

So You Want to Look into the Religious Beliefs of Public Officials?

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May 8, 2019 - San Francisco, CA - PipeLineNews.org

Article VI, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution prohibits a “religious test” from being required in order to qualify for any office or “public trust” in the United States. But in the last few years we have seen some interesting examples in which a person’s religion was examined when that person was being considered for public office.

In September 2017, Senator Diane Feinstein expressed concern about a judicial nominee’s Christian religion and stated:

Whatever a religion is, it has its own dogma. The law is totally different. And I think in your case, professor, when you read your speeches, the conclusion one draws is that the dogma lives loudly within you... [1]

In December 2018, Senators Mazie Hirona and Kamala Harris expressed concern about a judicial nominee’s membership in the Knights of Columbus, a 137-year-old fraternal Catholic charitable organization. These Senators considered positions taken by the Knights, which simply conformed to Catholic teachings, as “extreme” and raised the question about whether the nominee would end his membership if he was confirmed as a judge. [2]

It seems now that even current elected officials are not exempt from this religious scrutiny. In April 2019, Pete Buttigieg, a potential Democrat presidential candidate and current Mayor of South Bend, Indiana, was asked if he thought President Trump was a Christian. Buttigieg responded:

I'm reluctant to comment on another person's faith, but I would say it is hard to look at this president's actions and believe that they're the actions of somebody who believes in God. [3]

That same month, Buttigieg had criticized Vice President Pence for his opposition to homosexual marriage based on Pence's Christian faith; Buttigieg added:

I don't have a problem with religion, I'm religious too. I have a problem with religion being used as a justification to harm people. [4]

There was even an April 2019 article in *The Atlantic* about how potential Democrat presidential candidates were now bringing up their religious beliefs, and some were even referring to the Bible and to the importance of Christ.[5]

With these precedents in mind, let's turn our attention to the current U.S. Congress.

The 116th Congress convened on January 3, 2019. It has three Muslim members, all in the House of Representatives: Ilhan Omar – Minnesota 5th District; Rashida Tlaib – Michigan 13th District; and Andre Carson (a Muslim convert) – Indiana 7th District.

A week after this congress convened, the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) hosted a "Community Congressional Reception." These three Muslim Representatives attended and made presentations:

In her presentation Ilhan Omar made it a point to state that she and Tlaib were "Muslim women" in Congress.

Rashida Tlaib stated, "I believe so much in our faith, and it gives me so much strength every single day."

Andre Carson talked about increasing the number of Muslims in Congress with the idea of having 30-35 Muslims in Congress in 2030, and even having a female Muslim president by that time. Carson ended his presentation to the CAIR audience by saying that all Muslim Americans have:

...a directive to represent Islam, in all of our imperfections, but to represent Islam and let the world know that Muslims are here to stay, and Muslims are a part of America. And we will, we will have a Muslim caucus that is sizable, that is formidable, and that is there for you. [6]

Representing Islam

Omar, Tlaib and Carson are very upfront about their faith, and Carson said that Muslim Americans need to "represent Islam."

Omar has been criticized for making anti-Semitic remarks. Tlaib and Carson have been criticized for their association with Louis Farrakhan, head of the anti-Semitic Nation of Islam. Are they representing Islam? Let's see what Islam teaches about Jews.

In the Koran we find such verses as: Allah states that Jews are the worst enemies of Muslims (5:82); Allah curses the Jews (9:30) and states that Jews are among the worst of creatures who "will abide in the fire of Hell" (98:6); Allah forbids Muslims from being friends with Jews (5:51) and instead commands Muslims to fight Jews (9:29).

The Koran also tells us that Muhammad spoke for Allah (4:80) and is considered the Perfect Man for Muslims - they are expected to follow his teachings and example if they want to get to Paradise (33:21 and 59:7). Here are some things Muhammad said about Jews:

Muhammad called the Jewish Banu Qurayzah tribe “brothers of monkeys.” [7] He said that Jews were grave-robbers,[8]that a Jew was worth only half of a Muslim,[9]and that Jews would take the place of Muslims in Hell. [10] On his deathbed, Muhammad said that Jews (and Christians) should be expelled from the Arabian Peninsula so that only Muslims would be left. [11]

Muhammad also made this eye-opening statement:

Narrated Abu Hurairah: Allah’s Messenger said, “The Hour will not be established until you fight against the Jews, and the stone behind which a Jew will be hiding will say, ‘O Muslim! There is a Jew hiding behind me, so kill him.’” [12]

Considering what Islam teaches about Jews, the anti-Semitism of Omar, Tlaib and Carson should come as no surprise. Their dogma seems to be living loudly within them.

