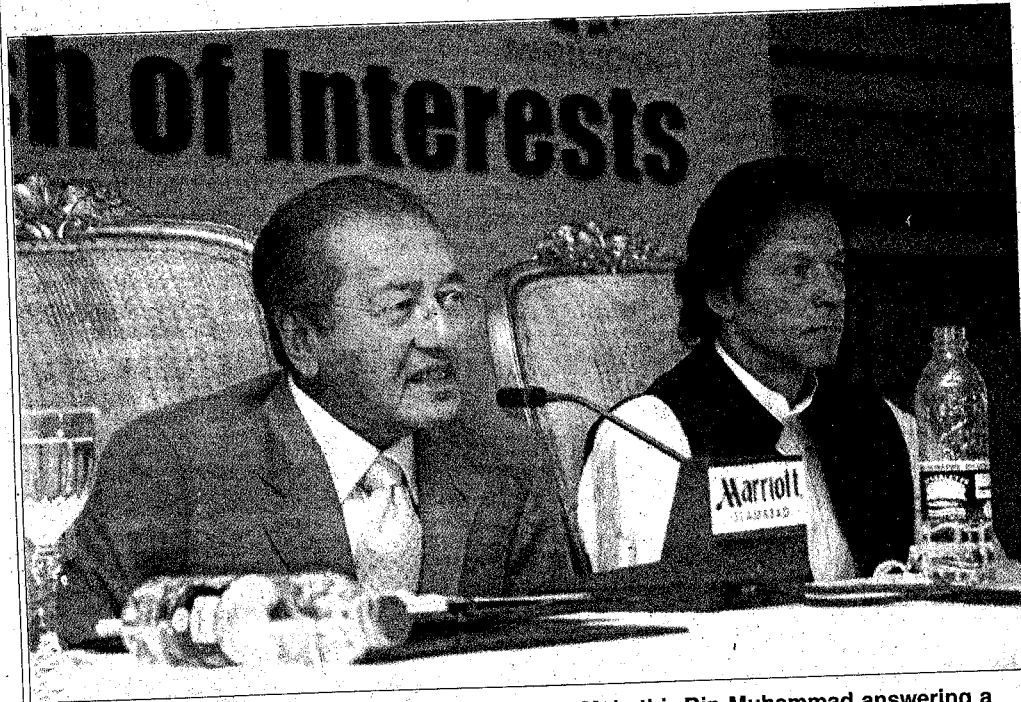


# Muslims have right to possess nukes



ISLAMABAD: Former Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Bin Muhammad answering a question during seminar on "Clash of Civilization or Clash of Interests" organised by Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf here on Friday. Chairman PTI Imran Khan also present on the occasion.—Photo by Syed Mehdi

## Mahathir urges Ummah to boycott US currency: 9/11 may be conspiracy: Asks Muslims to iron out differences: Grills Pope

HAQ NAWAZ

ISLAMABAD - Former Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Bin Muhammad has made it clear that Muslim countries also have the right to possess nuclear weapons as Israel.

"If you have (the world powers) allowed Israel to keep nuclear weapons then why can't the other Middle Eastern Muslim states get the nuclear weapons too," the veteran Muslim leader said while responding to a questioner during an hour-long question-answer session here at a seminar.

The seminar 'Clash of Civilizations or Clash of Interests' was organized by Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan here on Friday at a local hotel. PML-N Chairman Raja Zafar-ul-Haq, PML leader, former foreign

minister Gohar Ayub Khan and Farooq Amjad Mir MNA also attended the seminar.

The seminar was attended by politicians, intellectuals, defence analysts, religious scholars, academicians, political workers and students. Roughly, over two hundred patiently listened to the views of the great Muslim living legend Dr Mahathir while standing in the hall for more than two hours, besides 600 seated people.

"Yes, I am against the nuclear weapons but if the US and UK-led West is sincere in cleaning the world from the nuclear weapons then they should start first from US, UK," he argued. "Everyone should abandon the weapons of mass destruction and this should not be restricted only to the Muslims," he insisted.

He termed the clash of civilizations as clash of interests and the

very bases of all the disputes are politically motivated. He said that the US and its Western allies are looking for control of resources of the Muslim world and they have no religious agenda.

He called upon the Muslim countries to openly announce boycotting the US currency and use other currencies to give a strong message.

He urged the Muslims to make the sole super power weaker by devaluing its currency, as it did with others including Malaysia in late 90s, "We stopped using dollars, replacing it with other currency," he said.

He also questioned the so-called war on terror after the 9/11 terror

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Text of Mahathir Bin Muhammad's speech

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# Text of Mahathir's speech

1. I would like to thank the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf for this invitation. I would also like to thank the Government of Pakistan for the hospitality extended to me and my wife. The title suggested for his "the-clash of civilizations or clash of interests" seems to suggest that there is a link between the two. Frankly I do not think so. It is unfortunate that the international media have succeeded in creating the impression that Islam has to do with terrorism.

