

FP NEWS

& Commentary



A FREEDOM FOCUS - September 2010

FREEDOM'S SUBMISSION TO ISLAM



September 9, 2010 by
Paul McKeever

I am, and will always be, an outspoken defender of an individual's freedom to speak his mind, and I will remain a person who condemns censorship. I know nothing at all about Christian Reverend Terry Jones' past statements, and little about his beliefs.

However, as a person who values reason and individual freedom, I can only say "Bravo!" with respect to Jones' now widely known plan to burn copies of the **Quran** on the 9th anniversary of the September 11, 2001 murders.

And I cannot denounce strenuously enough those who are condemning Jones for his plan, and who are asking or threatening

him not to proceed with his plans. Whatever his motives might be – to express anger or frustration; to promote his own religion as somehow being true; etc. – his plan, and the angry response of many individuals to his plan, should say almost everything that needs to be learned about defending individual freedom from Islam.

Islam, which means "obedience", involves a belief in an omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent entity named Allah. It involves a belief that the *Quran* is the unadulterated word of Allah. It involves a belief that the only law that man must obey is Allah's. It has zero tolerance for the notion that man has authority to determine laws for himself, or to act in accordance with beliefs that are contrary to those laid down for him in the *Quran*. Like other religions – including Christian ones – Islam regards obedience to the word of Allah to be the highest of virtues, and self-sacrifice to be

the highest good. It regards man's highest purpose to be: do what Allah tells you to do, the way Allah tells you to do it. In short, like virtually all religions, Islam is founded upon superstition, founds beliefs upon faith rather than upon reason, condemns rational egoism while praising altruism, and – as a consequence of all of that – stands in strenuous opposition to individual freedom, capitalism, and democracy. The only society truly compatible with Islam is a theocratic, collectivist one.

Islam has spread through Africa and Europe, and is slowly increasing its influence in North America. This is less a function of religious conversion, and more a function of migration. The migration of theocrats, and their power to vote in the very democracies they despise, is gradually allowing proponents of theocracy to take governmental control in formerly freer, non-theocratic states. If North Americans do nothing to stop Islam's advance, the West will eventually fall into darkness, and the "infidel's" blood will be spilled until there are no more infidels to behead.

So, what is a proponent of reason and individual freedom – i.e., what is a Westerner – to do?

Plans to build a mosque near "Ground Zero" (the location of the World Trade Towers that were leveled by the most obedient of Islamists on 9/11) have outraged many. It has been said to be an insult by some, a provocation by others, or even a military-like stronghold for the enemy. Consequently, there are those who want to prohibit the building of a shiny new mosque near "Ground Zero", or to bomb it to the ground if it is built.

However, a mosque is just a building. If one, some, or all of them were places where violations of life, liberty or property were planned, eliminating every single one of

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"Some things are black and white."

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them would not stop the promotion or conduct of such conspiracies. A dark corner at a *McDonalds*, or a bowling alley, may well suffice for such purposes. Even an Islamic bingo hall might do the trick ("Under the Q..."). You cannot stop the communication of ideas or plans by bombing bricks and mortar.

President George W. Bush, and most of the Western world, have spent billions, and gallons of blood, and thousands of lives, to "bring democracy" to Islamic countries. Their mistake was to confuse elections with democracy.

Democracy
("demos" = "people";
"kratos" = "power")

contrasts with theocracy not by way of elections, or some misguided notion of majority rule, but by a belief about the source of governmental power: **democracy is the belief that the government's power comes from the governed**, whereas **theocracy ("god-power") is the belief that the government's power is delegated to it by a god** (i.e., that government is merely the hand of a god). You can bring voting systems to anyone you want: it won't change a hardened belief that Allah is the source of all governmental power and all law. Wherever theocrats are or become a sufficient percentage of the voting population, elections merely re-arrange deck-chairs on a societal Titanic.

Finally, there are those who burn books to prevent the communication of the words or ideas expressed in them. Even the West is full of such people, who – literally or figuratively – would prefer the burning (or other elimination) of everything from *Hustler Magazine*, to Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged*, to...the *Quran*.

Short of some ignoramus managing to destroy every copy of the *Quran*, and to murder everyone who has even heard about it, book burning will not prevent the communication of the *Quran's* toxic brew of anti-reality, anti-reason, self-destructive, collectivist theocratic words and beliefs. Besides, even were such a murderer to be successful in wiping every trace of Islam from the face of the globe, he would fail miserably.

