

The King, the Pope, And the Sword

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[Saudi Arabia](#)'s king visited the pope at the [Vatican](#) this week, and the leader of Catholicism expressed grief over the draconian discrimination experienced by Christian minorities in some Muslim lands.

During the unprecedented and historic encounter, [Benedict XVI](#) gave the Saudi monarch an old painting of the Vatican. The king's gift to the pontiff: a sword.

As a gift from from a leading Islamic fundamentalist nation, a sword is about as clear a symbol of intolerance as there can be; and indeed, swords are used for public decapitations in Saudi Arabia on Fridays. The U.S. State Department's yearly human rights report cites Saudi Arabia for bigotry toward non-Muslims, including "harassment, abuse, and even killings at the hands of the Muttawa (religious police)."

The newspaper L'Osservatore Romano said the Vatican hoped the meeting with the Saudi king would produce a frank dialogue on Christian worship — in Saudi kingdom and in the wider Arab world, where Christians' basic rights to practice their religion have been curtailed by Islamist terror of the same brand preached and practiced in Saudi Arabia. The pope pleaded for equal treatment for Christians as is granted to millions of Muslims in the West.

Abdullah, for his part, insisted on a joint statement that supports a just solution for the [Middle East](#) crisis — which is Morse code for Saudi Arabia's desire to see a Hamas-style Islamic state take over Israel. The Saudis also asked for a resumption of the Muslim-Christian dialogue that this pope ended as he came to office, noting that the discussion had turned into a monologue on Islam's supremacy.

In short, nothing happened in what was billed as the first encounter of the head of the Catholic church and the leader of an Islamic fundamentalist nation. Nothing substantial could have happened anyway on this first visit by the Saudi monarch to key European nations conducted with an air of triumphalism ignoring reality.

Before departing to [Britain](#), the king told the British Broadcasting Corp. that the British government had ignored "multiple warnings" of jihadists' attacks, suggesting the Britons basically deserved what they got when suicide bombers blew up their subways in July 2005. Even the enormously liberal Guardian newspaper ran an editorial wondering how the ruler of a country that creates and funds terrorists via so-called charities and jihadist ideologies can be so brazen.

In a recent essay, the director of Middle East Studies at Johns Hopkins University, Fouad Ajami, noted that the distinction between the Islamism of Al Qaeda and the "secularism" of the leadership in several so-called American-allied regimes — such as Saudi Arabia and [Egypt](#) — is a distinction without a difference.

The king of Saudi Arabia, along with his ruling royals and allies such as President Mubarak of Egypt, preside over cultures suffused with anti-modernism, anti-Americanism, and anti-Semitism, which they deliberately propagate via religious channels to deflect wrath directed as their despotically corrupt regimes.

Abdullah victoriously toured Britain and Germany — places where millions of Saudi oil dollars are pouring in to erect cathedral-size mosques, Saudi schools, and theology institutions designed and funded as bridgeheads of Islamist militancy into the heart of Europe.

In that sense, the Saudi monarch request for resumption of the so-called Islamic-Christian

dialogue is a facilitating tool for proselytizing invasions, which in his capacity as custodian of Mecca and Medina and commander in chief of Islamic jihad, he effectively leads.

Paradoxically, even as the king made his push for more love inside the Vatican, his creed prohibits diplomatic relations with the Holy See. A Vatican embassy in Saudi Arabia cannot be allowed, as it would raise a cross. Expatriate Christians are not even allowed to wear one, hold a private church service in their homes, or retain bibles, all of which are confiscated at the border.

Clearly, Benedict consented to pseudo-dialogue to soothe millions of moderate Muslims angered by his 2006 prescient remarks linking Islam to violence. In reality, it is far more incumbent upon those moderates to stand up to their fundamentalist preachers and Islamist radicals and the flood of Saudi money funding both.

Abdullah had visited the Vatican twice before, as crown prince and deputy prime minister. The next time he returns, it might be best to leave the sword behind.

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