

began falling and, gradually, public attitudes began to soften. High-profile research projections and a growing cadre of advocacy groups—many, like the Lindesmith Center and the Drug Policy Foundation, funded by billionaire philanthropist George Soros—encouraged this shift in attitudes by suggesting that treatment was more effective than prison at lowering both addiction and crime. The advocacy groups drafted model reform legislation and promoted ballot initiatives like those that have diverted nonviolent drug offenders away from prisons in Arizona and California. The researchers produced numerous studies showing that it costs far less to place an addict in treatment than in prison—and that treatment has a higher success rate in breaking the addiction cycle. A survey conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2001 found that fully 73 percent of Americans favored permitting medical marijuana prescriptions; 47 percent favored rolling back mandatory-minimum sentences for nonviolent drug offenders; and 52 percent believed drug use should be treated as a disease rather than a crime. Faced with this grassroots shift, local elected officials, too, began to re-examine the beliefs and theories underlying America's antidrug strategy.

Ever since recession hit two years ago, these changes in thinking have been bolstered by fiscal realities. While the Bush Administration may think it can fight a war on terror and run an occupation of Iraq while also cutting taxes and continuing the drug-war imprisonment boom, states are dealing with a more bitter reality. The Administration may want to devote resources to shutting down medical-marijuana buyers' clubs set up legally under new state laws, but states are no longer so enthusiastic. They are realizing that their budgets, buffeted by declining tax revenues, simply can't support major domestic-security spending and, at the same time, continued high expenditures on drug-war policing and mass incarceration. With drug treatment cheaper than incarceration and increasingly viable in the court of public opinion, drug-law reform is gaining ground despite federal intransigence. More and more elected officials are beginning to conclude that it's time to bring home the troops in the war on drugs as we know it. "Treatment instead of incarceration across the whole country has become a political safe ground," former Governor Johnson says. "It could not have been said safely prior to three years ago. Now it's totally safe." ■

Letter From Sarajevo

by Brian Whitmore

Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina

The Rev. Franklin Graham ought to visit Sarajevo. So, for that matter, should anybody else who thinks Islam "is a very evil and wicked religion," as Graham said it was shortly after the September 11 attacks; or that it is extreme and violent, as the conservative Christian televangelist Pat Robertson said of the faith last year.

And while strolling the smooth cobblestone streets of the Bosnian capital's Old Town, anybody holding such views might do well to stop in the city's Central Mosque and listen to what Grand Mufti Mustafa Ceric, leader of the nation's 1.6 million Muslims, has to say. In his speeches, Ceric has been known to quote the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi as often as he cites the Koran. He has also led calls for an "Islamic avant-garde" to promote human rights and democracy; frequently celebrates the historic and spiritual links among Islam, Christianity and Judaism; and implores Muslims to be careful about using words like "jihad." To Muslims, Ceric says, the word "may mean many good things, but to non-Muslims it means only one thing: violent actions against their faith." For Bosnian Muslims to live among other religions in a small country, he says, is a sign of strength rather than weakness. "I believe neither the weak nor the aggressive will inherit the earth, but the cooperative," Ceric said in a 2001 speech in Vienna titled "Islam Against Terrorism."

Ceric is about as tolerant and ecumenical as religious leaders

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come. But his views are neither unique nor on the liberal fringe here. Rather, they tend to reflect and reinforce those of the vast majority of Bosnia's Muslims, who make up 44 percent of the country's 3.7 million people. Despite a genocidal war from 1992 to 1995, in which Muslims were the main victims, Islam in Bosnia remains an astonishingly broad-minded faith that has largely made its peace with other religions, the West, modernity, democracy and the separation of mosque and state. This has remained true despite an influx of fundamentalists during the war who—funded largely by the Saudis and preaching the strict Wahhabi form of Islam—have led efforts to radicalize the country.

Bosnian Muslims, who prefer to be called Bosniaks, never tire of pointing out that in downtown Sarajevo a mosque, a synagogue, a Roman Catholic cathedral and an Eastern Orthodox church sit within blocks of each other. "Islam, through the Koran, accepts all other religions, including Christianity and Judaism," said Amel, a 22-year-old student.

At first glance, Bosnia seems an unlikely place to find such tolerance. The festering wounds and lingering mistrust from a war in which Serb and Croat militias waged a vicious campaign of "ethnic cleansing" against Muslims are still evident here. But due to centuries of tradition, and the strong leadership of people like Ceric, Bosnian Islam has managed to remain what many scholars call one of the most tolerant branches of the faith in the Muslim world. "All our experience in Bosnia is living with other traditions," Rusmir Mahmutcehajic, a Sarajevo-based sociologist and author of the book *Bosnia the Good: Tolerance and Tradition*, told me. "This kind of epistemic modesty is the basis for the Bosnian experience. What we have is valuable."

AIR MAIL

FIRST CLASS

SPECIAL DELIVERY

During the siege of Sarajevo, when the Serb militias captured territory in the city, they would often spray-paint THIS IS SERBIA! on buildings. At one point the Bosnian Army briefly took back a chunk of land on Sarajevo's outskirts, and a Muslim soldier noticed the graffiti on a post office. According to local legend, the soldier then scribbled an answer: THIS IS A POST OFFICE, YOU FUCKING IDIOTS!