Treatment of Homosexuals

Buttigieg, who has openly proclaimed his homosexuality and his “marriage” to another man, said that he had a problem with a religion that was used as “a justification to harm people.” Let’s see what Islam teaches about homosexuals, based on statements of Muhammad.

Muhammad cursed homosexuals:

It was narrated from Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allah cursed women who imitate men and men who imitate women. [13]

Muhammad said that those committing homosexual acts should be killed:

Ibn ‘Abbas said that the Messenger of Allah said, “Whoever you catch committing the act of the people of Lut (homosexuality), then kill both parties to the act.” [14]

And Muhammad even specified how those homosexuals were to be killed:

It was narrated from Abu Hurairah that the Prophet said concerning those who do the action of the people of Lut: “Stone the upper and the lower, stone them both.” [15]

It seems like these teachings provide plenty of “justification to harm people.” Perhaps Buttigieg should engage Omar, Tlaib and Carson in a conversation about these teachings of Muhammad.

Allegiance to the Constitution of the United States

Something else to think about: on the first day of the new Congress, the Speaker of the House administers the Oath of Office to the assembled House members. It starts out:

I, [state your name] , do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same... [16]

Support and defend our Constitution. Bear true faith and allegiance to our Constitution. Can Muslims really do this while also representing Islam?

Let’s take a brief look at how Islam relates to three Amendments to our Constitution. As we do so, keep in mind that Islamic Doctrine is based on the commands of Allah found in the Koran and the teachings and examples of Muhammad (the *Sunnah*).

First Amendment

Freedom of Religion is guaranteed in the United States. However, Muslims who want to leave Islam can face the death penalty.

Koran 4:89 states that apostates from Islam should be killed. Muhammad said that those who left Islam deserved to be killed,[17] and Muhammad even specified the means of death for those leaving Islam: *If someone changes his religion – then strike off his head!* [18] Muhammad also said that crucifixion was among the penalties for apostasy from Islam.[19]

What about freedom of religion for non-Muslims?

The history of Islam shows that since the 7th Century, when the power relationship has been conducive, Muslims have generally given non-Muslims the choice of converting to Islam or fighting to the death. On occasion non-Muslims, especially Jews and Christians, have been given a third choice of paying the *jizyah* (protection money) which allowed those non-Muslims to live under Muslim rule as, at best, second-class citizens. But in many cases, such living conditions became so onerous that the non-Muslims eventually converted to Islam to improve their lives.

There is no freedom of religion in Islam. [20]

Freedom of Speech is also guaranteed in the United States. However, when it comes to Muhammad, there is no freedom of speech in Islam. Muhammad did not like to be criticized or reviled. He personally ordered the killing of a number of non-Muslims simply because they had criticized or mocked him.

For example, in September 624 Muhammad ordered the killing of Ka'b b. al-Ashraf, a Jewish poet in Medina who had criticized Muhammad. Muhammad also stated that a similar fate would befall anyone else who insulted him:

[After Ka'b was killed] The Jews and the polytheists among them were alarmed. They came to the Prophet when it was morning and said, "Our companion, who was one of our lords, was knocked up at night and murdered treacherously with no crime or incident by him that we know of." The Messenger of God replied, "If he had remained as others of similar opinion remained he would not have been killed treacherously. But he hurt us and insulted us with poetry, and one does not do this among you, but he shall be put to the sword." [21]

Muhammad even killed poets in Mecca. This was mentioned in a letter written after the Muslim conquest of Mecca. It was sent to the poet Ka'b bin Zuhair, who used to satirize Muhammad, from Ka'b's brother:

Allah's Messenger killed some men in Makkah who used to satirize and harm him, and the poets who survived fled in all directions for their lives. So, if you want to save your skin, hasten to Allah's Messenger. He never kills those who come to him repenting. If you refuse to do as I say, it is up to you to try to save your skin by any means. [22]

This tale had a happy ending because after further correspondence between the brothers, Ka'b travelled to Medina, converted to Islam, and was forgiven by Muhammad.

Muhammad said there was no punishment for a Muslim who killed anyone who had reviled or criticized him, and he even gave retroactive approval to two Muslims who had each killed a woman for committing that very act. [23]

Our Constitution guarantees freedom of religion and freedom of speech; Islam prohibits both.

