

CHARLIE CHARLIE, ARE YOU HERE?

By

Maulana Khalid Dhorat

As promised, this is the second installment regarding the harms of mainstream media. The first installment was entitled “Take it with a Spoonful of Salt.”

We are now within the month of Ramadaan. Just before this blessed month, there was a huge commotion as kids all over the world were playing the devil-summoning game: “Charlie Charlie, are you here?” Well, I decided to play the game in Ramadaan and see if all the devils are really locked up or not. Try as I may, the pencil always shifted to “Yes, I’m here.”

I browsed the internet, and the news portals were still there, I walked through many bookstalls, and the magazines and newspapers were still there, and I switched on the television, and all the satellite news channels were still operating full swing. Gosh, Charlie seems to be everywhere nowadays, even in Ramadaan! We have many Muslims who give movies and sports a break in Ramadaan, but they still watch the “innocent” news. Well, news is the worst choice of them all. The presenters, who are more charming and beautiful than modern actresses, smilingly dish out lie after lie with a straight face, leaving us more confused and depressed than ever. At least, in sports, the ball can’t lie!

So, exactly what is propaganda for which the West has become so notorious for? Simply put, it's some truth, mixed with lots of lies and deception, to give us disinformation. This is then repeated over and over, to such an extent that it starts sounding like the truth. People are then forced to listen to these lies as today, the today has the **loudest and the most far-reaching** voice (not necessarily the truth), until it forcefully shapes a new reality for us. If we are not critical of the media, it will have us hating the people we suppose to love, and loving the people we suppose to hate. From billboards, to the print and electronic versions, the media is everywhere - be it Western controlled or Muslim-owned having secular values or western masters. The message, no matter how absurd, with its undertones, must hit home, whether the first time or the hundredth time. Truth certainly looks stupid in the face of such a propaganda assault!

I decided to follow the news for a few days to see what was cooking on the airwaves. It seems that the media is currently bent on painting Islam as a death cult bent on world domination; that all Muslims have become terrorists, and in order not to be branded as a terrorist, Muslims must apologize for not practicing Islam the "enlightened" and secular way. How did they arrive at this ridiculous conclusion? There is some truth that some Muslims are courageous enough to challenge American hegemony and the authority of her puppet regimes in the Middle East. But this is called "political self-reform," and self-reform is not terrorism, unless if such reform reveals the grotesque hand of western politics in Muslim affairs. And this seems to be the case, indeed.

Muslims are Terrorists

Let us now examine how the West currently paints Muslims as terrorists. There are about 2 billion Muslims in the world, but a small organization called ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria), which can only field [between](#) 7 000 and 15 000 troops in battle, is now threatening to create a Caliphate (Islamic homeland) and implement *shar*

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The entire world should be shaking in their shoes if this happens! Before ISIS, it was HAMAS and Al-Qaeda, and before them dozens of other organizations and nations like the Russians, the Germans etc who wanted their own way of ruling and whom we were supposed to fear. I'm not cared about what theory you may have on ISIS based on various media spins, but taking the highest estimate of their troop strength, this means that fewer than 1 out of every 125 000 Muslims worldwide share the same belief. There is no need to be alarmed.

On the other hand, the Iraqi army can field 250 000 soldiers. This figure does not include the Syrian government forces, the Sunni Kurdish *peshmarga* who are heavily armed by the west, the 76 countries who are providing logistical, training, arms and aerial support, as well as the other freedom fighters who don't share the ISIS vision of a Caliphate. This brings the figure to well over 700 000, fighting an enemy of no significance, a ratio of 1:50. Now, the premise that all Muslims are [terrorists](#) , or that ISIS poses an existential threat to everyone in the world, falls flat by a mere study of figures. In such circumstances, ISIS should be featuring once in a hundred days for a few seconds only, but it has strangely dominated the headlines in local and international media for many months now.

Why this paranoia and needless panic-mongering? According to Political Scientist Dr Cynthia Boaz, in an article entitled “ *Fourteen Propaganda Techniques Fox "News" Uses to Brainwash Americans*

,” it turns out that panic-mongering is the primary technique of the media designed to numb our brain. With panic mongering, there is never a break from fear. The idea is to terrify and terrorize the audience during every waking moment. From Muslims to swine flu to recession to homosexuals to immigrants, the belief seems to be that if your fight-or-flight reflexes aren't activated, you aren't alive.

