

The Islamic Interfaith Initiative

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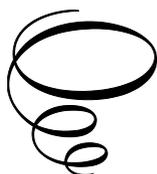
No Fear Shall Be upon Them

By

John Andrew Morrow

Foreword by Charles Upton

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The Islamic Interfaith Initiative: No Fear Shall Be upon Them

By John Andrew Morrow

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To Charles Upton and Barbara Castleton for their knowledge, wisdom, and insight, as well as their indefatigable support over the years. To Sam Hirbod for his unparalleled kindness and generosity.

In memory of Dr. Fuad Nahdi for his vision and mission. To Nazim Baksh, the affable Abdul-Rehman Malik, and the Radical Middle Way for helping make the Covenants of the Prophet Tour a reality. To Dr. Sayyid M. Syeed and all my friends at ISNA.

In memory of Dr. Amar Sellam, our dear friend and colleague, who translated *The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World* into Arabic, and to Dr. Mohammed Elkouche who partnered with him in this valuable task. To Dr.

Kiki Byas, Dr. Anna Maria Martelli, and Héctor Manzolillo for translating *The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World* into Indonesian, Italian, and Spanish.

To all the translators of the *Six Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of His Time*.

To Dr. Ibrahim M. Zein, Ahmed El-Wakil, Dr. Craig Considine, Dr. Halim Rane, and all the other scholars who have played a crucial role in this new, emerging, and burgeoning field of study. To Gary Krupp and Imam Yahya Pallavicini. To Emad Al-Turk, Okolo Rashid, and everyone from the International Museum of Muslim Cultures.

To all the religious, political, and community leaders and organizers who have supported the Covenants of the Prophet and invited me to speak around the world. To all the publishers who have printed my works and to the traditional peacemakers among the rabbis, monks, and sheikhs.

In memory of Yuhannah ibn Ru'bah, the seventh-century ruler and bishop of Aylah, a city at the head of the Gulf of 'Aqabah on the Red Sea, who was crucified and martyred by the Byzantines for refusing to violate the Covenant of the Prophet with the Christians. Last, but certainly not least, to all our opponents and enemies, both Muslim and non-Muslim, as an olive branch, a peace offering, and an invitation to human fraternity.

Those who believe, those who follow the Jewish (scriptures), and the Sabians, and the Christians—any who believe in God and the Last Day, and work righteousness—no fear shall be upon them, nor shall they grieve. (5:69)

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ENDORSEMENTS

“Few scholars in the world have done more in recent years for the Islamic interfaith initiative than John Andrew Morrow. Morrow’s latest book furthers this honorable mission by reminding readers of Prophet Muhammad’s vision of the Ummah as a confederation of diverse peoples united by common rights and love for humankind in its diverse forms. In this substantial piece of scholarship, which showcases Morrow’s service to the interfaith movement, he offers a glimpse into both the challenges and prospects of engaging in bridge building across the perceived religious divides, which is needed now more than ever. Furthermore, Morrow offers cogent solutions to combatting extremism in its various forms and provides inspiration on how human beings can effectively coexist and thrive amidst their differences. If you are looking for a book that provides common ground while also critically engaging with some of the most polarizing issues of our time, this is it. Highly recommended.” **Dr. Craig Considine, author of *The Humanity of Muhammad: A Christian View* and scholar based at Rice University.**

“Read this if you want the truth about al-Qaeda, Daesh, and the geopolitics of who funds and benefits by terrorism and Islamophobia. Read this if you want the truth about Islam, the Prophet Muhammad, and the most important interfaith movement of our time, the Covenants Initiative. Billions if not trillions of dollars have been spent on deception and lies and tens of millions of people have been killed because of these lies. This is a battle of Good vs. Evil, Truth vs. Falsehood, Right vs. Might, and Faith vs. Fear, and Dr. John Andrew Morrow knows whose side he is on. Every Christian leader needs to wrestle with what is said in this book and be a witness.” **Rev. John Shuck, Honorably Retired, Presbyterian Church (USA).**

“There are those rare individuals who defend God’s holy name by their actions to reveal the truth. The research of Dr. John Andrew Morrow has shed the light of truth within the Muslim world and by so doing exposed the apostates whose violent actions have violated Islamic law.” **Commendatore Gary Krupp, Knight Commander of the Pontifical**

Equestrian Order of St. Gregory the Great, Founder and President of the Pave the Way Foundation

