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War in the Name of God: Christianity Is No Less Addicted Than Any Other Religion

By Jonathan Lagard, of the Sea Island Times

In a recent op-ed in the New York Times, Jean Bethke Elshtain, a professor of philosophy at the University of Notre Dame, argues convincingly what most people already know:

> Religion has been a powerful force in human affairs for millennia. Its dangers lurkily in any religion that claims to be God's own truth. To kill in the name of God is a terrible thing, but it happens all too often. Religious authority and institutional violence go hand in hand.

Elshtain's point, however, is not to argue against atheism from the spiritually "enlightened" position, but to underscore the continued and enduring relevance of Christianity, which she believes is the only religion that can offer a "counter-narrative" to the violence and bigotry that other religions often include, given its inherent humility. The Christian Scriptures, she argues, are "a narrative of a God who does not kill but who is killed instead—let drop, not produced in the name of peace and with a great sense of irony, the Christian Scriptures are a narrative of a God who is both and and neither and neither and both."

Jean Bethke Elshtain writes that:

> The reader's duty, when reading the Hebrew text, or psalms, or Jesus' parables, is to "see" the text, to see what it means, to see what it means for one's life, and to see what it means for the world. Attention, it is true, must be focused, concentrated, intense. But this focus, this concentration, is not a kind of "seeing" that is a mastery over the text, a mastery that would allow one to see the text as a mere object, a text that would be a manifestation of one's own self-understanding, a reversal of the normal assignation of words, which would make the text a mere tool, a means to an end, a text that would say, "I know what I want to say—Torah, the Gospels, the Qur'an, the Bhagavad Gita, the Book of Mormon—I know what I want to say, and I will use this text to express what I want to express." Instead, the reader's duty is to be the ongoing confession of spirituality and our respectable Blue Green Liberals, who need Christianity only as a means to an end—to use it as a tool to keep the lower classes in line, to keep them from rioting and looting and burning down the cities, and, of course, to keep them from voting for Democrats—are thoroughly enjoying the fruits of the Republican Party's "War on Christmas" and "Christian Persecution" campaigns, which, of course, are the ultimate expressions of the Christian Right's "Christian Victimhood" mentality.

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of us working in this field unaware of any refutation; that is, nobody who claims, "War law states (a, b, c), so the US wars are legal because (d, e, f)."

Let's start there before we discuss arrests. Are the wars lie-started and illegal?

Again: documentation:
http://www.washingtonsblog.com/2016/04/us-illegal-history-rogue-empire-requiring-arrests-present-introduction-define-rogue-state-perfect-match-us-illegal-wars-aggression-crimes-humanity.html

Reply

Max Thomas S
August 26, 2016 at 11:34 am

Some wars were illegal and others were not. World war one and two were definitely legal. Among current wars, Afghanistan was legal (although arguably Saudi Arabia would have been a better choice as there was significant evidence that they had sponsored errorist groups beforehand), Uganda** (yep), Somalia (maybe – given the danger that terrorists pose to shipping that passes the Horn of Africa), Pakistan (probably not, although militant groups in Afghanistan continued to use Pakistan as a way to escape detection in Afghanistan), Iraq (no), Syria (most likely yes – although difficult to say*), Libya (no idea), Yemen (no idea). Which, by my analysis, seems largely like America is neither here nor there when it comes to starting illegal or lie-started wars.

