



## Islamists Push for Global Governance

The decision of Rev. Jones and his congregation to burn copies of the Koran on the ninth anniversary of the Muslim attacks on the New York World Trade Center and the Pentagon has been met with strong reactions from the White House, State Department, and the commander of U.S. military forces in Afghanistan, Gen. David Petraeus. Petraeus took the extraordinary step of [actually citing](#) the proposed burning of the Koran as a threat to American armed forces. He declared:

It puts our soldiers at jeopardy, very likely. And I think, in fact, the images from such an activity could very well be used by extremists here and around the world.

P.J. Crowley, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, took an even more extreme position and [opined](#): "It can have at least as powerful impact as the tragic events and photos that Abu Ghraib had." Given the difference between actions by uniformed personnel of the U.S. military in Iraq, and the actions of one pastor thousands of miles away in the United States, any such comparison seems patently absurd. Even delusional jihadists understand the difference between the actions of military personnel inside a Muslim-majority nation and those undertaken by private persons in an ostensibly "Christian" nation.

Of course, Petraeus' public handwringing also appears to take place under the assumption that the American people — and Christians throughout the world — have forgotten that one of the more odious examples of book burning in recent memory was undertaken by the U.S. government when the military burned copies of the Bible in Afghanistan. [According to a May 22, 2009 story by CNN](#):

Military personnel threw away, and ultimately burned, confiscated Bibles that were printed in the two most common Afghan languages amid concern they would be used to try to convert Afghans, a Defense Department spokesman said Tuesday.

The unsolicited Bibles sent by a church in the United States were confiscated about a year ago at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan because military rules forbid troops of any religion from proselytizing while deployed there, Lt. Col. Mark Wright said.

Such religious outreach can endanger American troops and civilians in the devoutly Muslim nation, Wright said. "The decision was made that it was a 'force protection' measure to throw them away, because, if they did get out, it could be perceived by Afghans that the U.S. government or the U.S. military was trying to convert Muslims," he told CNN on Tuesday.

Troops at posts in war zones are required to burn their trash, Wright said. The Bibles were written in the languages Pashto and Dari.

Thus, in the words of Lt. Col. Mark Wright, the Bible is to be considered "trash" by our men and women serving in Afghanistan, and burned as such; for Muslims, those same Bibles are what qualify Christians as "People of the Book." But there's no problem with the U.S. government burning the Sacred Scriptures if they are doing so to avoid any possibility of offending Muslim extremists who perceive themselves to be engaged in the latest phase of a 1,300 year *jihad* against Christianity.

People are quick to forget the reaction of the same political elites to the public burning of Salman Rushdie's book, *The Satanic Verses*, in the aftermath of the Ayatollah Khomeini's fatwa over 20 years ago. At the time, former President Jimmy Carter engaged in a round of blaming the victim in an article, ["Rushdie's Book is an Insult,"](#) in the *New York Times*:



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"The Satanic Verses" goes much further in vilifying the Prophet Mohammed and defaming the Holy Koran. The author, a well-versed analyst of Moslem beliefs, must have anticipated a horrified reaction throughout the Islamic world.

The death sentence proclaimed by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, however, was an abhorrent response, surely surprising even to Rushdie. It is our duty to condemn the threat of murder, to protect the author's life and to honor Western rights of publication and distribution. At the same time, we should be sensitive to the concern and anger that prevails even among the more moderate Moslems....

While Rushdie's First Amendment freedoms are important, we have tended to promote him and his book with little acknowledgment that it is a direct insult to those millions of Moslems whose sacred beliefs have been violated and are suffering in restrained silence the added embarrassment of the Ayatollah's irresponsibility.

This is the kind of intercultural wound that is difficult to heal. Western leaders should make it clear that in protecting Rushdie's life and civil rights, there is no endorsement of an insult to the sacred beliefs of our Moslem friends.

Thus, when Muslim extremists threaten to murder a citizen of a Western nation, and publicly burn his book, the author of the book is to blame.

But why the outrage over the actions of one pastor and one small congregation in Florida? The media and political elites could have ignored the proposed Koran burning as easily as they ignore hundreds and thousands of other religious actions and statements in the United States. One distinct possibility is that the proposed book burning provided a context for manufactured outrage in service of another agenda. John Birch Society CEO [Arthur R. Thompson pointed](#) to an apparent effort by the elites to actually heighten tensions between Christians and Muslims:

People have not considered that the growing number of incidences across both the Muslim and Christian world are actually designed to provoke and divide people against each other. Divide and conquer is an age-old scheme for people who want to use the ensuing violence to build government power in the name of quelling the violence and healing the division. There are all the appearances of exactly that scheme going on today.

Certainly those who wish to concentrate more power in the United Nations wasted no time calling on the UN to take decisive action. [According to a CNSNews report:](#)

Following the uproar over the threatened burning of the Quran by a small Florida church, a leading international Islamic body said Thursday that the United Nations should outlaw "all forms of offense against religions."

"The Florida Dove World Outreach Center Church's plan to burn copies of the Holy Quran on September 11 ... requires immediate action to outlaw all acts of defamation of religions and religious sanctities," the Morocco-based Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) said in a communique.

"It is a blot on humanity that such discriminatory attack against Islam and Islamic holy sites is continuing in the absence of deterrent legal measures, local and international."

ISESCO, an arm of the 56-nation Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), called on the U.N. "to issue an international law criminalizing all forms of offense against religions under any



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circumstances.”

Given Islam’s history ever since Mohammed launched his followers on the path of death and destruction in the 620s, the call by any Islamic organization for outlawing “all forms of offense against religions” is, at best, a case of unintended irony. But even if the history of Islam were other than it has been, ISESCO’s proposed “cure” would be worse than the “disease.” Freedom of religion and freedom of expression have easily survived many book burnings in the past. What directly threatens such freedom is any effort by government to determine what forms of political expression will be tolerated.

The Obama administration appears poised to fundamentally undermine religious freedom in America by reducing the guarantees of the First Amendment [from “freedom of religion” to a much narrower “freedom of worship.”](#) Shifting the battleground of the fight for “freedom of religion” from the national to the international arena would be typical of the tactics of those who are ready to sacrifice liberty for the sake of “tolerance.” Appeasement of Islamic extremists fits well with the agenda to restrict the liberties that Americans have striven to maintain for well over two centuries. The defense of unpopular speech, and unpopular forms of expression, is simply part of defending the underlying liberty fundamental to our Republic.

Photo of Pastor Terry Jones: AP Images



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