

## BOOK REVIEW

***ISIS Exposed: Beheadings, Slavery and the Hellish Reality of Radical Islam.* Erick Stakelbeck. Washington DC: Regnery Publishing, 2015. Pp. 207.**

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Erick Stakelbeck sheds light on how ISIS has engulfed the Middle East and the danger it poses to the world at large. Stakelbeck delves deep into the origins of the ISIS and uncovers facts about the world's most dangerous organisation and its designs to establish its rule in every part of the world. The book also explains how ISIS has managed to recruit thousands of foreign fighters, and how, surprisingly, it is attracting westerners in large numbers. Stakelbeck explores the phenomenon that is ISIS and how its bloodthirsty ideology has been successful in recruiting thousands of members as well as legal slaves. He also throws light on how big a threat the United States faces from ISIS and how it must preempt this threat.

The book is a riveting account, told like a story from the journalist's mouth that captures the reader's attention. ISIS is xenophobic and bigoted. Its use of barbaric means is aimed at annihilating the "other." The book starts by explaining the concept of the Caliphate that drives the ISIS to envision a global kingdom, an idea alien to the West and even to the Muslim world at large. However, some extremist groups have started swearing allegiance to ISIS, which shows its acceptability among some other pariah groups in Muslim countries. The main aim of the group is to spread its ideology by force, and to spread it as far as possible. As the book moves on, it explains the ruthless strategy of ISIS that employs religion as a guiding force while interpreting the Holy Scripture in its own way.

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The second chapter of the book describes ISIS' tactics and ways: the way the group uses extreme methods to inflict pain on their captives and victims alike. The author talks about the maltreatment of non-Muslim minorities and other Muslim groups that do not adhere to the beliefs of ISIS. Here, he gives an account of the treatment of Christians and Yazidi minorities held captive by ISIS. For Shias, Yazidis and Christians inside the ISIS caliphate, there is nothing but death, torture and anguish. Releasing gruesome videos of beheadings is also a strategy of ISIS to spread fear in the minds of people. The author also sheds light on the consciousness of the American public which is wary of the dangers of the ISIS. This has been possible due to the American print and electronic media. President Obama has also been severely criticised for his lack of understanding of the Middle East and his insensitivity to the dangers posed by ISIS.

Stakelbeck continues to give details about the atrocities of ISIS including beheadings, sex slavery, rape, murder, stoning and its child soldiers. The third chapter of the book reflects an inherent paranoia of the author as he expresses his fear of ISIS' influence in the United States, although it would not be easy for ISIS to get any influence in the country. The author also refers to and gives examples of young ISIS recruits, but fails to satisfy the reader about the reasons behind their radicalisation. There is also a heavy reliance on other news sources by the author and several references are also given. There are vague references to young people, men and women being radicalised in mosques. However, there is a strong emphasis on the description of how ISIS depends on the use of modern gadgets and social media as a means to advance their agenda. The ISIS recruits are upwardly mobile and well acquainted with the use of modern technology. The power and expansion through elimination of the "other" is the main goal of ISIS. The author has based his accounts on firsthand interviews and has extensively quoted other news sources.

The final chapters give an uncanny tour of London and the rest of Europe and how these cities are being transformed by a cultural and economic invasion from the Middle East. The author's assumptions are also based on certain widely-held opinions like Muslim immigration to Europe and lax border policies as well as the lack of integration by

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Muslim societies in the western countries. It seems that what Muslims could not gain through conquest under the Ottomans, they are achieving by immigration to the Western world, he argues. They are aggressive in their use of social welfare state for their personal benefit and they seek to change laws to suit their religious beliefs. In the author's opinion, Muslims in Europe and America are also aggressively building mosques and seeking converts to their faith including nurturing the lethal doctrines of jihad and war against the West in general and Israel and America in particular. The book leaves many questions unanswered and fails to satisfy the reader on numerous accounts, although ISIS' terror tactics are explained in great detail and the book moves from chapter to chapter like a novel.