“In the sixty-six chapters that comprise this impressive collection of work, John Andrew Morrow documents his intellectual activism for the promotion of mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence between people of different faiths. Showcasing his pioneering research on the Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad, he confronts such challenging phenomena as Islamophobia and violent extremism. This book is a must-read for admirers of John Andrew Morrow’s work and anyone interested in the importance of the Covenants for interfaith relations.” **Dr. Halim Rane, Griffith University, Australia.**

“In the West there is an increasing fear and discrimination against Islam and Judaism, the fear that the Muslims and the Jews will change the standards of secular society. Fear is irrational and it is due to the deep ignorance of the true reality of human beings and religions. Reading the new book written by Professor Morrow gives us the occasion to understand the historical, juridical, intellectual, political, and theological experiences for dialogue, peace, and knowledge. References to the *Medina Charter*, the wisdom of prophethood, and the teachings of Imam Ja‘far al-Sadiq on religious pluralism are key chapters to manage the complexities of the challenges in contemporary society.” **Imam Yahya Pallavicini, Vice Chair MJLC Muslim-Jewish Leaders Council Europe.**

“By his essential and multiple academic contributions, Dr. John Andrew Morrow has placed the study of the historicity of the *Ashtiname* (so-called Covenant) of the Prophet in its correct scholarly place. I have no doubt that his studies will be recognized by history as an essential contribution to truth and peace between Muslims and Christians.” **Dimitrios Emmanuel Kalomirakis, Director Emeritus of Antiquities at the Greek Ministry of Culture, responsible for the Sinai Archive of Monuments in the Mount Sinai Foundation (Athens), and General Secretary of the Hellenic Scientific Association “Ptolemy 1st” of Alexandria Egypt.**

“John Andrew Morrow is among those at the top of the list to whom people must look for wisdom and guidance.” **Dr. Keith Ellis, Scholar, Translator, and Author, Professor Emeritus, University of Toronto, Awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the University of Havana, Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, Recipient of the Medal of the City of**

Poitiers, the Andrés Bello Medal from the Ministry of Culture of Venezuela, and the Medal of the University of Havana.

“The answer to the global attack on religion is united front ecumenism—and there is no greater historical example of such ecumenism than the federation of Peoples of the Book founded by Muhammad in the Prophetic Covenants and the *Constitution of Medina*, for the purpose of mutual protection against the Byzantine Empire, the Persian Empire, and the pagan Quraysh of Mecca. It was in the spirit of the united front ecumenism of the Prophet Muhammad that the Covenants Initiative was founded by Dr. John Andrew Morrow and myself in 2013; the same spirit informs all the articles, lectures, and sermons that appear in this book.” **Charles Upton, Executive Director of the Covenants of the Prophet Foundation, Author of *The Virtues of the Prophet, The System of Antichrist, Legends of the End, and other works.***

“John Andrew Morrow’s collection of speeches, comments, and essays enlightens. Unlike so many writings on interfaith possibilities, Morrow’s book shows us that interfaith work is a journey, a pilgrimage that requires faith, heart, and wisdom. Second, his book presents the interfaith process as profoundly indebted to relationships—not texts and scriptures alone, a human social dynamic not founded on interpretations or re-interpretations of concepts and principles committed to the supposed timeless permanence of script. As Morrow shows, interpretation, reason, and good sense - for both individuals and collectives—lubricate our relationships for better or worse. Interfaith journeys depend on the understanding of all those who walk together in each other’s company. Morrow presents many facts, arguments, and narrative frames with verve and passion to stimulate respectful understandings of the ‘other’ in Christian-Muslim relationships.” **Stephen B. Young, Global Executive Director, The Caux Round Table for Moral Capitalism.**

“Dr. John A. Morrow is the author of a large body of academic works and has also served as editor and translator for several works. Particularly, his work about the Covenants and treaties of the Prophet Muhammad is a cornerstone and benchmark: anyone who works on these topics will be indebted to Professor Morrow until the day of judgement. As for this present work, *The Islamic Interfaith Initiative*, it is high time to address the topics and themes that it contains to reveal the real, moderate, face of Islam, particularly when Muslims are facing Islamophobia and Islamophobic literature has dramatically increased since 9/11.

