

Dear Sirs,

I am 79 and have lived and worked in Senegal, Mauritania, Egypt and Iran, in all, for over twelve years working as an Exploration Geologist and Party Leader. These are all Islamic countries. My son was born in Iran in the time of the Shah. I learned and spoke some Farsi. I came to Australia in 1970 and became a nationalised Australian in 1997. I was born in New Zealand.

I could not help but become interested in Islam so read the Koran several times. Being subjected to their pattern of life and having worked with many Muslim workers in conditions that few experience I think I gained their confidence. In the most remote deserts and the highest mountains you come to depend on each other for survival and in these circumstances you become very close. Many evenings around a camp fire we would discuss the Koran and the Bible.

From my workers conduct and spoken expectations I came to realise that Islam is not just a 'religion', it is a total body and soul commitment. Its laws supersede all other laws. Its demands dictate all facets of life irrespective of where a Muslim may live. There is 'Dar-al-Islam' and 'Dar-al-Gharb'. Land of Islam and Land of War. That makes up the world. *All* Muslims must strive to convert the world to Dar-al-Islam and so achieve the 'Umma' or world fellowship of Islam. Not to do so is *taqfir* (recanting) and punishable by death. All this I learned and much more.

I learned that Muslims can appear to be very tolerant and dismissive in one setting but quickly revert to fierce orthodoxy and fanaticism in another. Their core beliefs are unbelievably deeply ingrained in them. I am convinced that these beliefs are placed well ahead of any laws and customs mere Australians might seek to impose on them. They have words for the various techniques to convert infidel societies, ranging from the 'sword' at one extreme, to an overwhelming birth rate at the other. I could go on but I think my point has been made.

My biggest fear is that Sharia Law will 'creep' into Australia and be secretly practised here. I know a Muslim man who's been here for over 50 years, has thought about Islam, been integrated but is too fearful to speak out. 'Terrorism' already exists here in Australia! It will become more widespread. I too have some fear.

I think our Australian 'culture' cannot co-exist with an 'Islamic cult'. Our tolerance is interpreted as weakness and indecision. For us who 'believe totally' in so little, it's hard for us to face up to such commitment in another. The 'glamour' and decisiveness that some see as 'portrayed Islam' seems to be appealing to some young people born in our free society but I'm sure they have a lot to learn about Islam. It's new, and offers glamour and fellowship. It also offers support in failure and the promise of success in the next life if you fail in this one, but there's a price to be paid. Muslims must not *think* about Islam. That is *taqfir*. Islam means 'submit'----submit totally. No questions, no thinking, just submit, and as a true believer, in the next world you'll get all you could ever possibly dream of. I link Islamism and Nazism in my mind. I see little difference.

What is the solution? I don't think insisting on a separation of Islam as a religion from state affairs would work. Islam is the total package. I think the only hope we Australians have is to *convince Muslims that they have to question...question and think!!!* Think freely and widely. Any change will have to come from within them. So far all such 'weakening of cult' efforts have been met with death, and there have been several (Sufi Saints, Bahai etc) so it won't be easy. Islamic schools and Mosques simply reinforce the 'cult' so allowing them to be built is a mistake. Segregation by means of Halal foods, dress and movement

restriction should also be resisted. I don't think legislation against Islam as such is the answer.

I think Australia's position concerning Islam should be stated internationally. I think 'multiculturalism' as a policy ensures that an Australian community cannot develop. It guarantees friction and discord. What we have in Australia as a 'culture' has developed slowly in response to need. I think the arrival of the 'cult' of Islam seeks to replace that culture, not enrich it.

I think Islam is unique. We have no problem with Sikhs, Buddhists, Hindus, Confucists, Bahai's, Tsaoists, the Hebrew faith etc. They integrate and don't seek to convert us. Not so Muslims and Islam.

To summarise, it's not so much the people I fear, it's the teachings...the 'Koran' and the derived 'Sharia Law'.

Faithfully,