As for your original points.
1. I'll take your word for it, but this kind of mass scale killing is not exclusive to America either. Mao Zedong (Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution) and Stalin (massive incompetence and the starvation of many of his civilians) killed that many people as well.
2. I'll take your word that 400 million died as a result of poor policy, but American policy has also helped millions. America's corporations and free trade agreement with China helped lift 400 million people out of poverty (the only reason why the UN was able to meet its MDG poverty goal and it was also the biggest anti-poverty movement in a generation). Countries led by the US also helped women gained voting rights, the right to enter the workforce en masse etc, which are also anti-poverty measures. I think the issue here is not America is bad or good, it's rather a question of the good outweighing the bad, and I think it clearly does.
3. Another question of good outweighing the bad, has the presence of America led to more or less wars than otherwise? I'd say less wars, given that people are enjoying the longest life expectancy ever and violence across the world has continued to decline .
(http://www.politifact.com/punditfact/statements/2014/burguiere/fewer-wars-fewer-people-dying-wars-now-quite-some/ and
http://www.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052311190

*If you can recall, Barack Obama threatened to use force (at least more force than they are using now) against Bashar Al-Assad (the 'red line' quote) to stop the gassing of civilians, but ended up backing down because he didn't think it would be a good idea. So really, he was trying to use the threat of force to deter actual force, unfortunately it failed.
**America deployed military advisers to help fight Lords Resistance Army (both Busha and BO)
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/15/world/africa/barack-obama-sending-100-armed-advisers-to-africa-to-help-fight-lords-resistance-army.html?hp&_r=0

Reply

carlbradleyherman
August 26, 2016 at 8:01 pm

What do the two treaties state when war is and is not legal?

If you know, you can state it in a sentence. If not, you can look at the documentation I provided and/or ask me to provide you the summary that is crystal-clear in letter and intent.

Reply

Max Thomas S
August 27, 2016 at 11:08 am

The treaties state that wars of aggression are only legal when there is clear justification for self-defense and that a war is legal if crimes against humanity are not committed. But this is really just a piece of legislation to to hide behind, because wars can be legal and still involve crimes against humanity. Furthermore, wars can not involve self-defense (and thus not be legal under the two treaties you mentioned), but they can still be the right course of action and justifiable.

Reply

carlbradleyherman
August 27, 2016 at 7:06 pm

This is just for when war is or is not legal, not War Crimes within a war (targeting civilians, torture, etc.).

War law is as clear as "stop sign law" for driving, or when a baseball runner is safe or out. You've made mistakes:

1. "War of Aggression" is what you call an illegal war. War is only legal in response to armed attack by another nation's government. Because no government attacked the US, all US current wars are illegal. They are Wars of Aggression.

2. Laws are not meant to hide behind; they're meant to be what American has: limited government under law. What we have in war (and other areas) is unlimited government dictating about the law to engage in Wars of Aggression.

3. You argue for unlimited and dictatorial government if you say wars are ok if "magic words" are said about "right course of action and justifiable." What are you imagining would be an example, Max?

Reply

Max Thomas S
August 27, 2016 at 8:31 pm

1. The 9/11 attacks were committed by a non-state actor, but if a country harbors terrorists without a clear indication of bringing them to justice, then the responsibility of that attack is transferred to the country.
3. That is not what I argued, you are making the case that the number of wars will increase if foreign intervention in matters not pertaining to domestic security is legal. But if any country wants to go to war enough, they will manufacture a reason. Therefore, in the clear cases where foreign intervention is needed, such as deploying armed military advisers to help combat the Lords Resistance Army, it should be legal to enter into the war.

carlbradleyherman
August 27, 2016 at 9:52 pm

1a. You're making this up; that is not the law. Agreed?

1b. Your history is wrong. The Afghan government agreed to arrest anyone connected to any crime upon presentation of evidence of criminal involvement. The US refused to provide evidence. The UN Security Council issued two legally-binding resolutions for international factual sharing, arrests, and prosecutions of the 9/11 criminals. The US chose to violate the UN, refuse standard legal practice to offer evidence of a criminal suspect, and chose unlawful War of Aggression. Agreed? Perhaps you'll read the documentation I provided and/or look for yourself to verify.

3a. I am not making any case other than the US current wars are Orwellian unlawful and started on known lies.

3b. If a nation "manufactures" a reason to violate law, We the People have a choice to accept unlimited and dictatorial government for Wars of Aggression, or demand arrests.

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