8th Amendment

This amendment prohibits cruel and unusual punishment in the United States. However, Islam allows such punishments, and here is a list of those punishments approved by Islamic Doctrine:

Amputation of a hand or foot for theft: Koran 5:38, and *Sunnah*[24]

Amputation of a hand and foot from the opposite sides: Koran 5:33

Amputation of the fingers and toes: Koran 8:12 [25]

Beheading: Koran 8:12 and 47:4, and *Sunnah*[26]

Burning people to death: *Sunnah*[27]

Crucifixion: Koran 5:33, and *Sunnah*[28]

Flogging: Koran 24:2 and 4, and *Sunnah*[29]

Stoning to death: *Sunnah*[30]

Cruel and unusual punishments are prohibited by our Constitution, but allowed under Islam.

13th Amendment

Section 1 of this amendment prohibits slavery in the United States. However, slavery is allowed under Islam.

In the Koran there are numerous verses acknowledging and accepting the Muslim possession of slaves (e.g.: 2:221, 24:58, and 33:55).

There are also verses in the Koran referring to those "whom your right hands possess" (e.g., 4:3, 4:24-25, 23:6, and 70:30); this is a special category of slaves. These slaves are non-Muslim women who were captured by Muslims in battle; once so captured, the woman becomes a slave to her Muslim captor and it becomes "legal" for him to have intercourse with her. This sex slavery is authorized by Koran 4:24.

What about Muhammad, the man who set the example for Muslims? Muhammad was a slave dealer – he bought, sold and gave away slaves, and he had sex slaves.[31]

For example, after the defeat of the Jewish Banu Qurayzah tribe, Muhammad divided up that tribe's "property, wives, and children" among the Muslims; but some of the women he sent to Najd and to Syria to be sold for horses and weapons. [32] Muhammad personally sold some of the other captured women:

I attended the Messenger of God who was selling the prisoners of the Banu Qurayza. Abu al-Shahm al-Yahudi bought two women, with each one of them three male children, for one hundred and fifty dinars.

Muhammad also personally sold "a portion" of the women and children to 'Uthman b. 'Affan and 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf. [33]

In fact, Koran Chapter 33, Verse 50 specifically authorized Muhammad to have sex slaves.

Slavery is prohibited by our Constitution, but allowed under Islam.

The Religion of Islam teaches beliefs that are incompatible with our Constitution. How can a Muslim swear to uphold and defend our Constitution while claiming to represent a religion that violates that very Constitution?

The answer could be found in Koran 16:106, which allows Muslims to deny their faith if they feel they are under duress:

Whosoever disbelieved in Allah after his belief, except him who is forced thereto and whose heart is at rest with Faith; but such as open their breasts to disbelief, on them is wrath from Allah, and theirs will be a great torment.

But could Muslims in the United States, especially those in public office, really feel that they are under duress because of their religion? The answer is “yes,” because they are surrounded by non-Muslims (disbelievers), and Koran 4:101 tells Muslims that the disbelievers “are ever to you open enemies.”

Consequently, according to Islamic Doctrine Muslims can outwardly swear allegiance to, and pledge to support and defend a Constitution that outlaws many of their religious beliefs, as long as allegiance to Islam is secretly maintained in their hearts.

Conclusion

It has now become “fair game” for Christian public officials and those Christians aspiring to public office to be questioned, and to have comments made about their faith.

There is then no reason to refrain from taking that same approach to Muslim public officials and Muslims aspiring to public office, especially when they talk about the importance of representing their faith, and we know that many of their religious beliefs are in conflict with our Constitution, a document which they would be pledging to support and defend, and to which they would be swearing their allegiance.

It is only natural to ask them how they would resolve such conflicts.

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[1] Michael McGough, “Feinstein, a Catholic nominee and a dogma that didn't bark,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 8, 2017; accessible at <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/opinion-la/la-ol-feinstein-catholic-20170908-story.html> .

[2] Valerie Richardson, “Harris, Hirono accused of anti-Catholic 'bigotry' for targeting Knights of Columbus,” *The Washington Times*, December 30, 2018; accessible at <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2018/dec/30/kamala-harris-mazie-hirono-target-brian-buescher-k/> .

[3] Kirsten Powers, “Mayor Pete Buttigieg's countercultural approach to Christianity is what America needs now,” *USA Today*, April 4, 2019; accessible at <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2019/04/03/mayor-pete-buttigieg-christian-right-2020-democratic-primary-trump-column/3342767002/> .

[4] Ed O’Keefe, “Pete Buttigieg confronts Pence about religion ahead of 2020 bid,” CBS News, April 12, 2019; accessible at <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/pete-buttigieg-confronts-mike-pence-about-religion-ahead-of-2020-bid/> .

[5] Emma Green, "Democrats Have to Decide Whether Faith Is an Asset for 2020," *The Atlantic*, April 5, 2019; accessible at <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/04/buttigieg-democrats-religious-left/586492/> .

