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9-11-2013

### September 11, 2013: On the Occasion of 9/11

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#### Repository Citation

Ledewitz, B. (2013). September 11, 2013: On the Occasion of 9/11. Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/ledewitz-hallowedsecularism/775>

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Title: On the Occasion of 9/11

Date: 2013-09-11T20:44:00.003-04:00

9/11/2013—Today is the anniversary of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and the crash of flight 93. It is a solemn day, filled with great loss. America has been changed by the events of 9/11. But, despite the loss of life, the greatest tragedy of this day is the failure of one of the world's great religions: Islam. 9/11 was a terrible crime perpetrated in the name of religion. In the long run, the grotesque violence perpetrated on this day, the horrible willingness to take absolutely innocent life, stains irrevocably Islam in particular and maybe religion in general. Humankind is fully capable of making a judgment about this matter. Even though 1 billion people in the world practice Islam, and even though the overwhelming majority of these persons condemn the criminal fanaticism of this crime, Islam is still responsible for 9/11. And Islam is further responsible for a great deal more violence in the world. These statements are in no way a defense either of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands or of US or other Western policies in the world, either now or in the past. I would even exempt from the charge of religious fanaticism actions taken by Palestinians against the military occupation. Those actions, even if not justifiable, are certainly understandable. But what we see in the world today, and what was present on 9/11, is a kind of cult of violence and terror. Actions such as the attack on the World Trade Center are not strategies. They are terroristic spasms. Such violence is condemned by every religion. But somehow the violence seems to be called forth today by Islam. The result of 9/11 and all of the associated acts of violence during the 21st century can only be the long-term decline of Islam. Just as the wars of religion in Europe led to secularization, as an exhausted Europe turned away from religion altogether, an exhausted world will ultimately turn away from Islam.