The incident, now a part of Sarajevo folklore, reveals not only Bosniaks' irrepressible sense of humor, even in the darkest of times; it also speaks volumes about just what those defending Sarajevo were fighting for—not Islam, but the preservation of a city and a culture that had historically been a cosmopolitan melting pot. According to a survey conducted in 1996, a year after the war ended, a startling 93 percent of Bosnia's Muslims said they preferred to live in a multiethnic and multiconfessional society. In contrast, 83 percent of Bosnia's Serbs and 81 percent of the country's Croats said they wanted to live only with their own ethnic group.

Today, eight years after the war ended, Sarajevo is still cosmopolitan, but due to a massive influx of refugees from Serb- and Croat-controlled areas, it is 80 percent Muslim. The city's mosques are packed with the faithful for Friday prayers. But its hip downtown bars are also full of revelers enjoying drinks on Saturday night. Just as many Roman Catholics flout the church's restrictions on contraception, abortion and premarital sex, Bosniaks tend to ignore Islam's prohibitions against drinking alcohol. And anyone hoping to see strict dress codes here will be severely disappointed. There are as many women strolling the streets sporting fashionable—and often revealing—dress as there are wearing veils and head scarves.

"Islam leaves room for local traditions," said Ahmet Alibasic, a lecturer at Sarajevo's Faculty of Islamic Studies. "Local custom is one of the sources of Islamic law," he added. "I am a devout Muslim, and my wife wears the veil, but everyone should be able to make their own decision about dress." As he prepared to attend afternoon prayers, Alibasic relaxed in his office at the institute and explained over a cup of tea why Bosnian Islam has developed the way it has. "When you have Muslims living together with non-Muslims, there tends to be more tolerance," he said. "There is no talk here about an Islamic state. Islam is either realistic or it is not Islam."

Such attitudes, says Charles Kurzman, a sociologist at the University of North Carolina specializing in Islam and democracy, are part of a progressive trend that is emerging throughout the Islamic world. "There is something special going on in Bosnia, but the desire for liberalism, tolerance and democracy is widespread among Muslims," Kurzman said. He cited polls conducted from 2000 to 2002 by the University of Michigan's World Values Survey showing that more than 75 percent of the population in six majority-Muslim countries—Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Morocco and Turkey—agree that democracy is better than any other form of government.

But Bosnia's specific history also explains why liberal attitudes are so strong here. Most Bosniaks adhere to the Hanafi school, a progressive branch of Sunni Islam that is predominant in Turkey and the Balkans. Bosnia was ruled by the Muslim Ottoman Empire from 1463 to 1878 and by Roman Catholic Austria-Hungary from 1878 to 1918. Under the Ottomans, Christians

were required to pay additional taxes but otherwise enjoyed broad religious freedom. And Austria-Hungary tolerated and even encouraged the development of a strong Bosnian Muslim religious identity, historians and scholars say. Moreover, during the Habsburg period, progressive currents in the faith that were emerging out of Cairo and Istanbul heavily influenced the development of Islam in Bosnia. It was under Habsburg rule that Bosnian Muslims discovered that they could "adopt European culture, keeping at the same time the peculiar characteristics of their lifestyle," Fikret Karcic, an Islamic historian and legal scholar, wrote in his book *The Bosniaks and the Challenges of Modernity*.

This easy mixing of the European and the Islamic is clearly visible in the Faculty of Islamic Studies' graceful corridors, airy classrooms and spacious courtyards. The atmosphere is both casual and frantic as students chatted in the halls and prepared for exams. You could be in the religious studies department of any European—or American—university. "For me it is normal to be in this environment," said Seida, a 20-year-old student wearing traditional Islamic dress and a head scarf. Fundamentalists who wish to regulate lifestyle choices, restrict the rights of women and impose their religious beliefs on others simply "have trouble accepting the modern world as it is today," she said. "People should have a choice" about what to wear, she added. "The only thing that is important is what you wear in your soul."

As Bosniaks guard the frontlines of religious tolerance, just as they not long ago manned barricades to defend Sarajevo, they still face some daunting challenges. But this time the attacks are coming from other Muslims. During the war, thousands of Islamic fighters, or mujahedeen—including many veterans of the Afghan war against the Soviet Union—streamed into the country from all over the Arab world to fight their latest jihad. Most Bosnians were not interested in a jihad; they just wanted to survive and live in peace. But with an arms embargo in place and the West's commitment to intervening in question, they reluctantly accepted the help.

After the war, hundreds of mujahedeen settled in Bosnia and married local women. Many of them also hooked up with the scores of Saudi-sponsored Islamic charities that have set up shop here. The charities have spent millions of dollars to rebuild homes, renovate schools and feed, clothe and shelter orphans and impoverished widows. The generosity, however, comes with a catch: They have also used their presence here to promote a fundamentalist Islam. "We have a big problem with the Saudis," a senior Bosnian official told me, speaking on condition of anonymity. "They are spreading around huge amounts of money to help rebuild Bosnia. But they are also building mosques and spreading a version of Islam that is alien to our Bosnian Islam."

