

THE WORLD, IN WORDS

CHARLOTTE SQUARE GARDENS
EDINBURGH
www.edbookfest.co.uk
13 – 29 AUGUST 2011

NEWS RELEASE



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CONSEQUENCES OF 9/11 DISCUSSED AT THE EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL

The writer and documentary film maker, Dominic Streatfeild, attended the Edinburgh International Book Festival today to discuss his latest work: *A History of the World since 9/11*. Streatfeild revealed that the 2,753 lives lost in the initial 9/11 attacks, although hugely tragic, were exacerbated by America and Britain's "War on Terror".

The wars, fought in the name of "democracy" in Afghanistan and Iraq have, Streatfeild claimed, merely intensified the mistrust between Middle-Eastern Islamist societies and the West. Although Streatfeild believes America made the right decision to go to war with Afghanistan, the move into Iraq, which subsequently resulted in ravaged infrastructure, heavy civilian casualties and civil war, caused irrevocable harm to the relationship between Britain and America and the Arab nations.

One tragic consequence of this severed trust has been its impact on medical care in the Middle-East. Since 1988, the World Health Organisation has strived to eliminate the Polio virus world-wide. However, there remain four nations where Polio is still an endemic: Nigeria, India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, all four countries containing large Islamist populations. Streatfeild revealed that 'shortly after 9/11 people stopped allowing the polio vaccines' after rumours started circulating that the vaccines were in fact being used to sterilise Muslim women in order to stunt the Muslim population. As a result, the death-toll, as a direct consequence of the 9/11 attacks, has reached almost one million people; the vast majority of those being Muslim.

Streatfeild's views were backed up by the American former CIA intelligence officer, Michael Scheuer, in a later Book Festival event, who said that America, in its endeavour to 'clone itself' in terms of values, policies and rights, by 'occupying' the Middle-East, has played straight into the

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT FRANCES SUTTON, PRESS MANAGER:

frances@edbookfest.co.uk / Tel: 0131 718 5654 / Mob: 07841 579481

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hands of the Taliban and Al-Qaeda, strengthening insurgency in Arab nations by confirming their fears that the West is intrinsically opposed to Islam.

Scheuer said 'we are faced with a problem, largely of our own making', and that 'we are much worse off today than we were on September the 11th 2001'. Both authors were adamant that Al-Qaeda were not anti-democratic and held no grudge against the "freedoms" of the West, but that 'this is a war against what our government have done in the Arab world'.

The Edinburgh International Book Festival continues until Monday 29 August. Full details of the programme and tickets are available at www.edbookfest.co.uk.

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For further information please contact:

Frances Sutton, Press Manager

Edinburgh International Book Festival

frances@edbookfest.co.uk or 0131 718 5654

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT FRANCES SUTTON, PRESS MANAGER:

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