2. During the period of Islamic expansion half the known world came virtually under Muslim rule, but even western historians admit that other religions: Christianity and Judaism flourished under the Muslims.

3. In Spain the Jews and the Christians not only practiced their own religions undisturbed but Jews actually participated in the governments of the Muslim rulers, Jewish science and literature flourished in Spain and North Africa, and Christian Europeans renewed their acquaintance with the works of the Greek thinkers, philosophers and scientists through the Arabic translations of the old texts which had been lost to the Christian world.

4. We also know that after the reconquest by Ferdinand and Isabella a majority of the Jews left Spain to live in the Muslim states in North Africa and the Turkish-ruled parts of Eastern Europe.

5. Clearly the Muslims find nothing in their religion of Islam to stop them from living in peace with people of other religions. The Quran is quite clear about this, there should be no force in Islam, Muslims were told that to the non-Muslims their religion and to the Muslims their religion, even the Prophet was reminded that his task was to spread the message, Allah S.W.T would determine whether his listeners accept the religion or not.

6. By contrast the Christians of Europe were completely intolerant. In regular pogroms the Jews were massacred. After the Spanish reconquest the Muslims and the Jews were given three choices - emigrate, convert to Christianity or be put to death. Inquisitions resulted in even the conversos being burnt at the stake, having been forced under torture to admit that they were still practicing their former religions; they were crypto-Muslims and Crypto Jews.

only lost the war but the Palestinians lost more land.

12. Finally the Arab countries, knowing that they were fighting not just the Israelis but the great powers, Britain and America, desisted, and the world decided to ignore the Palestinians and their problems. For the world the problem had been solved.

13. In the terrible refugee camps the Palestinians were forgotten by the world, by the people who caused their misery. It was in desperation that they launched the intifada - primarily to attract the attention of the world to their sufferings and misery, to seek a solution to their problems as refugees, to regain their lost land.

14. But the stone throwing children of the intifada were met with Israeli tanks and bullets, rubber bullets at first but real bullets soon after. The children were wounded and killed, the world watched and did not care. No one told the Israelis to stop killing children. If at all some appeared to encourage Israeli atrocities.

15. Is it any wonder that the Palestinians resorted to other ways to counter the Israelis. If the world did not care, if even their Arab and Muslim brothers did not care, then they had to fight for themselves by themselves.

16. Yes, they resorted to acts which the world came to regard as terrorism, they bombed school buses and markets and innocent people were killed.

17. And the Israelis retaliated with their own brand of terrorism, they sent their helicopter gunships tanks and bulldozers to destroy and flatten Palestinian towns. They destroyed houses with the occupants still inside. They committed acts of extreme brutality. They even deliberately killed an invalid in a wheelchair.

18. The world and the Muslims governments watched, but can such brutality; such heinous acts of terror rouse no anger and hatred and bitterness in no one?

19. I do not believe in terrorism. I do not believe in killing innocent people. But can everyone seeing the bullying and brutal acts of the Israeli terrorists feel philosophical and calm. Can everyone just say that it is not his affair, that he can do nothing?

freedom of the Europeans. These people must be taught a lesson.

27. But what followed does not seem to be an anti-terrorist war alone. What followed is a war against Islam and the Muslims. They are the ones targeted. The countries attacked are Muslim countries Afghanistan and Iraq. And now Syria and Iran are targeted.

28. The axis of evil is supposed to include Iraq, Iran and North Korea. But no one really believes that north Korea is targeted. Even provocations by North Korea have not resulted in military strikes and invasion. Noises are made. Threats are uttered. But no war, not even a raid or sanctions.

29. On the other hand full action has been taken against Afghanistan and Iraq. It does not matter that actually Iraq and Iraqis had no connection with the terrorists. Iraq was said to have weapons of mass destruction which could be launched against Britain in 45 minutes. Iraq had nuclear weapons, Iraq had chemical weapons. Iraq had biological weapons. These could be made good excuses for killing Iraqis which war would do.

30. After the easy defeat of the Afghans, another easy victory was expected in Iraq. It was an opportunity to test new weapons and new tactics of fighting and killing. It was going to be another glorious episode. The forces of civilization and enlightenment would triumph against the forces of darkness.

31. Iraq must be invaded even if the weapons inspectors found no evidence of any WMD. It was to be the mother of invasions. It would shock and AWE - a nice English phrase which actually means it would strike terror in the hearts of the Iraqis. And terrorize it did. With missiles and bombs, with tanks and guns, with flame-throwers and cluster bombs Iraq was invaded and Iraqis were slaughtered. Iraqi towns and cities were pulverized.

