



Iran: Christians, not Nukes, Are the Real Story

The persecution of Christians is the biggest untold story in the establishment media. Consider Iran, a nation that we fear because it may soon acquire nuclear weapons. This fear is so strong in the school of popular punditry that strategic military strikes, embargos, and a host of other fairly dramatic remedies are seriously discussed. But is not our true fear that Iran is intolerant, warlike, and barbaric?



We have lived for more than 50 years with Britain and France, each of which has the power to destroy most major American cities on any given day. The Soviet Union and its offspring, the thuggish Russian nation, each have a vast nuclear arsenal, as does China, which bears us no goodwill. Israel, India, Pakistan, South Africa, and probably a few other nations either have nuclear capacity or could acquire it quickly. Our former Axis enemies — Germany, Japan and Italy — could all go nuclear fairly quickly, if they wished. What is it about Iran that makes us sweat?

Iran's ruling regime is viciously hateful toward Christianity. In 2008 the Iranian Parliament passed a law requiring that all Muslim men who become Christians will be executed and that all Muslim women who become Christians will be sentenced to life in prison. In 2009 the Assyrian Pentecostal Church in Teheran closed its doors after threats from the government. In October 2010, the Ayatollah Khamenei, the spiritual leader of Iran's Shia community, called "house churches" a threat to Iran's national security. Two months later, the day after Christmas, 25 Christians in Tehran were arrested.

The next month Morteza Tamadon, Governor of Tehran, called Christian evangelicals a "cultural invasion of the enemy" and he described these as "hard line" missionaries who "inserted themselves into Islam like a parasite." Since then the persecution of Christians has intensified. In the last six months 285 Christians have been arrested in 35 different cities in Iran. Those who are arrested are often kept in solitary confinement and abused physically and psychologically. A [major Muslim cleric](#) in Iran recently declared that the spread of Christianity was a greater threat than Satanism.

Most recently, Yusef Nadarkhani, a Christian pastor in Iran, has been sentenced to death for converting from Islam to Christianity. This sentence was upheld by the Iranian Supreme Court. The hope for the nation of Iran and for the Iranian people is that the peaceful, non-governmental work of Christian missionaries and Iranian converts to Christianity will persuade a troubled and angry nation that the message of peace is not some vacuous edict of the United Nations or some pontifical pronouncement by



Written by [Bruce Walker](#) on August 30, 2011

an American (or Iranian) professor, but rather a very real hope that resides in the hearts and minds of all who seek the loving God of the Bible.

If the Iranian people tomorrow embraced that loving God, then the power of the theocratic state would melt away and all the blustering threats of Iran's rulers would become dull and childish. Those who truly want peace in the world would draw attention every time that the Iranian (or Pakistani or Indian or Chinese or Indonesian) government tries to stamp out Christian faith, if the media elites were sympathetic.

Unfortunately, the elites who supposedly want to protect us from Iran and every other threat in the world recoil almost as reflexively at the message of Christianity as the Iranian mullahs do. It is not that the persecution of Christians around the world is not a big story — it is, in fact, a huge story — but it is not the sort of story that the collectivist statist elites want the world to know.

Photo: Ali Khamenei, Supreme Leader of Iran



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