

There was also the concept of "dhimmitude" — virtual enslavement of non-Muslims.

See JIHAD, Page 10

Bostom: Jihad Ended In 1683 In Vienna

Jihad FROM PAGE 9

Jews and Christians alike were prohibited from building new churches or synagogues, or restoring the old ones, said Bostom. They had to wear discriminatory clothing and faced heavy taxes, as well, he said.

The word of a "dhimmi" had no standing in a Muslim court of law, he added, while if a single "dhimmi" harmed a Muslim, the whole community faced attack and arbitrary killing, Bostom said.

Thus, the Crusades, begun at the end of the 11th century, were hardly the unprovoked attack by Christians that many apologists claim, he said. Instead, it was a response to the violence that Christians faced every day in the Holy Land under Muslim rule, Bostom said.

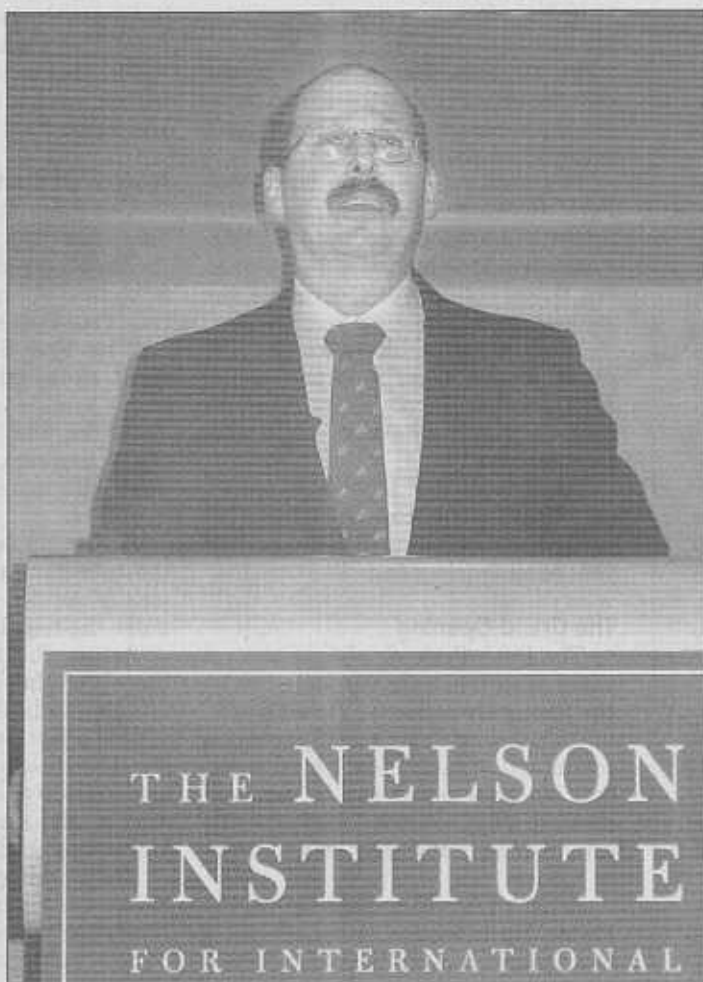
The jihad, meanwhile, continued for more than 1,000 years, ending only when the Muslim armies were stopped at the gates of Vienna in 1683.

Modern Parallels

Even to this day, the concept has continued, said Bostom.

"The precepts and regulations elucidated in the seventh through ninth centuries are immutable in the Muslim ... system, and they have remained essentially unchallenged by the majority of contemporary Muslims," he said. "The jihad is intrinsic to the sacred Muslim texts."

Fast-forwarding to the present day, Bostom said he had little hope for the West Bank now that the terrorist



Lee Zion / DN-R

Andrew Bostom, editor of the book "The Legacy of Jihad and the Fate of Non-Muslims," spoke Wednesday night at James Madison University.

organization Hamas is the elected power there. He noted that Palestinian leaders want the law to follow Shari'a, or Islamic law — the same law that openly supports jihad.

Meanwhile, Palestinian Authority religious leaders, such as Sheik Muhammad Ibrahim Al-Madhi, have openly called for a return to dhimmitude in a Muslim-run Israel, Bostom said.

Bostom called these "anachronistic, discriminatory views," adding that this was a very real possibility with 1.3 billion Muslims in the world.

During the question-and-

answer period after his lecture, several students vigorously disagreed with Bostom. Samier Mansur, president of the Muslim Student Association, said there was no justification in the Koran for the violence of Muslim extremists.

Mansur added that many passages in the Koran legislate on the sanctity of human life, and being compassionate toward others. He said that the fault for the violence in the Arab world does not lie in Islam itself.

Contact Lee Zion at 574-6274 or lzion@dnronline.com