32. But still there could be found no WMD. Not to worry. The war, the shock and awe, the terror attacks were actually meant to remove the dictator Saddam Hussein, to free his people from his dictatorship, Iraq will be a model of democracy for the Muslims of the middle east. At last the world would be totally democratized and freed from oppressive authoritarian regimes.

died. These are the people that count and they were counted.

38. These are soldiers and soldiers are trained to kill and to die. The Iraqi civilians are not trained to die. And they have killed no one. But call them collaterals and forget about them.

39. So who are the greater terrorists - the irregulars who often failed to do any harm, who bungled things, who are betrayed, are captured, incarcerated and tortured in the most heinous ways or the regulars who are trained to kill, who are armed with super lethal weapons, protected by body armour or ensconced in their tanks or flying high in their warplanes, moving only a finger to kill thousands, men, women, children, the sick and the invalids; who are the greater terrorists, count the killed, count the wounded, assess the destruction and you will find the answer.

40. Terror is felt by anyone who knows he is about to be killed or to have his limbs torn from his body or his guts spilled on the sidewalk, those who cause terror, by definition are terrorist. Regular or irregular they are terrorists. Democrats or not, they are terrorists.

41. If the scale of their killings is taken as a measure the regulars win hands down. They kill more. They terrify more people. They destroy more.

42. We do not ask about what religion they believe in. Not having a religion to explain their hatred has not diminished their desire to kill. They kill in the course of their battles. But they are not averse to killing whenever they feel like it. They kill unarmed civilians just as they would kill the armed ones. People cringing in fear as they point their weapons moved them not at all. Squeeze the trigger and bang bang - dead Iraqis. In Iraq there are more mal-lais than in Vietnam.

43. No, it is not their religion; it is not being Christians or Jews, these trained terrorists kill because they have the guns and the bombs, and to kill requires only a squeeze of the trigger or pressure on the button. Their masters told them to kill - and they kill.

44. And the Muslims who kill, who blew themselves up, who crash their planes into buildings are not obeying the injunctions of Islam. Islam has no place for terrorism. Nothing in the Quran says that Muslims must terrorize their enemies.

forced under torture to admit that they were still practicing their former religions; they were crypto-Muslims and CryptoJews.

7. In Palestine itself under Muslim and Turkish rule Jews and Arabs, Muslims and Christians lived together. And they would have continued to live together except for ideas about the creation of a Jewish state by the Zionists. From then on efforts were made, frequently through acts of terror by the Haganah and the Irgun, the Jewish terror groups to force the creation of Israel. Their targets were frequently the people who had ruled Palestine as a mandated territory - the British.

8. Faced with Jewish terrorism and intransigence the British took the easy way out. They abandoned Palestine to the ill-informed United Nations. Without studying the problem carefully the United Nations divided up the territory of the state of Palestine between the Jews and the Palestinian Arabs. It was to the United Nations a neat solution. The feelings of the people in Palestine were disregarded. Worse still the Palestine Arabs in the area allocated for the new state of Israel were ejected from their farms and houses and forced to emigrate to live in miserable refugee camps scattered in surrounding countries.

9. It was a time when the colonies of the European imperialists were fighting and gaining their independence. Yet in Palestine the Palestinians were expected to give up their country to the Jews.

10. It is this ill-advised decision by the European powers which precipitated the acts that we call terrorism in Palestine and elsewhere today. It is not about differences in religions. The Jews and the Muslims had lived in peace before. The quarrel is about territory, about land, about the seizure of the land of the Arabs who happened to be mainly Muslims to give to the Jews. Islam, the religion, had no part in it unless it is that the Jews hated Muslim and Christian Arabs and would not allow them to live in Israel.

11. It is natural that the Palestinian Arabs would want to get back their land. They appealed to the Arab countries in the region. Egypt, Syria and Jordan responded initially and they launched a conventional war. But the British and the Americans helped the Israelis to ward off the attack. The Palestinians and their brothers in neighboring countries tried again and again and each time they not

20. Some will feel that way but some feel more strongly than others. And invariable some would act. No one relished the idea of deliberately piloting and crashing a plane against a building and being torn to pieces by the explosion or being burnt to cinders. But the anger of these people who day in and day out watched Israeli atrocities cannot but result in some expression, in some retaliatory action, by someone.

21. The Sept 11 2001 attack was perhaps an act of unmitigated terrorism. 3,000 people died in the world trade center in New York. It was horrible to see people hurtling through the air to be smashed on the ground in order to escape being burnt alive. It was terrible to watch live the collapse of the twin towers. Such great edifices turned to dust.

22. The anger of the Americans and their President can well be understood. But without even considering the circumstances, without thinking of the causes which led to this terrible tragedy, the first thing that the American leader thought of was to declare war to revive the crusade, to war against Islam.

