

## LETTER TO VANCOUVER SUN

January 1, 2007

Re: "Confused Archbishop," 29 December, 2006

Confusion comes in many packages, in editorials as well as Archbishops' articles.

Yes, Christians and other non-Muslims usually have a rough time of it in Muslim lands, quite apart from any Western invasion. Islam has classically tolerated only those religious groups who accept the second-class designation of *dhimmi* assigned to them by Muslim authorities. It comes with all kinds of restrictions. Nevertheless, Muslims have a better record of tolerance historically than does pre-Enlightenment Christianity. The situation of Andalusia (Muslim and post-Muslim Spain) is perhaps the clearest example.

However, Western aggressive colonial and neo-colonial policies in the Muslim world have worsened the situation, long before the US' meddling in the region. The latter is just an intensified version of a long tradition of Western colonial aggression without the trappings of colonial government. Muslims have long accused their Christian neighbours of being lackeys of the West. The more intense Western aggression at different times, the more intense the Muslim reaction against Christians. With today's very high level of aggression comes an equally higher level of intolerance. The result is mass exodus of Christians. The point is that we should not blame only the Muslims and see only beams in their eyes without seeing our own.

Why do we always push ourselves into such one-sided and confused opinions? Any solution of the current situation must make frank acknowledgement of intolerance and imperialism/colonialism on the part of both the Muslim East and the Christo-secular West – yesterday as well as today.

Dr. Jan H. Boer, West End, Vancouver

604-646-8016 [www.SocialTheology.com](http://www.SocialTheology.com)

Author of 9 books on colonialism and Christian-Muslim Relations

Former Director of the Institute of Church & Society, Jos, Nigeria

(Re. Articles in the *Vancouver Sun* dated 24 December 2006 and 29 December 2006)