

LEARNING ABOUT ISLAM WITH IMAM KEITH

By Don Feder

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(Note to readers: This commentary was originally published before Abu Congressman took his oath of office, on the so-called Jefferson Koran.)

Rep. Virgil Goode (R, VA.) is taking more fire than the GIs at Omaha Beach.

The Anti-Defamation League says it's time for Goode to "rethink" his "ill-considered remarks" which demonstrate "a serious lack of understanding of the fundamental religious guarantees enshrined in the U.S. Constitution." That bad, huh?

The Council on American Islamic Relations (Jihad R US) says of Goode's comments, "There can never be a reasonable defense for such bigotry."

Even the American Humanist Association is agitated. Its president, Mel Lipman, fumes, "If Virgil Goode is to continue serving in Congress, he needs a refresher course in basic American civics" -- from the ACLU, no doubt.

The occasion for these fevered condemnations was a letter Congressman Goode sent to a number of his constituents, just before Christmas, in response to the announcement of then-Rep-elect Keith Ellison (D, Minn.) -- a convert to the Religion of Peace -- that he would bring a Koran with him to his swearing-in ceremony.

“I do not subscribe to using the Koran in any way,” Goode wrote. While The Ten Commandments and “In God We Trust” are prominently displayed in his congressional office, “The Koran is not going to be on the wall of my office.”

If that weren't enough of an offense against multiculturalism, Goode went on to observe that unless we “stop illegal immigration totally” and end “the diversity visas policy, pushed hard by President Clinton” allowing more immigration from the Middle East, “I fear that in the next century we will have many more Muslims in the United States.” And that's not a good thing?

Meanwhile, Ellison wowed the Sons of the Prophet (Dearborn, MI chapter) at a conference on Sunday. “You can't back down, you can't chicken out, you can't be afraid, you got to have faith in Allah, and you got to stand up and be a real Muslim,” Ellison told those gathered for the annual convention of the Muslim American Society and the Islamic Circle of North America.

Ellison was formerly a member of the Afro-Nazi Nation of Islam. But, supposedly he's reformed – having moved from an organization whose leader called Judaism a “gutter religion” to a religion whose founder called Jews “the descendants of apes and pigs.”

According to Jihad Watch, the Muslim American Society has ties to the terrorist Muslim Brotherhood. Terrorism expert Steven Emerson says the Islamic Circle of North America “is on record as calling for jihad in the United States.” They sound like real Muslims to me.

Abu Ellison rhetorically inquired of the Dearborn Brethren: “How do you know that Allah ... did not bring you here so that

you could understand how to teach people what tolerance was, what justice was?”

Right you are, Keith. After all, there are so many shining examples of justice and tolerance in the Muslim world, where minorities are treated with such admirable fairness, justice is impartially administered and respect for human rights is a standard we could all emulate. (Please note the sarcasm here.)

“We all support the Constitution, one Constitution that upholds our right to equal protection,” Ellison told CNN’s Wolfe Blitzer.

Yes, but wouldn’t you say Goode is a vile bigot? Blitzer inquired. Ellison nobly declined to engage in “name-calling.” “I don’t know the fellow and I’d rather just say he has a lot to learn about Islam,” Ellison condescendingly replied.

Poor, ignorant Virginia backwoodsman that he is, Goode just doesn’t know enough about Islam to appreciate its exquisite beauty and lofty principles – like the thing about Jews being the descendants of apes and pigs.

We all have much to learn about Islam, and perhaps the Minnesotan can help to enlighten us.

But first, consider this: The book which Ellison will proudly schlep to his swearing-in has been used to justify the following:

- The Madrid bombings of 2004, the London bombings of 2005 and the plot to blow up as many as 11 trans-Atlantic flights that unraveled in 2006
- The Beslan massacre – where 186 Russian school children and 158 adults died in a hostage crisis in 2003

- Rioting in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nigeria and Libya (over Danish cartoons dissing Mohammed) in which 139 were killed
- A series of blasts in Mumbai, India, in July, which left 209 dead and more than 700 injured
- Attacks during this year's celebration of Ramadan (280 in 17 countries) in which more than 1,600 were killed. I didn't kill anyone for Hanukah. Guess I'm just not serious about my religion.
- The murder of a priest and a nun, the firebombing of churches in the West Bank and multiple death threats following the Pope's comments on Islam and the balance between faith and reason
- The ethnic cleansing of 90% of Kosovo's pre-1999 Serb population, not to mention the destruction of hundreds of churches, monasteries, convents and shrines in the province
- The ritual slaughter of Dutch filmmaker Theo Van Gogh

Think anyone in the mainstream media is curious about how America's first Muslim congressman feels about the foregoing? Think again.

