

08/11/2003

Muslim world paying price for West's guilt

Shamsul Akmar

IN the Nov 2 edition of the Sunday Herald, a Scotland-based publication, the paper carried an article which adds to the existing list of conspiracy theories on the Sept 11, 2001 attack on New York's World Trade Center.

The article, written by Neil Mackay, started off like this:

"There was ruin and terror in Manhattan, but, over the Hudson River in New Jersey, a handful of men were dancing. As the World Trade Center burned and crumpled, the five men celebrated and filmed the worst atrocity ever committed on American soil as it played out before their eyes.

"Who do you think they were? Palestinians? Saudis? Iraqis, even? Al-Qaeda, surely? Wrong on all counts. They were Israelis and at least two of them were Israeli intelligence agents, working for Mossad, the equivalent of MI6 or the CIA."

No doubt the article also carried interviews and excerpts which dismissed the possibilities of Tel Aviv having a hand, or having anticipated the attack on the WTC.

However, Mackay's story, all in all, managed to stoke the imagination of readers of conspiracies beyond the "black and white" conclusion made by Washington that the incident was purely the work of terrorists who are Muslims.

Such articles do not paint a good picture of Tel Aviv and the Jews.

Neither did a European Commission poll which found out that 60 per cent of Europeans feel that Israel is a greater threat to world peace than North Korea, Iran or Afghanistan.

Almost immediately after the report of the poll was published, a leading US lobby group denounced it as shocking and anti-Semitic.

The group, the influential Simon Wiesenthal Centre, said the EU poll of around 7,500 people across Europe, defied logic and was a racist flight of fantasy.

The centre also took the lead in attacking Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad for saying in his speech at the recent Organisation of Islamic Conference Summit in Putrajaya that "Muslims should learn from the Jews, who now rule the world by proxy after having gained control of the most powerful countries".

Dr Mahathir had been explaining that his speech was not about anti-Semitism, but rather a reflection on history and later reminded the Jews that they should not inflict upon the Muslims the oppression and killings the Europeans had committed on the Jews in the past.

Dr Mahathir even went to the extent of reminding the Jews that when they were oppressed and persecuted by Europeans, they (the Jews) ran to Muslim nations and were well received.

In so far as the fanning of anti-Semitism is concerned, European and even American literature and writings are more blatant in their condemnation and suspicions of the Jews.

Then there is the 24 Protocols of the Elders of Zion, the basis of Zionism as the modern world today knows and associates with Israel's forceful attempts to annihilate Palestinians and the rest of the Arab world apart from being the blueprint for global domination.

When Dr Mahathir raised the Jews' issue, the reaction was vitriolic condemnation, followed up with pressure on the US administration to "punish" Malaysia.

Tel Aviv, too, had repeatedly shown that it had no regard even for

several United Nations' resolutions aimed at providing a more conducive atmosphere for the Middle East peace process.

The latest conflict between the EU and Tel Aviv was sparked by Israel's decision to boycott Marc Otte, EU's special envoy to the Middle East.

Tel Aviv had boycotted Otte because he had held a meeting with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

Following that, the EU is deliberating on the possibilities of severing ties with Israeli leaders.

While Tel Aviv has every right to determine its domestic policies, the arrogance it shows in dealing with the rest of the world does not reflect that it is a nation under siege nor a victim in any way.

It is against this backdrop that the whole issue of anti-Semitism and anti-Jews is being debated.

The sad part is that the Muslim world, especially from this part of the region, was never the perpetrator of crime against the Jews.

Today, it seems to be the ones paying the price for the guilt felt by the West.