

cause. His reward is eternal glory—an eternity in heaven surrounded by willing young virgins. In some cases there is a promise that his family will be taken care of by the community.

## **Social and Political Conditions: Cultures of Despair**

Most Islamic would-be martyrs not only share these beliefs but also have grown up in a culture of despair; they have nothing to lose. Eliminate such poverty and you eliminate the breeding ground for most terrorists—though the September 11 terrorists were relatively well-to-do. When the Bush administration spoke of eliminating terror, it did not appear to be talking about eliminating cultures of despair and the social conditions that lead one to want to give up life to martyrdom.

Princeton Lyman of the Aspen Institute made an important proposal—that the worldwide antiterrorist coalition being formed should address the causal real-world conditions. Country by country, the conditions (both material and political) leading to despair need to be addressed, with a worldwide commitment to ending them. It should be done because it is a necessary part of addressing the causes of terrorism—and because it is right! It never happened.

What about the first cause—the radical Islamic worldview itself? Military action won't change it. Social action won't change it. Worldviews live in the minds of people. How can one change those minds—and if not present minds, then future minds? The West cannot! Those minds can only be changed by moderate and liberal Muslims—clerics, teachers, elders, respected community members. There is no shortage of them. I doubt that they are well organized, but the world needs them to be well organized and effective. It is vital that moderate and liberal Muslims form a unified voice against hate and, with it, terror. Remember that *Taliban* means “student.” Those who teach hate in Islamic schools must be replaced—and we in the West cannot replace them. This can only be done by an organized moderate, nonviolent Islam. The West can make the suggestion and offer extensive resources, but we alone are powerless to carry it out. We depend on the