The Islamic charities and the remaining mujahedeen together form a front that is trying to spread Wahhabism, the strict Islamic movement founded in the eighteenth century by Abdul-Wahhab, who converted the Saud tribe, which now rules Saudi Arabia. According to a report by the Sarajevo branch of the International Crisis Group, an international think tank, Saudi charities require "female beneficiaries to cover their heads and their children to attend classes in their faith." The Wahhabis have been more successful in winning converts in Bosnia's impoverished rural areas

than in its cosmopolitan capital of Sarajevo. "This is destructive to Bosnia morally and culturally," Mahmutcehajic said. The Wahhabis are also provoking conflict with Serbs and Croats. In the tense and ethnically divided city of Mostar, local media reported graffiti shortly after September 11, 2001, reading: "Bin Laden, brother, send a 767 against the Croats."

But Bosnian intellectuals and religious scholars say that if the Wahhabis are hoping to buy converts in Bosnia, they are wasting their money in the long run. Everything from their strict dress codes for women to their claim to be the sole true Islamic faith to the severe architectural styles of their giant mosques contradicts—and even offends—Bosnian tradition. "The Wahhabis do a disservice to Islam and to Muslims," Alibasic said. "They have a very selective knowledge of Islam, and their solutions don't work,"

he added. "They have no future here in Bosnia, but as long as they remain nonviolent they will have a place."

Some of the mujahedeen have also been linked to terrorism. In October 2001 six Algerian nationals suspected of plotting to attack American interests in Bosnia were arrested, turned over to US custody and subsequently transferred to Guantánamo Bay. Those arrests, and others since, have made many Bosnians uneasy that all Muslims, themselves included, would be suspect in the war on terrorism.

But Mustafa Cerić sounded an optimistic note—paraphrasing King. "My heart is full of hope to... dream that my three children will one day live in a world where they will be judged not by the faith of their hearts, but by the content of their character," Cerić said. ■

WASHINGTON CONTINUES TO EVADE RESPONSIBILITY FOR 47 YEARS OF CONTAMINATION.

The Legacy of Hanford

ROBERT ALVAREZ

In mid-October of 1805, after being saved from starvation by Indians, the exhausted Corps of Discovery led by Captains Lewis and Clark finally reached the Columbia River Basin—gateway to the Pacific. The success of their two-year quest to chart the nascent American Empire was now assured. As the powerful current pushed their canoes to the ocean, they entered the high sagebrush desert, teeming with deer, elk and wild horses. They were astonished by countless salmon, some weighing over 100 pounds, in the crystal clear water—more than in any river of the world.

While camping nearby, Clark wrote in his journal, "We were obliged for the first time to take the property of the Indians without consent or approbation of the owner." He reasoned that "the night was cold and we made use of a part of those boards and Split logs for fire wood." Before, Lewis and Clark had scrupulously "made it a point at all times not to take anything belonging to the Indians." But the temptation was too great, setting an ominous precedent.

On January 16, 1943, Gen. Leslie Groves, the military leader of the Manhattan Project, chose Hanford, in eastern Washington near the Lewis and Clark campsite, for the world's first large nuclear reactor. The area, the traditional watering grounds of many Indian people, offered key elements Groves was looking for: plenty of water and electricity from the Columbia River dams, and sufficient isolation that nuclear accidents were regarded as tolerable. The Indians were promptly banned from their homes and



from religious, fishing and medicine-gathering sites, and farmers were uprooted. Within about two and a half years the Hanford "B" reactor had made enough plutonium to destroy Nagasaki, Japan, on August 9, 1945.

Over the following forty-seven years, until it was closed down in 1990, Hanford's 570-square-mile nuclear complex continued to produce not just plutonium but massive contamination. There were many large releases of radioactivity, particularly iodine-131, which rapidly contaminates air, vegetation and milk supplies. Because it is absorbed mostly in the body's thyroid gland, radioactive iodine has been linked to thyroid cancer and other types of thyroid damage. Between 1944 and 1947, more than 684,000 curies were released (the accident at Three Mile Island released about fifteen curies). In addition, some 440 billion gallons of contaminated liquids were directly disposed into the ground at Hanford—enough to create a poisonous lake the size of Manhattan and more than eighty feet deep. Hexavalent chromium, a carcinogen, is now being found to damage fish in the river, while large amounts of radioactive contaminants were spread down the Columbia River and to parts of the Pacific Ocean along the coasts of Oregon and Washington. According to Timothy Jarvis, a scientist then with the Energy Department's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, enough dangerous materials were dumped at Hanford to have "the potential to induce cancer in every person currently on the planet, 208 million times over."

In the late 1980s, the federal government finally acknowledged its responsibility for Hanford and other similar sites around the country and began the largest, most expensive and most challenging environmental cleanup program in US history. As Senator John Glenn put it in 1988, "What good does it do to defend ourselves with nuclear weapons, if we poison our people in the process?" Spurred on by angry citizens, states, "downwinder"

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