But why terrorize your own audience? Because it is the fastest way to bypasses the rational brain. In other words, when people are afraid, they don't think rationally. When they don't think

rationally, they will not independently verify the facts. They will believe anything. For every argument, there are two sides, and sometimes even three, and panic-mongering is a way of overcoming this basic rule, winning unsuspecting people to your side, and creating enemies within our own ranks. “ *What if the media version is wrong?*

,” is never asked. Based on the false belief that bin Laden bombed the Twin Towers, the USA invaded Afghanistan and killed millions. The world did nothing because the Afghans were supposed to be barbaric in any case. Not satisfied, they then accused Saddam Hussein of having possession of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). They invaded Iraq and killed a further 2 million children, and the world did nothing because these children would grow up as terrorists and use the very same WMDs on the world. Both the above have been proven today to be blatant lies, cooked by the media, created to justify the murder of Muslims. So today, must we still believe anything that the media spits at us, especially about the mess the West created in the Muslim world and how Muslims are trying to recover from it? Never.

Other propaganda techniques:

1.Character Assassination: The media does not waste time debating an idea. Instead, it prefers a quicker route: go after the person's credibility and “box” them. So, if a devout Muslim says something, he is brushed off as “fundamentalist,” if a modernist espouses some rubbish, he is punted as “progressive,” if a conservative says something, he is “orthodox,” and if a person challenges an idea, he is a “terrorist.” But don't we Muslims do the same? If a person forwards an argument, then without examining it, we dismiss him as “Sufi,” “Salafi,” “Tablighi,” “Sunni,” or “Jihadi.” Such labeling promotes intellectual deterioration and leaves no room for genuine debate over ideas, and so we divide and sub-divide ourselves further and further, weakening ourselves.

2.Flipping: This involves taking whatever underhanded tactic you're using, and then accusing your opponent of doing it to you first. We see this frequently in the immigration discussion, where anti-racists are accused of racism. When Muslims are accused of terrorism, then we ask who dropped nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and in seven other countries, including 9 major cities in the USA? Who provided nuclear technology to 3 countries in order to kill civilians? Who interfered in the government of 73 countries, planting their own puppet regimes? Who rigged the elections of 32 countries? Who is directly or indirectly responsible for the murder of over 80 million people in the past 50 years? For an answer, go to <http://www.the-philosopher.co.uk/>
Certainly not Muslims!

3.Scapegoating: This works best when people feel insecure. The idea is that if you can find a group to blame for the world's political or economic problems, and they are Muslims in today's times, you can justify violence against them, and also get away with the consequences of mass murder thereafter. The idea is to deliberately confuse the argument, insist that the logic is airtight, and imply that anyone who disagrees is either too dumb or too fanatical to grasp. Please do remember that if we demonize people whom we disagree with, blaming them for the problems of the world, and go along with the media narrative, we are actually justifying their murder. Do Muslims murder people who disagree with them? No. But by supporting the pernicious media, we are in fact, giving them this passport and also silencing ourselves from expressing the truth in future. We will become the next casualty of war. Muslims cannot afford to have the mainstream media as a partner, even in the things they agree with. It's a stinking partner.

4. Saturation: There are three components to effective saturation: being repetitive, being ubiquitous and being consistent. The lie must be repeated over and over, it must be everywhere and it must be shared across commentators: e.g. "Saddam has WMD." Also, the message must come from the media or whom the media "embeds" as an authority. So, a lady with heavy

make-up reading from a prompter will be preferred over an old-fashioned guy with all the hard facts. Its' about creating media icons, some of whom are even religious, and regarding these icons as the source of ultimate truth. Education and other evidence of being trained in critical thinking are direct threats to this hive-mind mentality.

5. Guilt by Association. This technique has been successfully used to decimate the lives of many good people. Here's how it works: if your cousin's school roommate's uncle's ex-wife attended a dinner party back in 2005 with bin Laden's niece's father-in-law's half-sister, then you, by extension are a terrorist set on destroying America. Period.

Lastly, many would posit that since a many people share the same perceptions on a certain issue, including some pretty influential people, then it should be true. Remember that common perception is merely an indication of the media's ability to reach a wider audience. The fact that the majority of people believe in something is not necessarily a sign that it's true; it's just a sign that it's been effectively marketed. The more we do not harness our critical thinking abilities, the more we will fall prey to media propaganda.