



## Islam and the Problems of Nation Building

The culture, the religion, and the attitude toward government of people ultimately determine how a particular nation behaves. The Americans of 1789 had a culture of self-reliance (which ended the “need” for much of what the world today has as government) and Americans also combined a wholesome capacity for self-defense with a desire for domestic tranquility.

The Americans of 1789 were overwhelmingly religiously serious Christians who understood the injunctions of Christ and tried to follow them; Jews, the only other religious group of any real size, loved America from the beginning and understood that the practical application of true Christianity did not threaten Jews at all. How did Americans view government? With great suspicion. Laws should be few, modest, and mild. Those American traits, more than anything else, made America great in every sense of the word.



Afghanistan is proving an object lesson in how the absence of a culture of peacefulness and tolerance, adherence to a religion which embraces peace and brotherhood, and a view of government that creates and enforces draconian and intrusive laws can thwart the best efforts of nation-building. The Taliban last Sunday (August 15) began public executions by stoning of a young couple who had eloped. This combination of totalitarian government with an aggressively militant religion has led, as it nearly always does, to ghastliness. Nadir Khan, a local farmer and supporter of the Taliban, advised reporters that family members worked with the Taliban and tricked the couple into returning home to their village in Kunduz Province.

Moslem leaders have urged that the combination of government and mosque, which is the heart of Islam, be implemented more in Afghanistan. Shariah law provides for amputation, lashings, stoning and other savage punishments for people who do things like elope and marry in violation of Islamic law or who offend Islam in some vague, uncertain way. The murdered couple, Khayyam and his bride Siddiqa, said “We love each other no matter what happens.” The married couple were encircled by about two hundred Moslem men (women were excluded) and after Siddiqa was executed by stoning, her husband Khayyam was then stoned to death. Khayyam’s father and brother and Siddiqa’s brother participating in the group murder of their family members.

What is the solution to the horrors resurfacing in Afghanistan? A model government could have been created and imposed from above. The garrisoning of Afghanistan does not just include American forces, but armed forces from a number of NATO allies, all nominally committed to Western ideals. These



Written by [Bruce Walker](#) on August 18, 2010

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forces have had almost a decade to change the face of Afghanistan.

But when a man is brutally executed by a religious-state process in which the condemned's own father and brother join in the mob, what can America do? Not much, really. Peoples get the government they want. If the Afghan people, who live in a high, easily defended nation, had wanted temperate, limited government that did not impose cruel religious punishments for crimes that are not really crimes, then they could have had that government.

Islam's Shariah law is not compatible at all really, with ordered liberty and tolerant society. It leaves poverty, fear, and brutality in its wake. The cure for Afghanistan is not more NATO forces but, perhaps, more brave Christian missionaries. Not the politically correct approach, of course, but the real and true approach nonetheless.

*Photo: Mohamed Abukar Ibrahim is stoned to death by militants from the Hizb Al-Islam group in Afgoye district in Somalia. A local Islamist court sentenced the victim to death by stoning after he was found guilty of committing adultery while married: AP Images*



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