



## Thomas Jefferson's Quran

In the course of his flattering remarks about the great contributions of Muslims to America, the President mentioned the presence at the banquet of two Muslim members of Congress: Andre Carson, Democrat from Indiana, and Keith Ellison, Democrat from Minnesota, the latter of whom took his oath on Thomas Jefferson's copy of the Quran, which has been preserved in the Library of Congress.



What the President didn't mention is why Jefferson bought a Quran in London and why he read it. In preparing for war, he read it to find out what kind of religion the rulers of the Barbary States on the coast of North Africa believed in.

For centuries the Muslim pirates had cruised the Mediterranean Sea, capturing ships and taking prisoners, forcing Christian nations to pay tribute for freedom of passage. To avoid such confrontations, some Christian nations were willing to appease the Islamic enemy by signing treaties requiring them to pay a certain amount of tribute each year. It was a form of extortion that Muslims could impose on frightened Christians.

The pirates also raided coastline villages and took prisoners. The reason why so many Christian Greek coastal villages were built up in the hills was to provide protection against the depredations of the Muslims. Millions of Africans and thousands of Christian Europeans and Americans were enslaved by these raiders, who killed many non-Muslim older men and women and kidnapped young women and children to be sold as concubines. The boys were often mutilated to create eunuchs for use in harems and as servants.

Congressman Keith Ellison, born in Detroit to a Catholic family, was converted at age 19 to Islam while at Wayne State University. In law school, he wrote articles in support of Louis Farrakhan, with whom he is no longer affiliated. He said he chose to use Jefferson's Quran because it showed that "a visionary like Jefferson" believed that wisdom could be gleaned from many sources. Actually, it wasn't wisdom that Jefferson gleaned from the Quran, but a realistic understanding of what the United States was up against with the Barbary Pirates.

In 1786, Jefferson, then the American ambassador to France, and John Adams, then the American ambassador to Britain, met in London with Sidi Haji Abdul Rahman Adja, the Tripolitan ambassador to Britain. American merchant ships had been captured by the Barbary corsairs and their crews and passengers imprisoned. They could only be freed by the payment of large ransoms. The Americans wanted to negotiate a peace treaty to spare their ships these piratical attacks. Congress was willing to appease the Barbary pirates if only they could gain peace at a reasonable price.

During the meeting, Jefferson and Adams asked the ambassador why Muslims held such hostility toward America, a nation with which they had had no previous contacts. [Jefferson later reported to John Jay](#)



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[what the ambassador had told them](#): the reason for the Muslims' enmity was that "It was written in their Koran that all nations which had not acknowledged the Prophet were sinners, whom it was the right and duty of the faithful to plunder and enslave; and that every mussulman (Muslim) who was slain in this warfare was sure to go to [P]aradise."

What was Paradise like? George Sale, the translator of the English edition of the Quran that Jefferson had purchased, [wrote in his commentary](#):

[T]he very meanest in paradise will have eighty thousand servants, seventy-two wives of the girls of paradise, besides the wives he had in this world, and a tent erected for him of pearls, jacinths, and emeralds, of a very large extent; and, according to another tradition, will be waited on by three hundred attendants while he eats, will be served in dishes of gold, whereof three hundred shall be set before him at once, containing each a different kind of food . . . [T]here will be no want of wine, which, though forbidden in this life, will yet be freely allowed to be drunk in the next, and without danger, since the wine of paradise will not inebriate, as that we drink here. . . . [T]he inhabitants of paradise will not need to ease themselves, nor even to blow their nose, for that all superfluities will be discharged and carried off by perspiration, or a sweat as odoriferous as musk, after which their appetite shall return afresh.

So Jefferson was well aware of the superstitious lunacy and irrationality that motivated the Muslims willing to die as martyrs for Mohammed. And when he became President, he resolved to repel force by force. Within days of his inauguration, Jefferson ordered four warships to sail to the Barbary Coast and blockade and attack any Barbary State that was at war with the United States. Jefferson and his Cabinet all agreed that American power was needed to protect the young nation's commercial interests in the Mediterranean.

Joseph Wheelan writes in *Jefferson's War* that the third U.S. President "pitted a modern republic with a free-trade, entrepreneurial creed against a medieval autocracy whose credo was piracy and terror. It matched an ostensibly Christian nation against an avowed Islamic one that professed to despise Christians.... Jefferson was willing to send a largely untried squadron across the Atlantic to go to war with a people whose customs, history, and religion were alien to the early American experience."

The new President did not have a CIA to tell him what the enemy was like. He found that out by reading the Quran he had bought for his own edification. In other words, Jefferson's copy of the Quran helped him understand the nature and mentality of the Muslim enemy. He was wise enough to do his own research long before the United States government had any intelligence apparatus.

The Barbary War was the first foreign war fought and won by the newly independent United States. After many attempts to appease the duplicitous Barbary Muslims, the U.S. finally decided that force was the only way to put an end to the piracy. And thanks to Jefferson, a new U.S. Navy was created to fight and win this war.

The result was that the United States and the Christian nations of Europe were then able to keep the Muslims at bay for over a hundred years. The French went so far as to invade Algeria and colonize it with Europeans. But in 1960, Charles de Gaulle undid it all — and now there are over five million Muslims in France. Indeed, the loss of Christian nerve has once more opened the gates of the West to a barbaric Muslim offensive.

It's hard to believe that all this history is unknown to Congressman Ellison as well as President Obama,



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who knows full well what is in the Quran and what motivates the global jihadists. He doesn't need the CIA to tell him what we are up against in this new phase of our never-ending war with Islam, for as long as the religion of Islam exists it will never disobey its Prophet's command to conquer unbelievers and dominate the world.

**Dr. Samuel L. Blumenfeld** is the author of nine books on education including *NEA: Trojan Horse in American Education*, *The Whole Language/OBE Fraud*, and *The Victims of Dick & Jane and Other Essays*. Of *NEA: Trojan Horse in American Education*, former U.S. Senator Steve Symms of Idaho said: "Every so often a book is written that can change the thinking of a nation. This book is one of them." Mr. Blumenfeld's columns have appeared in such diverse publications as *Reason*, *The New American*, *The Chalcedon Report*, *Insight*, *Education Digest*, *Vital Speeches*, *WorldNetDaily*, and others.



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