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WHY WE FIGHT

An Anti-Idiotarian
Manifesto *continued* ▶

by Eric Steven Raymond



WHEREAS, the period since the terrible events of 9/11 has exposed the vacuity and moral confusion of all too many of the thinkers, politicians, and activists operating within conventional political categories;

WHEREAS, the Left has failed us by succumbing to reflexive anti-Americanism; by apologizing for terrorist acts; by propounding squalid theories of moral equivalence; and by blaming the victims of evil for the act of evil;

WHEREAS, the Right has failed us by pushing 'anti-terrorist' measures which bid fair to be both ineffective and prejudicial to the central liberties of a free society; and in some cases by rhetorically descending to almost the same level of bigotry as our enemies;

WHEREAS, even many of the Libertarians from whom we expected more intelligence have retreated into a petulant isolationism, refusing to recognize that, at this time, using the state to carry the war back to the aggressors is our only practical instrument of self-defense;

WE, THEREFORE, ASSERT the following convictions as the premises of the anti-idiotarian position:

1. **THAT** Western civilization is threatened with the specter of mass death perpetrated by nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons placed in the hands of terrorists by rogue states;
.....
2. **THAT** the terrorists and their state sponsors have declared and are pursuing a war not against the vices of Western civilization but against its core virtues: against the freedom of thought and speech and conscience, against the life of reason; against the equality of women, against pluralism and tolerance; against, indeed, all the qualities which separate civilized human beings from savagery, slavery, and fanaticism;
.....
3. **THAT** no adjustments of American or Western foreign policy, or concessions to the Palestinians, or actions taken against globalization, or efforts to alleviate world poverty, are of more than incidental interest to these terrorists;
.....
4. **THAT**, upon their own representation, they will not be dissuaded from their violence by any surrender less extreme than the imposition of Islam and shari'a law on the kaffir West;
.....
5. **THAT**, as said terrorists have demonstrated the willingness to use civilian airliners as flying bombs to kill thousands of innocent people, we would commit a vast crime of moral negligence if we underestimated the scope of their future malice even without weapons of mass destruction;
.....

6. **THAT** they have sought, and on plausible evidence found, alliance with rogue states such as pre-liberation Iraq, Iran, and North Korea; states that are known to have active programs working towards the development and delivery of weapons of that would multiply the terrorists' ability to commit atrocities by a thousandfold;
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Western **civilization** is **threatened** with the specter of mass **death** perpetrated by...**weapons** placed in the **hands** of **terrorists** by rogue states

WE THEREFORE DECLARE that both the terrorists and their state sponsors have made themselves outlaws from the moral community of mankind, to be dealt with as rabid dogs are.

WE FURTHER AFFIRM that the 'root cause' of Islamo-fascist terrorism lies in the animating politico-religious ideas of fundamentalist Islam and not in any significant respect elsewhere, and that a central aim of the war against terror must be to displace and discredit those animating ideas.

WE REJECT, as a self-serving power grab by the least trustworthy elements of our own side, the theory that terrorist depredations can be effectively prevented by further restrictions on the right of free speech, or the right of peaceable assembly, or the right to bear arms in self-defense; and we strenuously oppose police-state measures such as the imposition of national ID cards or airport-level surveillance of public areas;

IN GRAVE KNOWLEDGE that the state of war brings out the worst in both individual human beings and societies, we reject the alternative of ceding to the world's barbarians the exclusive privilege of force;

WE SUPPORT the efforts of the United States of America, its allies, and the West to hunt down and capture or kill individual members of the Islamo-fascist terror network;

WE SUPPORT speedy American and allied military action against the rogue states that support terrorism, both as a means of alleviating the immediate threat and of deterring future state sponsorship of terrorism by the threat of war to the knife.

Terrorists have made themselves **outlaws**
from the **moral community** of mankind,
to be **dealt** with as **rabid dogs** are.

WE SUPPORT, in recognition of the fact that the military and police cannot and should not be everywhere, efforts to meet the distributed threat with a distributed response; to arm airline pilots, and to recognize as well the ordinary citizen's right and duty to respond to terrorist aggression with effective force.

WE SUPPORT, as an alternative greatly preferable to future nuclear/chemical/biological blackmail of the West, the forcible overthrow of the governments of nations that combine sponsorship of terrorism with the possession of weapons of mass destruction; and the occupation of those nations until such time as the root causes of terrorism have been eradicated from their societies.

WE DEFINE IDIOTARIANISM as the species of delusion within the moral community of mankind that gives aid and comfort to terrorists and tyrants operating outside it.

WE REJECT the idiotarianism of the Left — the moral blindness that refuses to recognize that free markets, individual liberty, and experimental science have made the West a fundamentally better place than any culture in which jihad, ‘honor killings’, and female genital mutilation are daily practices approved by a stultifying religion.

WE REJECT the idiotarianism of the Right — whether it manifests as head-in-the-sand isolationism or as a Christian-chauvinist political agenda that echoes the religious absolutism of our enemies.

Idiotarianism...the **species of delusion** within
the moral community that gives **aid** and **comfort**
to **terrorists** and **tyrants** operating outside it.

WE ARE MEMBERS OF A CIVILIZATION, and we hold that civilization to be worth defending. We have not sought war, but we will fight it to the end. We will fight for our civilization in our thoughts, in our words, and in our deeds.

WE HAVE AWAKENED; we have seen the face of evil in the acts of the Bin Ladens and Husseins and Arafats of the world; we have seen through the lies and self-delusions of the idiotarians who did so much to enable and excuse their evil. We shall not flinch from our duty to confront that evil.

WE SHALL DEMAND as citizens and voters that those we delegate to lead pursue the war against terror with an unflagging will to victory and all means necessary — while remaining always mindful that we must not become what we fight;

WE SHALL REMEMBER that the West's keenest weapons are reason and the truth; that we must shine a pitiless light on the lies from which terrorist hatred is built; and that we must also be vigilant against the expedient lie from our own side, lest our victories become tainted and hollow, sowing trouble for the future.

WE HAVE FAITH that we are equal to these challenges; we shall not be paralyzed by fear of the enemy, nor yet by fear of ourselves;

WE SHALL SHED the moral cowards and the appeasers and the apologists; and we shall fight the barbarians and fanatics, and we shall defeat them. We shall defeat them in war, crushing their dream of dominion; and we shall defeat them in peace, using our wealth and freedoms to win their women and children to civilized ways, and ultimately wiping their diseased and virulent ideologies from the face of the Earth.

THIS WE SWEAR, on the graves of those who died at the World Trade Center; and those who died in the Sari Club in Bali; and those who died on U.S.S. Cole; and indeed on the graves of all the nameless victims in the Middle East itself who have been slaughtered by terrorism and rogue states:

YOU SHALL NOT HAVE DIED IN VAIN.

Eric S. Raymond, 26 December 2003

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Eric Steven Raymond is the granddaddy of today's hackers, a man who revels in living the life in all its geeky glory. According to him, "The world is full of fascinating problems waiting to be solved." Annoyed by the fact that most people misuse the term "hacker," he wrote *The Hacker's Dictionary* and *How to Be a Hacker*. (Raymond says the basic difference is that "hackers build things, crackers break them.") Not only is he respected for his astounding skills as a programmer, but Raymond is also valued as a fierce defender of the Open Source Movement, which is based on the premise that programmers should be able to read and modify all software source codes.

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
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