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# Afghan Man to Be Executed for Converting to Christianity?, Update

Tuesday, March 21, 2006

Yesterday, several international news sources reported that a man in Afghanistan, Abdul Rahman, is now on trial in Kabul for the “crime” of converting to Christianity [see entry below]. Now, further details are coming out, and it appears that the man’s only hope is to be declared insane.

ABC News reports: *Despite the overthrow of the fundamentalist Taliban government and the presence of 22,500 U.S. troops in Afghanistan, a man who converted to Christianity is being prosecuted in Kabul, and a judge said Sunday that if convicted, he faces the death penalty.*

*Abdul Rahman, who is in his 40s, says he converted to Christianity 16 years ago while working as an aid worker helping Afghan refugees in Pakistan. Relatives denounced him as a convert during a custody battle over his children, and he was arrested last month. The prosecutor says Rahman was found with a Bible.*

Further:

*Presiding judge Ansarullah Mawlawezadah tells ABC News a medical team was checking the defendant, since the team suspects insanity caused Rahman to reject Islam. “We want to know that the doctors have given him a green light on his mental state, because he is not normal when he talks,” says the judge.*

*The post-Taliban constitution recognizes Islam as Afghanistan’s religion, and decrees that Islam’s Sharia law applies when a case is not covered by specific legislation. The prosecutor says under Sharia law, Abdul Rahman must die.*

*The judge, however, holds hopes for a solution. “We will ask him if he has changed his mind about being a Christian,” Mawlawezadah says. “If he has, we will forgive him, because Islam is a religion of tolerance.”*

Here is another troubling dimension of this atrocity — the official American response seems to be quite tepid.

*The U.S. State Department is watching the case closely and considers it a barometer of how well democracy is developing in Afghanistan. Our view ... is that tolerance, freedom of worship is an important element of any democracy,” State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said. “And these are issues as Afghan democracy matures that they are going to have to deal with increasingly.”*

That’s it?