23. It was the spontaneous reaction and response of the ethnic Europeans because they have never forgotten the crusades. The hatred for Muslims and Islam remains deep in their psyche. And Sept 11 forced the regurgitation of this old hatred. Once again the Muslims had dared to face the might of the Christian Europeans. And as before they will suffer the consequence.

24. They are not very Christian now, these Ethnic Europeans. Maybe the President is a born again Christian. Accusing the Muslims was natural. The spirit of the crusade is still alive. And just as the crusade was organized to destroy the Muslims in the Middle East and Muslims in general, the call to a crusade echoed by Bush has the same objective - destroy the Muslims.

25. The President corrected himself later. It was not a call to war against Islam that he meant. It was to fight against terrorists. For this the whole world was asked to join. And most of the world, including the Muslim countries joined. The world was prepared to overlook that spontaneous call to a crusade.

26. It was not to be a war against Islam or the Muslims. It was to be war against terrorists, against people who for no very good reason wanted to terrorize the world, to kill and destroy simply because they hated the

of democracy, for the Muslims of the middle east. At last the world would be totally democratized and freed from oppressive authoritarian regimes.

33. The lid was lifted and Pandora's box was opened and Mayhem released. Now to the delight of the coalition of the willing, the Americans, British and Israelis, the Iraqis are doing the killings for them, the Iraqis are killing Iraqis. Of course it is because they have always been against. Each other; the Sunnis against the Shiahs, the two against the Kurds and the Kurds against other Iraqis. They have always wanted to fight each other and to kill each other. It's not the result of shock and awe. These Muslims, they are all blood thirsty terrorists.

34. But under the dictator Saddam Hussein they would all be alive today. Yes some would be killed by Saddam but many more would not. They would be alive but for the great democracy which the Americans brought and forced down their throats.

35. Shock and AWE - otherwise known as terrorism, has won. The civilized democrats have introduced a new brand of terrorism, caused more death and destruction than the authoritarian ruler, then the irregulars, the untrained disorganized terrorists. These are organized, well-trained and well-equipped terrorists; in uniforms and painted faces.

36. Is there a difference between being killed by democrats and being killed by dictators? If only we can ask those who died. We can't. But I do not think they would die happier, suffer less because they were killed by democrats. But those who lost limbs and have been gravely wounded, they probably can tell. Under Saddam we are told they were gassed to death. It could have been painful. But he did not drop bombs or shell and rocket them and so they did not end up losing their limbs and being gravely wounded. So they cannot compare their sufferings with those wounded by the forces of enlightenment, the great democrats.

37. During the shock and awe invasion, were innocent people killed? Yes they were and they were as innocent as those killed in the world trade center in New York.

But we can dismiss these innocent people because they were Iraqis and Iraqis do not count. We do not count the number of Iraqis who died, who were wounded. But we know exactly when 2,000 American soldiers died, when 2,300 died, when 2,500

who blew themselves up, who crash their planes into buildings are not obeying the injunctions of Islam. Islam has no place for terrorism. Nothing in the Quran says that Muslims must terrorize their enemies.

45. They are enjoined to defend their Muslim society, the ummah. For this they must make preparations. In the days of the Prophet they needed to have war-steeds, bows and arrows, sword etc. Today they should have the tanks, warplanes, warships guns and missile. Yes they need to have nuclear weapons too because only the possession of such would their enemies be deterred from attacking them. But no aggression and certainly no terrorism is advocated by Islam by the Quran. Arm yourself to deter your enemies, that is all that Muslims are enjoined to do. Use the arms when attacked. Fight those who fight you. If they sue for peace then cease fighting.

46. But without the weapons, pushed into a corner what are they to do? In desperation they resort to what is called terrorism. They would not do it if they are not terrorized, not terrified. It's a normal human reaction. It is not religion. It is not Islam. It is pure self-preservation.

47. So let us not blame Islam for what we call terrorism carried out by people who happen to believe in Islam. We are not going to say that the terrorism of regulars against the Muslims are induced by Christianity or Judaism. It is just the arrogance of the strong. It is the way of the bully.

48. Christianity, Judaism and Islam have been hijacked by people with vested interests from time to time. There have been numerous misinterpretations of these religions by interested parties so as to justify the evil that they wish to do. We should not conclude that religion is guilty when these things happen. The hijackers are guilty.

49. The present spate of terrorism is not because of Islam. I repeat, it is about the seizures of land belonging to people of the Muslim faith. There are Muslim sympathizers for their unfortunate co-religionists. But do not presume that everyone who is a Muslim is a suspect, is a terrorist. If you do then expect yourself to be suspected and killed.

50. Call the perpetrators and those planning to terrorize, regulars and irregulars alike, terrorists. But do not link Islam to terrorism and we will not link Christianity or Judaism with the same, with state organized terrorism.

Thank You.