There is no shortage of similar substitutes, including such enduring tomes as Hitler's **Mein Kampf**, and Marx's **Communist Manifesto**. Indeed, even were all such books – and their supporters – destroyed, it would be a matter of seconds before someone would invent another god or fuehrer or collective; another faith-based attack on reason; another set of mystical or dictatorial or majority-rule commandments that we all sacrifice ourselves for someone

else's alleged good; another collective defined by divine selection, by genetic purity, or by the whims of the incompetent; another explanation that government gets its power not from the governed, but from a god, or from a fuehrer, or from the whim of an elusive body corporate. You cannot, by physical means, prevent the communication or adoption of irrational ideas.

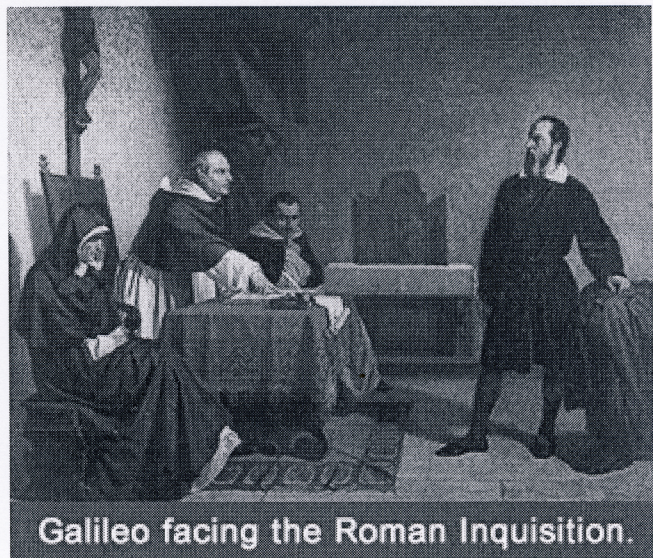
If you agree with me this far, you might well now consider why some Muslims would get so upset that some utter nobody in Florida is planning to burn some copies of the *Quran*. He isn't proposing the destruction of a mosque. He isn't threatening to bring elections to a theocratic country. And his burning of the *Quran* won't stop a single person from reading it. Why the anger? What is the threat?

The answer is: **irreverence**. At its root, it is an **expressed and offensive denial of something that someone else holds as a value**. Irreverence is expressed in many ways. One of the most potent is ridicule. In his book *Rules for Radicals*, leftist activist **Saul Alinsky** wrote insightfully:

"Ridicule is man's most potent weapon. It is almost impossible to counteract ridicule. Also it infuriates the opposition, which then reacts to your advantage."

A famous example in the history of reason and freedom is that of **Galileo**. In his *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems* he put the Pope's pro-geocentric view (the view that the sun moves around the Earth) into the mouth of the fictional character Simplicio (the simpleton),

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Galileo facing the Roman Inquisition.

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thereby (intentionally or unintentionally) mocking both the geocentric view provided by the bible and those who hold and promote it, including the then Pope himself. Galileo's book was banned shortly after its publication, and he spent the remainder of his life under house arrest. But here I am, telling you the story because physical force had no ability to stop the communication of ideas and beliefs. I can now tell you that the bible contains falsehoods concerning physics and call Pope Urban a simpleton (if I am so inclined) with virtually no fear that **Pope Benedict** will sentence me to house arrest for my heresy.

The famous Danish Mohammed cartoons are a much more recent case in point. The cartoons (and the cartoonists) ridiculed Mohammed, and thereby ridiculed Islam, Allah, and anyone who believes in such mumbo jumbo. The reaction by scores of Islamics in Europe was violence and vandalism. The advantage gained by the cartoonists (and the West): the violent reaction resulted in more publications of the Mohammed cartoons; in more ridicule; in more irreverence for Islam.

Most importantly, it inspired more interest in, research of, and commentary about what was in the *Quran* that would cause its adherents to engage in such a violent reaction. Just as destroying mosques does not stop the growth of Islamic communication and belief but instead fortifies it, breaking glass and burning cars was ineffective as a response to ridicule by the West. Indeed, such brutality only served to increase ridicule directed at Islam, the things it values, and the people who choose to practice it.

Book burning is not ridicule, but it is certainly irreverence. Burning copies of the *Quran* will not stop people from being able to read or hear about the *Quran*, but it will cause people to wonder if maybe it is worthy of being burned. Few are willing to accept on faith the alleged harmlessness of a book that others are so committed to destroy. Burning the *Quran* will cause people to be wary of Islam; to wonder if maybe, just maybe, the book that drove a handful of men to murder thousands on September 11, 2001, might be worthy of condemnation. It will cause many rational people to read it, to read about it, and to otherwise discover that its message is anti-reality, anti-reason, anti-happiness, anti-freedom, and – hence – anti-life.