Islam is portrayed as a barbaric and irrational religion that does not share common values with other religions. It is depicted as a violent religion that supports fighting and killing. These negative impressions are imprinted in the minds and hearts of many non-Muslims when it comes to Islam and Muslims. Doubtlessly, this beautiful book will play a significant role in strengthening interfaith harmony between Muslims and non-Muslims and help people differentiate between terrorists and peaceful Muslims. It will surely help remove negative impressions of Islam disseminated by terrorist organizations through their inhuman activities which are detailed in this book with solid evidence. In sum, I would like to share my heartfelt feeling that the Muslim Ummah would be intellectually enriched in the present if it would be blessed with a few more scholars like John Andrew Morrow.” **Dr. Musferah Mehfooz, Department of Islamic Studies, COMSATS University Islamabad, Lahore Campus.**

“Amazingly rich, diversified, and focused.” **W. George Krasnow, President, RAGA: Russia & America Goodwill Association.**

“Dr. Morrow’s great ideas have astonished readers all over the world and help to spread global peace. God-willing, he will be nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize.” **Dr. Abdulrahman Abulmajd, Department of Faith and Contemporary Beliefs, Islamic University of Minnesota, Minnetonka.**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Since there are far too many people to mention, I acknowledge all those who deserve acknowledgment and thank all those who deserve to be thanked. The support I have received from Muslims and non-Muslims around the world has been astonishing and humbling. They invited me to speak. They requested articles. They provided me with a podium. This work could never have been completed without them.

CONVENTIONS

Every reasonable effort has been made to remove any repetition. Pious introductions and conclusions have been suppressed. Honorifics are generally absent. Diacritical marks have not been employed. Most Arabic words and phrases have been replaced by English ones. Expressions of divine praise, along with invocations of peace and blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad and other personalities have been excluded. Most deletions are indicated by the use of ellipsis. In most cases, complete references are provided. However, as is customary in Islamic studies, page numbers are not provided for prophetic traditions: only the source in which they are found such as Bukhari, Muslim, Kulayni, and so forth. These collections are generally not listed in the list of works cited as they come in so many editions and are all available online and can be readily accessed by any competent researcher. This work has been copy-edited, proof-read, and peer-reviewed countless times. I assume full responsibility for any errors. Any mistakes and shortcomings are mine alone.

INTELLECTUAL AND SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION

With the exception of God, everything is subject to change. Over the decades, my knowledge has grown exponentially, and my views have evolved considerably. Everything that is living is in constant flux. Life is motion and movement. Inertia is decrepitude. Inaction is obsolescence. Stagnation is death. The destination is the journey. I am not bound by words, thoughts, and opinions. They represent points of view past. They are written records of both firm and fleeting attitudes and feelings. They are freeze-frames and still images. They capture the living moment as opposed to the ebb and flow of life. Dogma is self-deception. Nobody has a monopoly on truth. The only absolute is God and God is unfathomable. There is no truth but the Truth. There are, however, eternal realities that emanate from that Truth. While God is eternal and unchanging, our relationship with those realities changes in time and history. Some principles are time-bound and contextual. They can change. Others are perennial and immutable. When we depart from these primordial principles, we do so at our peril. Consequently, it is imperative to distinguish between the eternal and the temporal. Since I am a living, breathing, and evolving entity, my works represent stages in my intellectual and spiritual growth.

FOREWORD

BY CHARLES UPTON

I: The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Peoples of the Book

The contents of this book were generated during the first expansive phase of an international, interfaith, Muslim peace movement known as the Covenants Initiative, which I was privileged to co-found in partnership with Dr. John Andrew Morrow—Ilyas ‘Abd al-‘Alim Islam—in 2013, based on the publication of his ground-breaking book *The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World*. The profound and exhaustive research was his, the capacity to bring this research to the world through monumental public labors was his; all that was mine was the catalyzing vision of what he had accomplished and the immense historical relevance of it, plus a certain ability to articulate some of the essential implications of, and principles behind, that accomplishment—an ability I hope I have demonstrated in the present foreword.

The Covenants or treaties of the Prophet with various Christian communities, which Dr. Morrow re-discovered in obscure libraries and collections, as well as in a number of ancient monasteries in the Middle East which he contacted in search of these vital documents—also providing exhaustive historical research and textual analysis to establish their validity—uniformly command Muslims not to kill, rob or in any way oppress peaceful Christians, or stop churches from being repaired, or tear down churches to build mosques, or even prevent their Christian wives from going to church and taking spiritual direction from Christian priests and elders. On the contrary, the Prophet commands all Muslims to actively defend these communities “until the coming of the Hour.”

