

DEATH OF A SOLDIER

O Lord, as you called on your disciples to venture all to win all people to you, grant that we, the chosen members of the Special Air Service Regiment, may by our works and our ways dare all to win all, and in so doing render special service to you and the people of the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Prayer of the Special Air Service Regiment

On Monday, 2nd July 2012, Sergeant Blaine Flower Diddams, a Patrol Commander with Australia's Perth-based Special Air Service Regiment, was killed in action in an engagement with Muslim insurgents in the Chora Valley, Afghanistan. He was the 33rd Australian soldier to die in the conflict.

The son, and the grandson, of a soldier, Blaine had resisted the encouragement of his father, a veteran of the Vietnam conflict, to train as an officer. He wanted to be in the action, a 'hand's-on' soldier, not caught up in administration. His training was rigorous; his deeds and his achievements the sort of things the ordinary citizen only dreams about. He was, among other things, a parachutist, an ice climber, a skier and a frogman. Blaine was fluent in the French language and would have appreciated the providence which, overseeing bureaucratic clumsiness, had his funeral take place on Bastille Day, 14th July. *Almighty God*, as the Portuguese proverb has it, *writes straight with crooked lines*.

After his death a friend drew to the writer's attention the remarks made by Charles J. Chaput, the Archbishop of Philadelphia, to the graduates of an American military college in which he reminded them of the dignity and solemnity of their profession and calling. If it is the essence of the professional to serve, the soldier is the professional *par excellence* for his calling embraces potentially the ultimate sacrifice that may be made in the service of his fellow man. In the very undertaking of his profession the soldier makes, at least inchoately, a great act of love.

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The perceptive understand that the actions of the forces in Afghanistan are little more than a holding operation. The war in that country can never be won without the extirpation from its peoples of that religion, grounded in antipathy for mankind, that holds them in subjugation. Assisting Muslims to fight Muslims is a profitless exercise for the conqueror remains constrained by the religion at the root of his belligerency.

The most limited grasp of mediaeval and modern history reveals to the student the millennium-long conflict between Mohammedanism and that bulwark of all that is good in the world, Christianity. St Thomas Aquinas's remarks in the thirteenth century are to the point.

"Mohammed seduced the people by promises of carnal pleasure to which the concupiscence of the flesh goads us... He mingled the truths he taught with many fables and with doctrines of the greatest falsity. He brought forth no sign produced in a supernatural way, which alone fittingly gives witness to divine inspiration, for a visible action that can only be divine reveals an invisibly inspired teacher of truth. On the contrary, Mohammed said that he was sent in the power of his arms, signs not lacking even to robbers and tyrants... Those who believed in him were brutal

men and desert wanderers utterly ignorant of all divine teaching through whose numbers Mohammed forced others to become his followers by violence. Nor do divine pronouncements by the prophets offer him any witness. On the contrary, he perverts almost all the testimonies of the Old and New Testaments by making them into fabrications of his own, as can be seen by anyone who examines his law.¹

The saint wrote 600 years after Mohammed had flourished and more than 600 years ago. Nothing has changed.

We are attended by politicians and public servants who, largely devoid of religious faith, yet retain a derivatively Christian attitude towards their fellow man. In Australia this manifests itself in the attitude of the 'fair go' for one's neighbour. Lacking faith in God they lack, too, its condign sensitivity to the dangers of Mohammedanism.² They have no understanding of the reason Christ's admonition to his followers to be 'as harmless as doves' was presaged by the parallel requirement that they be 'as wise as serpents' [*Matthew* 10: 16].

In their naivety these practical atheists think that the application of derivatively Christian values to the Muslim will convert him to their 'democratic' way of life. It will not. The evidence is before them every day of the disorder characteristic of Muslim societies, yet they are unable to see why their Christian ancestors worked so strenuously to extirpate the Mohammedans and Mohammedanism. So, daily, they commit the negligence of allowing the incursion of the Muslim into their midst as if the appellation 'refugee' excluded every other consideration. The burden of this neglect will, regrettably, not fall upon them but upon their children.

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Again, it is only the perceptive who can see in the systematic opposition of the forces of derivatively Christian countries such as Australia to the depredations of Mohammedanism the persistence of that age-long conflict. It is no accident that the Special Air Service Prayer should be directed to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to aid its members in their struggles.

Michael Baker
20th July 2012

¹ *Summa Contra Gentiles* Bk. I, 6 [4]

² The fault is, however, not primarily to be attributed to these atheists but to the 2,308 bishops of the Catholic Church at the Second Vatican Council who, on 7th December 1965 in the Declaration *Dignitatis Humanae*, formally rejected the infallible teaching of their Church that there is no right of religious liberty. "When [such a liberty] is offered to man," wrote Pope Leo XIII, "the power is given him to pervert or abandon with impunity the most sacred of duties and to exchange the unchangeable good for evil which, as we have said, is no liberty at all but its degradation and the abject submission of the soul to sin." [*Libertas praestantissimum*, 20 June 1888, n. 20] The evil example of their collective negligence has had profound consequences for the nations of the world, not the least of which is the permission of the Muslim invasion.