There's a teenaged girl in Indonesia on whom an indelible impression was made. Noviana Malewa has a scar from a machete cut running from her cheekbone across her face and down her neck.

Noviana was lucky. On October 29, 2005 she was walking home from school with four teenaged companions, when the group was set upon by machete-wielding attackers dressed in black. Her friends were decapitated.

The inspiration for this atrocity came from which literary work: 1) “The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin” 2) “Sense and Sensibility” 3) “Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm” 4) “It Takes a Village” or 5) “The Koran”?

It is the very book Ellison will proudly carry to his swearing-in that was the motivation for these murders.

The heads of the four teens were found in bags on the steps of a church with the following message, “We will murder 100 more Christian teenagers and their heads will be presented as presents.” When apprehended, one of the murderers said the killings were planned as a “gift” to mark the end of Ramadan.

To help us ignoramuses learn about his faith, perhaps Imam Ellison could explain the following verses in the Koran, with special reference to their relationship to justice and tolerance:

- “Believers, take neither Jews nor Christians for your friends. They are friends with one another. Whoever of you seeks their friendship shall become one of their number.”
- “Fight those who do not believe in God...Nor acknowledge the religion of truth (*Islam*) even if they are people of the Book (*Christians and Jews*) until they pay the Jizya (*poll tax*) with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.”
- “Ye Muslims are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind.”
- “As to the thief, male and female, cut off his or her hand: A punishment by way of example, from Allah for their crime.”
- “The woman and the man guilty of adultery or fornication, flog each of them with a hundred stripes.”

- “The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His Apostle, and strive with might and main for mischief through the land is crucifixion, or the cutting off of the hands and feet from opposite sides or exile from the land.”
- “The last hour will not come before the Muslims fight the Jews and the Muslims kill them, so Jews will hide behind stones and trees and the stone and the tree will say ‘O Muslim. ‘O servant of God! There is a Jew hiding behind me: come and kill him.’”

And please -- I beg you -- don't cite the Bible verses about dealing with civilians in conquered cities, or the penalty for blaspheming or cursing one's parents.

It's been 3,000 years since a Canaanite city was put to the sword. (Israel doesn't even have capital punishment for Muslims who murder Jews in the name of Allah.) Christianity's last crusade was half-a-millennium ago. I know of no Western nation that applies the death penalty to those who sass mom and pop.

On the other hand (the one that hasn't been cut off), execution for adultery, fatwah/death warrants for “insulting the Prophet,” the rape of female captives, honor killings of women suspected of extra-marital sex, suicide bombings and other excursions into holy war are regular occurrences in the Muslim world.

Such crimes are condoned by the highest religious authorities in Islam, including the scholars of Al-Azhar University and Adb al-Rahman al-Sudais, sheikh of Mecca's Grand Mosque. (Ain't Islam grand?)

On January 3, Ellison will take an oath to defend the Constitution of the United States with his hand on the Koran. But are the two in any way compatible?

Our form of government is based on the Bible. At the dedication of the Bunker Hill Monument (1843), Daniel Webster declared that the Bible “is also a book which teaches man his own individual responsibility, and his equality with his fellow-man.”

As Franklin Delano Roosevelt put it in 1935 (speaking on the 400th. anniversary of the printing of the English Bible), “We can not read the history of our rise and development as a nation without reckoning the place the Bible has occupied in shaping the advances of the Republic.”

Christianity and Judaism are embraced voluntarily. Throughout its history, unto today, conversion to Islam is often under duress. (Ask the 1.9 million who died in the Sudan’s second civil war – 1983 to 2005) The Bible appeals to reason. Islam is based on blind, unthinking adherence to the Koran. Benedict XVI alluded to this in his famous remarks at the University of Regensburg.

The Bible contains the seeds of our current conception of equality under the law and human rights. (The American Revolution was preached from colonial pulpits. The anti-slavery movement started in the churches of New England.) That’s why the Western world pioneered the abolition of slavery. That’s why the Islamic world still has it.

If there’s anything in the Koran compatible with civil liberties, it has yet to be discovered. The Koran is the basis for the system of dhimmitude – the subjugation of non-Muslims. That’s why democracy has never developed organically in the Islamic world. If the Islamic advance into the heart of Europe hadn’t been

stopped at the Battle of Tours (732 AD), our government might resemble Iran's or Saudi Arabia's – where freedom of conscience is not exactly enshrined in law.

The concept of tolerance that permits the election of a Muslim in an overwhelmingly Christian country is not based on the Koran, but the book Muslims believe it supersedes.

While Ellison is teaching us benighted Islamaphobes about justice and tolerance, perhaps he could save a few lessons for his co-religionists in the Muslim world (like the headhunters of Indonesia) – where such concepts are non-existent.

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