Here is the English translation of the text of the first Covenant that was granted by Muhammad to the ancient monastery of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai:

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful. This Covenant was written by Muhammad, the son of ‘Abd Allah, the

proclaimer and warner, trusted to protect God's creations, in order that people may raise no claim against God after [the advent of] His Messengers, for God is Almighty, Wise.

He has written it for the members of his religion and to all those who profess the Christian religion in East and West, near or far, Arabs or non-Arabs, known or unknown, as a Covenant of protection.

If anyone breaks the Covenant herein proclaimed, or contravenes or transgresses its commands, he has broken the Covenant of God, breaks his bond, makes a mockery of his religion, deserves the curse [of God], whether he is a sultan or another among the believing Muslims.

If a monk or pilgrim seeks protection, in mountain or valley, in a cave or in tilled fields, in the plain, in the desert, or in a church, I am behind them, defending them from every enemy; I, my helpers, all the members of my religion, and all my followers, for they [the monks and the pilgrims] are my protégés and my subjects.

I protect them from interference with their supplies and from the payment of taxes save what they willingly renounce. There shall be no compulsion or constraint against them in any of these matters.

A bishop shall not be removed from his bishopric, nor a monk from his monastery, nor a hermit from his tower, nor shall a pilgrim be hindered from his pilgrimage. Moreover, no building from among their churches shall be destroyed, nor shall the money from their churches be used for the building of mosques or houses for the Muslims. Whoever does such a thing violates God's Covenant and dissents from the Messenger of God.

Neither poll-tax nor fees shall be laid on monks, bishops, or worshippers for I protect them, wherever they may be, on land or sea, in East and West, in North and South. They are under my protection, within my Covenant, and under my security, against all harm.

Those who also isolate themselves in the mountains or in sacred sites shall be free from the poll-tax, land tribute and from tithe or duty on whatever they grow for their own use, and they shall be assisted in raising a crop by a free allowance of one *qadah* [unit of dry measure] in every *ardabb* [=6 *waiba*=24 *rub 'a*] for their personal use.

They shall not be obliged to serve in war, or to pay the poll-tax; even those for whom an obligation to pay land tribute exists, or who possess resources in land or from commercial activity, shall not have to pay more than twelve *dirhams* a head per year.

On no one shall an unjust tax be imposed, and with the People of the Book there is to be no strife, unless it be over what is for the good [Q. 29:46]. We wish to take them under the wing of our mercy, and the penalty of vexation shall be kept at a distance from them, wherever they are and wherever they may settle.

If a Christian woman enters a Muslim household, she shall be received with kindness, and she shall be given opportunity to pray in her

church; there shall be no dispute between her and a man who loves her religion.

Whoever contravenes the Covenant of God and acts to the contrary is a rebel against his Covenant and his Messenger.

These people shall be assisted in the maintenance of their religious buildings and their dwellings; thus, they will be aided in their faith and kept true to their allegiance.

None of them shall be compelled to bear arms, but the Muslims shall defend them; and they shall never contravene this promise of protection until the hour comes and the world ends.

As witness to this Covenant, which was written by Muhammad, son of ‘Abd Allah, the Messenger of God, may the peace and blessings of God be upon him, to all the Christians.

As sureties for the fulfillment of all that is prescribed herein, the following persons set their hands... (Morrow 2013: 215-216)

The signatures of the witnesses to this Covenant include those of four future caliphs—Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthman, and ‘Ali—along with those of many of the Prophet’s companions. Muhammad issued similar Covenants to many Christian communities in Arabia, Iraq, Syria, and Armenia, as well as making Covenants with the Jews, the Zoroastrians, and the Sabians. All these documents have similar provisions, along with special features relevant to specific communities.

Before the fall of the Ottomans at the end of World War I, the Prophetic Covenants were known to most literate Muslims and virtually all scholars in the Muslim world, as well as many Western scholars. They were attested to by Muslim historians and in many cases renewed annually or every few years by caliphs and sultans. They formed the basis for official Ottoman policy toward religious minorities. When the Ottoman Empire fell, however, the Covenants began their descent into obscurity since they were now seen as little more than the irrelevant documents of a defunct bureaucracy.