[6] Scott Morefield, "Congressman envisions over 30 Muslim reps in Congress by 2030," *The Daily Caller*, January 12, 2019; accessible at <https://dailycaller.com/2019/01/12/andre-carson-muslim-reps-2030/> .

[7] Muhammad ibn Ishaq, *The Life of Muhammad (Sirat Rasul Allah)*, trans. Alfred Guillaume (Karachi, Pakistan: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 461.

[8] Muhammad bin Ismail bin Al-Mughirah al-Bukhari, *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, trans. Muhammad Muhsin Khan (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 1997), Vol. 4, Book 60, No. 3452, p. 413.

[9] Muhammad bin Yazeed ibn Majah al-Qazwini, *Sunan Ibn Majah*, trans. Nasiruddin al-Khattab (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 2007), Vol. 3, No. 2644, p. 521.

[10] Abu'l Hussain 'Asakir-ud-Din Muslim bin Hajjaj al-Qushayri al-Naisaburi, *Sahih Muslim*, trans. 'Abdul Hamid Siddiqi (New Delhi, India: Adam Publishers and Distributors, 2008), Vol. 8, No. 2767R1, p. 269.

[11] *Sahih Muslim* , Vol. 5, No. 1767, p. 189.

[12] *Sahih Al-Bukhari* , Vol. 4, Book 56, No. 2926, p. 113.

[13] *Sunan Ibn Majah* , Vol. 3, No. 1903, p. 93.

[14] Abu al-Fida' 'Imad Ad-Din Isma'il bin 'Umar bin Kathir al-Qurashi Al-Busrawi, *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*(Abridged), abr. Shaykh Safiur-Rahman al-Mubarakpuri, trans. Jalal Abualrub, et al. (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 2000), Vol. 2, p. 402.

[15] *Sunan Ibn Majah* , Vol. 3, No. 2562, p. 469.

[16] Title 5, Section 3331 of the United States Code; <https://history.house.gov/Institution/Origins-Development/Oath-of-Office/> .

[17] *Sahih Al-Bukhari* , Vol. 4, Book 56, No. 3017, p. 159.

[18] Malik ibn Anas ibn Malik ibn Abi 'Amir al-Asbahi, *Al-Muwatta of Imam Malik ibn Anas: The First Formulation of Islamic Law* , trans. Aisha Abdurrahman Bewley (Inverness, Scotland: Madinah Press, 2004), 36.18.15, in the section titled "Judgement on Abandonment of Islam."

[19] Abu 'Abdur-Rahman Ahmad bin Shu'aib bin 'Ali bin Sinan bin Bahr An-Nasa'i, *Sunan An-Nasa'i*, trans. Nasiruddin al-Khattab (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 2007), Vol. 5, No. 4053, pp. 56-57.

[20] For information about how Muhammad and his Muslim warriors conquered the Arabian Peninsula for Islam at the point of the sword, see my book *Islam's Militant Prophet: Muhammad and Forced Conversions to Islam* .

[21] Muhammad b. 'Umar al-Waqidi, *The Life of Muhammad: Al-Waqidi's Kitab al-Maghazi*, trans. Rizwi Faizer, Amal Ismail, and AbdulKader Tayob, ed. Rizwi Faizer (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 96.

Muhammad's attitude toward such poets is best summed up in this *hadith*:

Saalim ibn 'Abdullah said: I heard Ibn 'Umar say: I heard the Messenger of Allah say: "If the belly of one of you were to be filled with pus, that would be better than filling his mind with poetry."

Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Hanbal ash-Shaibani, *Musnad Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal*, trans. Nasiruddin Al-Khattab, ed. Huda Al-Khattab (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 2016), Vol. 4, No. 5704, p. 441.

[22] Safiur-Rahman al-Mubarakpuri, *The Sealed Nectar* (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 2008), p. 521.

[23] Abu Dawud Sulaiman bin al-Ash'ath bin Ishaq, *Sunan Abu Dawud*, trans. Yaser Qadhi (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 2008), Vol. 5, Nos. 4361 and 4362, pp. 20-21.

[24] *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Vol. 5, Book 64, No. 4304, pp. 361-362; *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Vol. 8, Book 86, No. 6789, p. 410, No. 6796, p. 412, and No. 6799, p. 413; and *Sunan An-Nasa'i*, Vol. 5, No. 4883, p. 462, and No. 4981, pp. 499-500.

