

Terrorists need reform

Dear editor:

On August 13th, the Toronto Star published a lengthy editorial heading, 'Reforming Terrorists'. As I read it, I couldn't help thinking, this could be a force for good or evil. The evil that needs the good, is in the person of Saad Khalid, a convicted Muslim terrorist, now in prison at Millhaven Institution. The good is a Muslim Imam and prison chaplain who spent considerable time with Khalid and other Muslim prisoners. His name is Ramzy Ajem.

As the editorial points out, 'Experts who study Islamic terrorists say that many are motivated by a perverse misunderstanding of their religion. Instead of following its mainstream, peaceful teachings, they are recruited by extremists who distort those teachings.'

Prison imams such as Ajem can reach such men through Islamic and Arabic studies and help them develop a healthier, more moderate understanding towards other cultures'. Certainly all that and more is what Ramzy Ajem as a Muslim Prison Chaplain was passing on to Saad Khalid and other Muslims. He was definitely getting through to Saad because when he had to announce his departure as part of a 49 chaplain lay off called by the Conservative Government, Saad actually broke down and wept.

This is a miserly move by Harper to squeeze a bit of money out of the prison system. And quoting the editorial again, 'The loss of even one seasoned chaplain who aims to deradicalize prisoners, can be deeply felt'.

I say this move by the government is both unwise and inhumane.

Betty Anderson,

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