As soon as *The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World* appeared, it was widely recognized as of central relevance to our post 9/11 world, where religion as a pretext for conflict has in many ways replaced the secular ideological struggles of the twentieth century. Since 2013, the Covenants Initiative, which that book inaugurated, has become an international peace movement within Islam. It invites Muslims to subscribe to the theory that the Covenants of the Prophet are legally binding upon them today and to sign the following declaration to that effect:

We the undersigned hold ourselves bound by the spirit and the letter of the Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) with the Christians of the world, in the understanding that these Covenants, if accepted as genuine, have the force of law in the shariah today and that nothing in the shariah, as traditionally and correctly interpreted, has ever contradicted them. As fellow victims of the terror and godlessness, the spirit of militant secularism and false religiosity now abroad in the world, we understand your suffering as Christians through our suffering as Muslims, and gain greater insight into our own suffering through the contemplation of your suffering. May the Most Merciful of the Merciful regard the sufferings of the righteous and the innocent; may He strengthen us, in full submission to His will, to follow the spirit and the letter of the Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the world in all our dealings with them. In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Praise be to God, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds. (Morrow 2013: xviii)

This declaration, which appears in the book itself, has allowed many Muslims from all walks of life, including prominent scholars and religious leaders, to lend their support to our efforts, both scholarly and political.

The central thrust of our scholarly effort, as carried on by Dr. Morrow and other researchers influenced by his work, has been to subject these documents to a rigorous Western-style textual and historical analysis, thereby establishing a documentary paper-trail stretching back from the earliest extant copies of the Covenants to their original authorship by the Prophet Muhammad himself with many of his better-known companions acting as scribes and witnesses. The effect of this achievement has been to provide, almost for the first time, a historically-verifiable record of the *sunnah* of the Prophet in his dealings with the Peoples of the Book that is *not dependent upon the hadith literature*, thus going a long way toward establishing the political documents of the Prophet—the Covenants and the *Constitution of Medina*—as a third foundational source for the Islamic tradition outside of *hadith* and Qur'an.

The potential applications of this perspective are twofold. To begin with, those Qur'anic *ayat* relating to how Muslims are to interact with the other Peoples of the Book that had once seemed obscure or ambiguous can now be better understood in light of Muhammad's actual known practice as revealed in the Covenants—and as soon as the real intent of the Qur'an is seen in the light of this newly-elucidated prophetic *sunnah*, a new criterion is established that allows us to distinguish true from spurious *hadith* with greater confidence, according to whether or not they are in line with the intent of the Qur'an as clarified by the Covenants. In other words,

to the degree that the Covenants illuminate the Qur'an, the Qur'an can begin to winnow the *hadith*.

Secondly, a renewed appreciation for the pivotal significance of the Prophetic Covenants, as well as the *Constitution of Medina*, has given Muslims something that they have desperately needed in these times: a way to oppose terrorism and establish human rights and social justice in an entirely traditional and Islamic way, without imitating Western models of progressivism and modernity, of “equality” and “the rights of Man.” This is an important consideration in view of the fact that most of these ideologies ultimately derive from the French Revolution, which was a revolution not only against power and privilege, but also against religion, against God. According to the Prophetic Covenants, it is God, not humanity, Who is the Guarantor of human rights and the Delegator of human responsibilities.

II: A History of the Covenants Initiative

Scholarly Achievements

In the course of his quest for the Prophetic Covenants, which began even before 2013, Dr. Morrow brought many little-known and some heretofore unknown documents to light. He also issued an appeal to all monastic and other institutions possessing authentic copies of the Covenants to provide texts and photos of them which could be archived in the West for safekeeping—in some cases just ahead of ISIS, who were also searching for them, but only to destroy them.

As for the six Covenants which appear in *The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Peoples of the Book*, Dr. Morrow arranged for them to be printed in a separate booklet, *Six Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of His Time*, which has been translated into fourteen languages. Subsequently, he convened a consortium of scholars, both Muslim and non-Muslim; together with them he wrote and published a three-volume anthology of “Covenants Studies” entitled *Islam and the People of the Book*. This work includes Covenants of the Prophet with Jews and Parsees, as well as Christians, clearly demonstrating that it was Muhammad’s intent to found a confederacy of all the religions who believe in the one God.