[25] Although this verse states what Allah had commanded the angels to do when they reportedly helped the Muslims during the Battle of Badr, it was also a command for what the Muslims (believers) were to do to their enemies:

Ibn Jarir commented that this Ayah [verse] commands, "O believers! Strike every limb and finger on the hands and feet of your (disbelieving) enemies."

Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Vol. 4, p. 274.

Why cut off fingers and toes? In the commentary about this verse of the Koran, the 20th Century *Tafsir Ahsanul-Bayan* explained:

If the fingers of the hands are cut off, they will become unable to move their swords. Similarly, when the toes are cut off, they will be unable to run away.

Salahuddin Yusuf, *Tafsir Ahsanul-Bayan*, trans. Mohammad Kamal Myshkat (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 2010), Vol. 2, Commentary No. 2, p. 276.

[26] *The Life of Muhammad (Sirat Rasul Allah)*, pp. 464 and 515; *Sunan Ibn Majah*, Vol. 3, No. 2539, p. 455, and No. 2608, pp. 494-495; *Sahih Muslim*, Vol. 8, No. 2771, p. 281; *The Life of Muhammad: Al-Waqidi's Kitab al-Maghazi*, pp. 57, 331 and 422; *Al-Muwatta of Imam Malik ibn Anas*, 36.18.15; and Abu Ja'far Muhammad b. Jarir al-Tabari, *The History of al-Tabari: The Victory of Islam*, Vol. VIII, trans. and annotated Michael Fishbein (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1997), pp. 122-123.

[27] *Sunan Ibn Majah*, Vol. 1, No. 791, pp. 513-514; *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Vol. 1, Book 10, No. 644, pp. 371-372, and No. 657, p. 376; *Sahih Muslim*, Vol. 2, No. 651R2 and No. 652, p. 367; *Sunan An-Nasa'i*, Vol. 1, No. 849, p. 502; *Sunan Abu Dawud*, Vol. 1, No. 549, p. 340; *Al-Muwatta of Imam Malik ibn Anas*, 8.1.3; and *The Life of Muhammad (Sirat Rasul Allah)*, n. 858, p. 782.

[28] *Sunan Abu Dawud*, Vol. 5, No. 4353, p. 16; this *hadith* from Aisha was similarly reported in *Sunan An-Nasa'i*, Vol. 5, No. 4053, pp. 56-57. Also see Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad ibn Sa'd ibn Mani' al-Zuhri al-Basri, *Kitab al-Tabaqat al-Kabir*, trans. S. Moinul Haq (New Delhi, India: Kitab Bhavan, 2009), Vol. 2, p. 115.

[29] *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Vol. 8, Book 86, Nos. 6831 and 6833, p. 435, and Nos. 6837-38, pp. 437-438; *Sahih Muslim*, Vol. 5, No. 1690, p. 131; *Sunan Abu Dawud*, Vol. 5, No. 4415, pp. 50-51; and *Sunan Ibn Majah*, Vol. 3, No. 2550, p. 462; *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, Vol. 7, pp. 18-19; and *Tafsir Ahsanul-Bayan*, Vol. 3, pp. 664-665.

[30] *The Life of Muhammad (Sirat Rasul Allah)*, pp. 267 and 652; *Sahih Muslim*, Vol. 5, pp. 131-141; *Sunan Abu Dawud*, Vol. 5, No. 4415, pp. 50-51; *Sunan Ibn Majah*, Vol. 3, No. 2550, p. 462; and *Sahih Al-Bukhari*:

Vol. 3, Book 54, Nos. 2724-2725, pp. 522-523

Vol. 5, Book 64, No. 4303, pp. 360-361

Vol. 8, Book 86, Nos. 6815-6816, pp. 421-422, and No. 6841, p. 439

Vol. 9, Book 93, Nos. 7193-7194, p. 193

It is not uncommon to hear the erroneous claim that stoning adulterers is no longer a valid penalty under Islam. To refute that claim and show that stoning is still a valid penalty, see my article "The Fantasy Islam of the University of Michigan's Juan Cole (Part 3)," *Jihad Watch*, December 16, 2018; accessible at <https://www.jihadwatch.org/2018/12/the-fantasy-islam-of-the-university-of-michigans-juan-cole-part-3> .

[31] <http://perfectmantruth.com/slaves.php>

[32] *The Life of Muhammad (Sirat Rasul Allah)* , p. 466. This is also mentioned in *The Sealed Nectar*, p. 378; *Sahih Muslim*, Vol. 5, No. 1766, p. 186; and *The Life of Muhammad: Al-Waqidi's Kitab al-Maghazi*, pp. 256-257.

[33] *The Life of Muhammad: Al-Waqidi's Kitab al-Maghazi* , pp. 256-257.

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