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## Sponsoring Regimes That Assassinate Is Un-Christian

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*Article Dated 9/13/2002*

According to the Los Angeles Times (May 10, 2002), U.S. taxpayers will provide \$2.76 billion in aid to Israel in the fiscal year that ends Sept. 30 and \$75 million in indirectly relief aid for the Palestinian Authority. The Jerusalem Post (May 07, 2002) indicates that most of the \$3 billion of U. S. taxpayers' aid to Israel is for military purposes. The Associated Press (April 26, 2002) notes that taxpayers' support to Israel is about \$3 billion.

The level of U.S. taxpayers' sponsorship of Israel's military machine is significant. Hence, the linkage between U.S. taxpayers and Israel's military actions is real and significant. Thus, Israel's actions, their policy of assassinations, indirectly reflect the preferences of American taxpayers. Therefore, it is not difficult to see the root of Arab resentment. Surely, they must think that Americans are sponsoring and abetting their suffering.

Ironically, most Americans are unaware of their government's level of sponsorship of Israel's military. As a result, they do not internalize the linkage between their tax dollars and the policy of assassinations by the government of Israel. On the other hand, many quickly, and rightly so, condemn foreign governments and institutions that they believe support Palestinian suicide bombers.

Therefore, it is not surprising that many outside the US, and even within, view the deafening silence of most Americans towards assassinations by Israel as hypocritical. Moreover, what is deeply troublesome, and saddening, is the silence of the American Christian community. Their silence towards Israel's policy of assassination is hellish.

Neither Jews nor Muslims see Christ as God. Thus, they reject the central tenet of Christianity, our only Sovereign and Lord, Jesus Christ (Jude 1:4). Hence, when Christians support those that perennially reject Christ, their actions deny Christ (Titus 1:10-16).

Therefore, it is impossible for followers of Christ to reconcile their support for those that reject Christ. Christian cannot simultaneously accept and reject Christ. Similarly, they cannot ignore injustices at home and abroad and follow Christ.

Christianity is an emulative relationship with Jesus Christ, one in which followers take on His nature. Christ is the giver of abundant life (JN 6:51-58); the taker of life is the evil one. Thus, Christians cannot be lukewarm towards regimes that implement policies of assassination, apartheid, or that mistreat their citizens. Likewise, they must unequivocally condemn and decry those sponsoring and sending suicide

bombers to kill Israelis. These actions are deplorable and anti-Christian. Demonstrating evenhandedness will facilitate peace and bring blessings to the nation (MT 4:9).

American Christians, therefore, have a unique opportunity to reflect Christ's love and servant nature to Palestinians, Iraqis, Israelis, and the world. How can American Christians reflect God's love and mercy? They can by loving their brothers and sister, including Jews and Muslims, as they love themselves (MT 22:38; LK 10:27; 1JN 3:10; 1JN 4:20-21).

In essence, true Christians internalize Christ and reflect His love and unbounded compassion. Surely, it is difficult for many to emulate Christ, because He came not to be served, but rather to serve and to give of himself (MT 20:24-28; MK 10:45). However, the culture of status and distinction often lead many Americans to become self-oriented and wanting "others" to serve them. Yet, Jesus exhorts us to become His instrument in the world and demonstrate His servant nature and compassion to all (MT 16:15).

Therefore, it is hollow to clamor for God's blessing when we hate our neighbor (MT 22:37-40). It further demonstrates that our faith in the Word is empty. In addition, when we have no faith, we run around worrying about "preempting" tomorrow, and fail to seek first the kingdom of God. May God help us to see clearly, so our whole body, and nation, will not be full of darkness (MT 6).

When Americans see clearly, they will conclude that it is impossible to be an honest broker of peace, when the peace broker provides significant military sponsorship to one of the conflicting parties. Why would the sponsored party want to negotiate?

In fact, maintaining an aggressive posture often leads to more aid from the sponsor. Thus, U. S. taxpayers ought to be interested in lessening the conflict between Palestine and Israel. A lower level of conflict would allow reallocation of life-taking sponsorship to life-giving sponsorship. For instance, taxpayers may allocate all or a portion of the \$3 billion to prescription drugs for elderly Americans, or even to the reparation movement.

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