In the course of our scholarly researches, we developed ongoing and cordial relationships with St. Catherine’s Monastery in the Sinai, whose archives contain a vast literature on the Prophetic Covenants collected over many centuries, as well as the Simonopetra Monastery on Mount

Athos. In February of 2019, the Vatican co-hosted a seminar in Rome along with the Caux Round Table on the Covenants of the Prophet; in October of the same year, a conference on the Covenants, centered around *The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World*, took place in Istanbul co-sponsored by the Vatican and including the Caux Round Table, a representative of the Armenian Orthodox Church, the Syrian Orthodox metropolitan vicar of Mardin in southeastern Turkey, and one of our academic colleagues from the Hamad Bin Khalifa University in Qatar, Ahmed El-Wakil.

Political Activities

In 2014 Dr. Morrow embarked on a European tour, co-sponsored by the Canadian government and Radical Middle Way, speaking to French ministers in Paris, EU officials in Brussels and the Hague, and in the UK at Oxford, Cambridge, and the House of Lords; the same year he spoke at a televised meeting in Abu Dhabi before ambassadors and foreign ministers of several Muslim nations. Early on, our work garnered expressions of support from Bartholomew, Ecumenical Patriarch of the Eastern Orthodox Church, from Theophilus III, Patriarch of Jerusalem, from Dr. Mohamed Gameaha of al-Azhar University, from a number of Catholic prelates, and from Ayatullah Khamenei, the leader of Iran. In addition, a cordial relationship was established with the Government in Exile of Western Armenia, and a copy of *Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World* was presented to Pope Francis through the agency of Shaykh Yahya Pallavicini, President of the Comunità Religiosa Islamica Italiana (COREIS).

In 2016, Dr. Morrow served as an advisor to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and in the same year the Covenants Initiative was contacted by bishop Francis Kalabat, leader-in-exile of the Chaldean Catholics of Iraq, now living in the United States. Bishop Kalabat asked the Covenants Initiative to issue a second initiative calling for the actions of ISIS to be declared genocide. This became the Genocide Initiative, which we posted as a petition on the *Change.org* website. In March of that year, the Fortenberry Amendment, defining the actions of ISIS as war crimes and genocide, was passed unanimously by the US House of Representatives, followed shortly by a statement to the same effect by Secretary of State John Kerry (b. 1943). The work of the Covenants Initiative was hailed in an article in the premier US armed forces publication *Stars and Stripes* as one of the factors that led to the passage of the Fortenberry Amendment. Also, in 2016, Dr. Morrow was part of a

delegation of Muslim leaders to the Obama (b. 1961) White House. In the same year, he received an Interfaith Leadership Award from the Islamic Society of North America. In 2017, he was awarded a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition by the US House of Representatives, addressed President Rouhani (b. 1948) of Iran at the United Nations, and was invited to participate in the Arbaeen Pilgrimage by the New Horizon Conference along with a group of intellectuals, professors, scholars, diplomats, political advisors, analysts, journalists, and artists. In addition, he advised the Kingdom of Bahrein in 2018 and met with Iraqi religious and political leaders in Iraq in 2019.

When ISIS burned St. Mary's Cathedral in the Philippines in 2017, the governor of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao immediately invoked the Covenants of the Prophet. There is every reason to believe that this response was largely due to the efforts of the Initiative. And in November of 2018, when the Supreme Court of Pakistan acquitted the Christian woman Asia Bibi on charges of blasphemy, the justices extensively quoted from *Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World* in their written decision; since then the Pakistani prime minister, Imran Khan, has referenced the Covenants in a number of his speeches. In view of these successes, we can now confidently assert that the Covenants Initiative has been among the major ideological counterforces within Islam to ISIS, al-Qaeda, and other jihadist movements.

Since 2013, Dr. Morrow has given numerous speeches and *khutbahs* in mosques, major Muslim conventions, and interfaith gatherings. He has also published many articles, as well as lecturing and granting interviews in podcast, radio, and television formats. Many of the texts of these speeches, articles and interviews are reproduced in this book.

II: A Global Attack on Religion? The Need for a “United Front Ecumenism”

The adventure of bringing the newly rediscovered Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad to the attention of the world during the era of ISIS, which these Covenants seem expressly designed to condemn, taught us many lessons, not the least of which was that religion is under global siege in the twenty-first century, and that the ultimate engineers of this siege are not always “the usual suspects” recognized by contemporary social mythology.

We are all aware of the growing number of attacks on churches, mosques, and synagogues around the world, including North America. Whatever attacks are not carried out by (supposedly) lone individuals are

usually attributed to, or claimed by, specific known groups: Islamicist terrorists, white supremacists, and so forth. But a further question must be asked: are a percentage of these attacks actually false flags, carried out by entities with an agenda of creating conflict between the religions in order to weaken them, destroy the potential solidarity between them, and limit their social influence? To begin to ask this question more thoroughly, I will need to give a little background.

