

Arab Christians are being persecuted in the Middle East

July 31, 2014

by [Randy Bright](#)



Randy Bright

Of all the sad stories in the news today, few seem so sad as the news coming out of Iraq. Christians have been forced out under threat of death by ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria), an Islamic organization that has been incrementally and militarily taking over Iraq city by city.

There are reports now that there are virtually no Christians left in Iraq. Reportedly all that have made it out of the country alive have left everything they owned behind to be confiscated by ISIS. One report said that three families fled the country, all packed in one car, only to be held at a checkpoint for hours before finally being allowed to leave.

According to a report from Fox News, "The Islamic State (ISIS) terror group announced through their mosques on Friday afternoon that local Christians must either convert to Islam, pay an exorbitant Muslim tax - the jizya, which amounts to protection money - or leave the city. If they did not conform to these demands by noon on Saturday, July 19, there would be "nothing for them but the sword".

Several years ago I wrote a series of articles on Islam which included discussion of the jizya tax. Originating from the Koran, this tax was intended to enslave people as a resource for money when it was advantageous to do so. It also included an act of humiliation - being slapped on the face when the tax was paid - in order to let non-Muslims know that they were inferior to Muslims.

But it appears that the real ultimatum coming from ISIS does not include the jizya. According to the same Fox report, "It's not surprising that the vicious tactics of the IS/ISIS terrorists horrify most observers. As is often reported on social media - with substantial videographic evidence - they have beheaded, mutilated, raped, stoned and even crucified those whose behavior is 'unislamic' or whose religious convictions displease them."

There are other reports indicating that churches are being destroyed to cleanse Iraq of its centuries old Christian presence - they were there many centuries before Islam was created - including the destruction of a shrine dedicated to the prophet Jonah,

Denunciations of the terrorist actions of ISIS is replete from the United States, United Nations and European Union, among others, but nothing is being done to stop the slaughter of Christians and destruction of churches and other Christian-Judeo architecture.

Obama, who pulled troops out of Iraq far too early for political reasons, left the Iraq Christians alone and defenseless. Consistent with that policy, he has indicated no interest in doing anything about the takeover of Iraq. He said, "what we can't do is think that we're just going to play 'Whack-a-Mole' and send U.S. troops occupying various countries wherever these organizations pop up."

We can argue all day long about whether we should or should not have sent troops into Iraq in the first place, but once having conquered that country, we had a responsibility to maintain control until a real republic could be established with freedoms including religious freedoms, even it took several decades.

The investment we made in Iraq - thousands of American lives that were lost, the horrible injuries that were inflicted upon thousands of other Americans, and the financial investment we made - are all now a terrible waste. Iraq could have been an oasis of religious freedom in the middle east, but now Christians are being killed or are losing everything they have because of the evil religion of Islam (which I maintain it is not really a religion, but an ideology).

In all of this we cannot forget that a similar scenario is being played out in Israel, who is desperately trying to defend itself against the rocket attacks from Hamas, another terrorist Islamic organization.

Under Obama's leadership, Secretary of State John Kerry is placing pressure on Israel to stop its defensive war against Hamas in Gaza, where Hamas has fired thousands of rockets indiscriminately into Israel for months.

It has been reported that an FAA ban against American flights into Israel may have been imposed in order to pressure Israel into stopping their defense against Hamas.

What we do in this country does matter. What we believe in this country matters as well. If ordinary Americans become as detached from the religious cleansing that is going on in the Middle East, it may soon find itself in another post-911 scenario, wondering why someone at the top didn't do something to stop Islam in its tracks.

Of all the sad stories in the news today, few seem so sad as the news coming out of Iraq. Christians have been forced out under threat of death by ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria), an Islamic organization that has been incrementally and militarily taking over Iraq city by city.

Randy W. Bright, AIA, NCARB, is an architect who specializes in church and church-related projects. You may contact him at [918-582-3972](tel:918-582-3972) rwbrightchurcharch@sbcglobal.net or www.churcharchitect.net. ©2014 Randy W. Bright © 2014 Tulsa Beacon
Previous articles written by the author are available for reading at his website.