



Letters to the Editor

Freedom of Speech

It is easy to allow freedom of speech when people are saying things with which you agree, or at least saying things that are not blatantly offensive. The real test of a nation's commitment to freedom is when individuals or groups on the fringe say and do offensive, bigoted, or hateful things.

The threatened burning of the Koran by a pastor in Florida and a handful of other people in America are acts of religious intolerance that are condemned by the vast majority of Americans of all faiths. Furthermore, most Americans are repulsed by book burning in general, and rightly associate it with oppressive regimes like the Nazis. However, book burners are not, and should not, be prevented from peaceably assembling and expressing themselves. Other Americans will likewise be able to openly express their disapproval of such actions.

This controversy provided an excellent demonstration of America's continuing commitment to freedom and tolerance. Think about it, the Secretary of Defense, a man who commands thousands of heavily armed military personnel, called the pastor of that tiny church and asked him to please not burn the Koran. That kind of thing would make rulers like Hitler, Stalin, Kim Jong-il, Ahmadinejad, and countless others fall out of their chairs laughing, for when an insignificant and powerless person causes trouble for a government that doesn't have restraints, he is just killed — sometimes in a public spectacle of torture or sometimes he just quietly disappears.

In recent years, citizens in other countries have burned American flags, desecrated churches, and burned Bibles and crosses. Those are objects as dear to the hearts and minds of many Americans as the Koran is to Muslims. However, when that happens the American public does not cry out to seize a Pakistani, Arab, or Muslim to kill. Yet that is precisely the kind of barbaric reaction that American and Muslim leaders predict will occur in various nations when a Koran is burned in the United States.

We believe that feeling offended in matters of race, religion, ethnicity, sexuality, or any other aspect does not give someone the right to murder another human being — whether it be in response to a Danish cartoon, Dutch movie, Koran burning, or mosque location in America. Civilized people around the world and their laws recognize that.

People tend to see what they want to see — or in some cases what their leaders want them to see. If a Koran is burned by an isolated bigot in America, Muslims around the world can choose to view that as an attack by all Americans on their faith. Or, they can concentrate on the overwhelming majority of the 310 million American citizens who condemn such an action, and they can join with us in an ongoing quest for religious tolerance, peace, and justice.

John Marsh
Muncie, Indiana

Usefulness of the Federal Reserve's Comic Books

To more efficiently use the Federal Reserve's five comic books, which purport to explain to the layman the wonderful utility of the Fed's creation of money and market manipulation, here are some suggestions: for evidence in a fraud indictment against the Fed, to insulate dwellings in an economic



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bust the Fed creates, as toilet paper during another bust cycle, and as part of a books-for-prisoners project specifically for incarcerated Fed officials to remind them of their Ponzi scheme against the American people.

Dennis Dorotiak
Orlando, Florida

Changing Periodically

Beginning when I was about 11 years old, *U.S. News & World Report* was my most highly valued source of information, edited at that time by David Lawrence. The last page of each edition contained his extremely helpful analyses of key elements of the Constitution of the United States. Unfortunately, the current edition of *U.S. News & World Report* is a typical left-of-center rag that does not provide substantive advice or information unavailable elsewhere. Today, the best alternative to the current *U.S. News & World Report* is The New American, published bi-weekly by The John Birch Society.

Howard Phillips,
Chairman, The Conservative Caucus
Sent via e-mail



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