



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

Muslim clerics call for the death of convert to Christianity



Abdul Rahman

The case of Abdul Rahman, an Afghan Muslim who converted to Christianity while living abroad, and who could face the death penalty in his homeland for rejecting Islam, has caused something of an international stir. Countries with troops involved in keeping the peace in that land, see it as a major problem since the death of the man could have domestic political consequences for them.

Under Islamic Sharia law on which Afghanistan's constitution is based, Mr. Rahman faces the death penalty unless he reconverts to Islam.

"The Prophet Muhammad has said several times that those who convert from Islam should be killed if they refuse to come back," says Ansarullah Mawlafizada, the trial judge.

"Islam is a religion of peace, tolerance, kindness and integrity. That is why we have told him if he regrets what he did, then we will for-

give him," he told the BBC News website.

The judge's comments reveal the true face of Islam, one that Blair, Bush etc., would hide from their people!

But the bigger problem confronting the Afghan government is that an overwhelming number of ordinary Afghans believe Mr. Rahman has erred and deserves to be executed.

At Friday prayers in mosques across the Afghan capital, the case of Abdul Rahman is the hot topic of discussion and the centrepiece of sermons.

Senior Muslim clerics are demanding that Rahman be executed, warning that if the government caves in to Western pressure and frees him, they will incite people to "pull him into pieces."

"We will not let anyone interfere with our religious practices," declared cleric Inayatullah at Kabul's Pulakasthy mosque, one of the city's largest.

"Rejecting Islam is insulting God. We will not allow God to be humiliated. This man must die," said cleric Abdul Raouf, who is considered a moderate.

"What is wrong with Islam that he should want to convert?" asks an agitated Abdul Zahid Payman. "The courts should punish him and he should be put to death." "According to Islamic law he should be sentenced to death because God has clearly stated that Christianity is forbidden in our land," says Mohammed Qadir, another worshipper.

Thousands of protesters have taken to the streets in the northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif demanding Abdul Rahman be tried and executed for converting to Christianity. With chants of "Death to Bush!", they warned the international community to keep off the case. Afghanistan has an Islamic constitution which must be respected, they said.

Whatever happens to the man, his case has flushed out the wickedness of Islam.