When the Covenants Initiative made its debut at the Christian/Muslim Dialogue hosted by the Bilal Mosque in Lexington, Kentucky in 2013, one of the members of the congregation, whose accent told us that he was from the Indian subcontinent, told a highly enlightening story: “On certain nights in my home town,” he said, “unknown parties would throw pig carcasses into mosques and slaughtered cows unto Hindu temples; this made it virtually certain that there would be Muslim/Hindu riots the next day.” It was obvious to him that the slaughtered animals had been placed in those houses of worship not by Hindus or Muslims, but by unidentified third parties.

Joachim Hagopian, in “Divide and Conquer: The Globalist Pathway to New World Order Tyranny” writes as follows of the application of the famous “divide and conquer” tactic to the creation of interreligious conflict:

The retention of power by utilizing a deliberate strategy of causing those in subordinate positions to engage in conflicts with each other that weaken and keep them from any unified effort to remove the status quo force from power.... This divide and conquer stratagem was frequently repeated by European colonial powers typically pitting competitive tribal, ethnic, and religious factions against each other to ensure they would not conspire to revolt against the ruling imperialists. In Asia, the British took full advantage of Moslems versus Hindus in India as well as creating conflict between Indians and Pakistanis.²

In our time, however, we are not only seeing a sharp increase in attacks on mosques, synagogues, and churches in the west, as well as concerted genocidal attacks on Christians, Muslims, Yezidis, and other faith communities in many parts of the world; we are also witnessing the beginning of a “united front ecumenism” in response to these attacks—an ecumenism based not on seeking some abstract and idealistic unity of religions that could supposedly be created by homogenizing the teachings of different faith traditions and discarding “divisive” doctrines, but on mutual aid against real enemies. The American Muslim woman Faatimah Knight raises money to repair churches burned in the North American south;³ the Shoulder-to-Shoulder Campaign organizes US churches to work against Islamophobia;⁴ Muslims raise money to help the Pittsburgh synagogue whose congregation is massacred by anti-

Semites;⁵ the same synagogue raises money for the mosques in New Zealand whose congregations are massacred by white supremacists...⁶

It is the position of the Covenants Initiative that the Covenants of Muhammad with the Peoples of the Book, which the Prophet tells us were inspired directly by God, urge all Muslims to engage in precisely this kind of work. Such efforts are hampered, however, by the general lack of any comprehensive understanding of why such attacks are taking place. It is certainly clear to many that broad-spectrum anti-religious ideologies -- militant secularism, scientism, "the new atheism," the mainstreaming of Satanism, and so forth, are growing in influence. The history of such ideologies, which spring from Enlightenment rationalism, Nietzsche, Darwinism, Marxism, National Socialism, Freudianism, Behaviorism, Freemasonry, Theosophy, "traditional" atheism, Aleister Crowley-style Satanism, H.G. Wells-style technocracy, Fabian Socialism, postmodern deconstructionism, the Frankfurt School, and so forth, can fairly easily be traced, and it would be naive of us to believe that elements of such ideologies have not been incorporated into today's bureaucratic, advertising, and social-engineering paradigms.

Each religion possesses a large body of theory and historical lore relating to the identity, motivation, ideology, and agendas of its hereditary enemies, as well as its own analysis of the kind of "worldliness" that is inimical to its doctrines and values. However, it is rare for the believers in a given religion to see or admit that at least some of the adversaries it must contend with are equally inimical to the other faiths. Grasping this rather simple fact often requires a shift in perspective that is difficult to arrive at -- a difficulty that explains why so little attention has been paid to the possibility that some of the attacks against various religions that we are seeing in the twenty-first century might have been orchestrated by those religions' *common* enemies.

The work of researching and cataloguing the many ways in which anti-religious ideologies have come to form both public policy and various social engineering agendas also leaves much to be desired. This is highly unfortunate since one of the inherent weaknesses in the admirable mutual aid efforts between the religions like those mentioned above is the ease by which various *agent provocateur* actions, by forces working to foment interreligious conflict, can act to shift believers' attention away from mutual aid toward mutual suspicion. If, however, it were possible to provide evidence that one or more concerted global efforts presently exist to weaken and destroy the religions by inciting conflict between them, if we had in our hands a convincing and well-researched body of data supporting this contention, then it would be much easier to prevent the

work of mutual interfaith defense on the part of different religious communities from being compromised by *agents provocateurs* or eroded by a co-opted interfaith movement based on a promiscuous, anti-traditional ecumenism. I believe that the articles and speeches of Dr. John Andrew Morrow that make up this book represent a significant step toward filling this need.

