
ECONOMIC SUICIDE BOMBERS

Contributed by Jim Jordal
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Moreover I saw under the sun, in the place of justice, that wickedness was there; and in the place of righteousness, that wickedness was there…. Then I returned and saw all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold, the tears of those who were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter.

Ecclesiastes 3:16, 4:1, WEB

Perhaps the writer of Ecclesiastes had a vision of our society today as he penned the immortal words above. In any event he was prescient in describing quite accurately the condition of modern American political and economic life. He noted that wickedness had driven righteousness from the place of justice, meaning from the institutions of political and economic power. He also noted the oppression resulting from such a condition, and the tears of the oppressed. And he lamented that they had no comforter, or anyone to help them because the available power resided with the oppressors. Does it sound like America today? I think so.

A "suicide bomber" is someone so firmly persuaded in the justice and rightness of their beliefs—even if erroneous--that they willingly expect to perish for their cause as they attack the "enemy." That innocents or noncombatants may die in the effort is only a sort of "collateral damage." The point is to make a gruesomely graphic statement in favor of their ideas, even at the cost of their lives and possibly many others.

Perhaps you’ve noticed that many of these modern suicide bombers now reside in the U.S. Congress where they strenuously resist any attempt to improve the horrendous economic plight of working class citizens. That perhaps 100 million Americans struggle mightily due to the economic doctrines and policies they support seems lost on them. They seem not to care that workers lose their homes to foreclosure, cannot feed themselves without charity or save for a reasonable retirement. It doesn’t seem to make any difference to these obstructionists that millions can no longer get a decent education or obtain health insurance at a reasonable price. They seem not to be troubled that multitudes are falling rapidly from the middle class into poverty---even if they have a job---and that these unfortunates have little or no hope of ever rising again. No, these awful sufferings are merely collateral damage in the war against deficits.

Have you also heard that most of these suicide bombers are signatories to Americans for Tax Reform leader Grover

Norquist's Taxpayer Protection Pledge to oppose tax increases of any kind? That's one major reason why they strenuously resist all tax increases, even those modest increases for those who already have more than enough. If the past negotiations over budget issues are any indication, we can expect virtual gridlock on this subject because of the intransigence of those who have signed this pledge.

The answer generally given by these suicide bombers when questioned as to why they resist benefits for the working class is that they do this to "save the country." But perhaps their cure is worse than the disease. Common sense, it seems to me, would dictate that jobs now are more important than deficits later. No, we cannot continue going into debt forever, but how will the debt ever be paid or the deficit lessened without jobs, income, and the taxes paid by people with an adequate income? If average people cannot pay the expenses of running the country, then perhaps the rich will have to shoulder more of the burden---a frightening thought for the economic suicide bombers and those they represent.

The bombers seem to have enough sense to know that what they do is both questionably effective and certainly immoral-- at least according to common values of the Judeo-Christian ethic. Old Testament law, the prophets of Israel, and Jesus Christ himself make abundantly clear that the major efforts of national civil leaders should be aimed at providing economic, political and social justice for the common people. Prosperity for the working class will also benefit the rich because they own or control such a large percentage of the productive wealth of the nation. But tax cuts and subsidies given to the rich in the (false) hope that they will somehow trickle down to workers never seem to make it---they get stuck somewhere in the funnel.

There's only one way out of this mess, and that's to follow God's way of justice and equity for all!