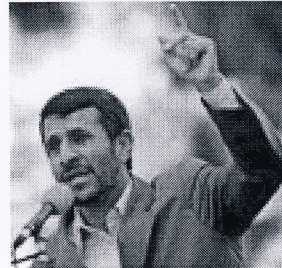
The outrage we now see around the globe about Reverend Jones' plan to burn the *Quran* is founded upon the



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knowledge that irreverence is a potent weapon in its defence against the advance of Islam and Islamic tyranny. Those threatening or implying destruction, violence, or murder will be the response to the Reverend's conduct know, full well, that his simple act of putting flame to paper harms their cause more than any attack helicopter or stealth bomber. He is not only lighting up a book, but causing minds to switch on and attend to the task of shaking off North America's timid moral subjectivism at least enough to condemn the belief system that, at present, poses the greatest threat to individual freedom, to the individual's ability to pursue his own happiness, and to the ability of man to identify and harness the facts of reality.

In this light, let us consider the responses of the various purportedly Western voices that are condemning Jones and his proposed book burning. All such voices, being victims or perpetrators of **moral relativism**, have **confused** – or deliberately conflated – **political tolerance with moral tolerance**.

With respect to **matters of politics**, tolerance refers to refraining from coercive or fraudulent reactions against a person whose physical appearance, beliefs, words or deeds do not deprive you, non-consensually, of your life, liberty or property. With respect to **matters of morality**, tolerance refers to withholding both praise and condemnation in respect of a person's beliefs, words, or conduct. In the political realm, tolerance is a corollary of individual freedom.

In the ethical realm, tolerance is just a tarted up synonym for moral subjectivism. And, normally, moral

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subjectivists are quick to blur the distinction, implying that a person who verbally condemns, say, a person's religion, is somehow being *politically* intolerant and anti-freedom.

But moral subjectivists are not the only ones conflating the moral with the political. Today, Canadian Prime Minister **Stephen Harper** told reporters:

"I don't speak very often about my own religion but let me be very clear: My God and my Christ is a tolerant God, and that's what we want to see in this world

"...I unequivocally condemn it...We all enjoy freedom of religion and that freedom of religion comes from a tolerant spirit."

Let the irrational deny it, but let the rational observe it. There are many who, fearing that their own irrational beliefs will be the subject of irreverence, will come screaming to the defence of the Islamists who are killing Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan; who aided or abetted the murder of thousands on September 11, 2001. Out of fear that their own irrationalities will become the subject of irreverence, our religious politicians are condemning those who condemn Islam precisely because they condemn irrational, faith-based, religious beliefs, as such. Self-servingly, such politicians are passing off ethical condemnation as though it were political intolerance.

Earlier today, Canadian Defence Minister **Peter MacKay** similarly condemned Jones' plan, stating that "This initiative is insulting to Muslims and Canadians of all faiths who understand that freedom of thought and freedom of religion are fundamental to our way of living".

Paraphrase: you are intolerant, hence anti-freedom, if you freely think and thereby morally condemn a silly or evil religious belief (or system of beliefs). MacKay's tail-chasing follows yesterday's statements by General **David Petraeus**, who similarly condemned Jones' plan, saying that "images of the burning of the Koran would undoubtedly be used by extremists in Afghanistan — and around the world — to inflame public opinion and incite violence." Both men — and scores of others having the same intellectual depth, such as **Angelina Jolie** — somehow worry Jones'

planned act will interfere with Western soldiers' efforts to win the hearts of Islamists. The central message of all of these folks is: nobody should ever treat Islam with such irreverence because such irreverence will cause Islamists to resort to violence, destruction, and murder and to hate the West.

Unbelievably, such folks believe that those who are so easily goaded into violence, destruction and murder are somehow just on the verge of being converts to Western civility, democracy, freedom, and the like. To the contrary, if such uncivilized conduct is the result of Jones' *Quran* burning, the West should — once and for all — accept that its efforts have been a misguided failure; a self-deceptive draping of lamb's clothes over wolves.

"In reality, irreverence is the West's intellectual H-bomb."

In reality, irreverence is the West's intellectual H-bomb. The General, and the Defence Minister, and all of the others begging or threatening Jones not to proceed with the burning are the West's intellectual peaceniks. Though they are quite willing to blow billions on physical weapons and electoral systems that cannot — even theoretically — fight effectively the spread of irrationality and evil, they are simultaneously calling for a self-imposed shelving of one of the West's most effective weapons.

While the Islamists teach their brethren to club Western "infidels" with "dirty kuffar" irreverence — even in mosques located in the West — the intellectual peaceniks are calling for the West to dismantle its entire stockpile of intellectual nukes; to simultaneously tolerate Islam's irreverence for reason and freedom; to sit in non-judgmental silence for the blade to be put to our throats.

Screw that. If our soldiers have been put in the way of people who may turn on them at something so remote and tiny as a Florida minister playing with matches, get them out of there now.

In the meantime, lock 'n load.

Then, burn baby. Burn. {end}

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