Rather than flatly asserting the existence of a global anti-religion agenda, however, in the manner of the conspiracy theorists—simply because it seems to make sense, explains certain events, and has well-known historical precedents—we need either to uncover solid evidence that such an agenda exists, or else determine that certainty on this question is impossible to arrive at. However, as I learned in the process of editing Lee Penn’s important book *False Dawn: The United Religions Initiative, Globalism and the Quest for a One-World Religion* (Sophia Perennis, 2005), which deals with the sponsorship of the interfaith movement and its indoctrination with globalist ideologies by governments, foundations, and international think tanks, we do not have to cast such plans as “conspiracies” by this or that clandestine cabal or secret society, seeing that plenty of government agencies, foundations, and think-tanks, certain of their power and confident in the obliviousness of the general public, are often quite open about their plans. These agendas are sometimes clearly laid out in published documents which, though not widely disseminated, are not strictly secret. (One great example of the complacency and unguardedness of the powers that be with regard to their social engineering agendas is Carroll Quigley’s *Tragedy and Hope*, which was in many ways the political handbook of President Bill Clinton). Likewise, it is possible to read between the lines in documents related to the Obama administration’s countering violent terrorism program to find a fairly obvious agenda of “re-integrating” ex-ISIS fighters into US society, with the federal government openly sponsoring these international criminals—“Operation Paperclip” reborn.

Below is my own analysis of what I take to be some of the major strategies and goals of the global attack on religion, based on a pattern that emerges when many apparently separate incidents and bits of information are brought together. If this analysis could be more thoroughly substantiated by hard data, I believe that an accurate picture of this widespread and ongoing attack would emerge:

1) There appears to be an agenda in place on the part certain of non-religious forces, operating on a global scale, to control, and perhaps ultimately eliminate, virtually all the world’s religions, at least those that are in any sense traditional. Thus, the visible interferences with religious

doctrine and practice by specific governments, as well as attacks by unknown terroristic or criminal elements, may therefore—at least in some cases—be subsets of a more comprehensive plan of action on the part of either clandestine governmental agencies or non-governmental power blocs controlling trillions of dollars in largely untraceable capital, forces with a long-term agenda of altering human society, psychology, and biology on a global scale. Put it like this: If you were identified with interests who were attempting, often successfully, to exercise this level of political, economic, and social influence, would you sit passively by and accept a situation in which the worldview, ethics, and aspirations of billions of people were determined by religious authorities and institutions which you did not control?

2) There is a great deal of evidence suggesting that every world religion, plus many so-called esoteric organizations, have been infiltrated by “change agents”—not necessarily all working for the same entities, but for the most part working in roughly the same direction. At least according to anecdotal evidence, such infiltration of religious groups is apparently a common practice of many intelligence agencies.

3) One of the central strategies of these forces is to mount what I have called a “pincers movement” against the religions, especially the traditional religions. This pincers movement consists of two prongs—which, in some cases, can be proved to originate from exactly the same governmental, corporate, and trans-governmental entities. These two are:

Prong one: Funding, training, and arming extremist or terrorist factions within the religions for use as proxy armies in various conflicts, as well as sponsoring international mercenaries to masquerade as members of such factions, in order to pervert religious dogma, disseminate propaganda, and carry on genocidal and *agent provocateur* actions, not only in service to this or that military or geopolitical goal, but also—whenever possible—for the larger purpose of fomenting conflict between traditional religious communities, largely in Asia and Africa, for the purpose of weakening and ultimately destroying them. This would explain the practice of ISIS—who seem to be partly composed of international mercenaries simply masquerading as Muslims—of massacring not only Christians, but also Yezidis, Shia Muslims, Sunni Muslims, and Sufis.⁷ In the Muslim world, this sort of fifth-column activity has been going on at least since the British began to lend clandestine support to the Wahhabis as insurgents against the Ottoman Empire before the First World War.

Prong two: Funding, organizing, and infiltrating the interfaith movement, mostly in Europe and North America, according to a paradigm of “repressive tolerance” where the religions are encouraged to weaken