

## **Ask the politicians**

Letter to the Editor  
Halifax *Chronicle Herald*, 12 September 2010  
(unpublished)

Mark Mercer  
Department of Philosophy  
Saint Mary's University  
Halifax, NS B3H 3C3  
(902) 420-5825  
[mark.mercer@smu.ca](mailto:mark.mercer@smu.ca)

Political leaders from all parties have told us in no uncertain terms that they oppose public burnings of copies of the Qur'an. I'd rather that they'd expressed indifference, and then explained why all of us, including religious Muslims, should also be indifferent.

The question for Canadians to ask now, then, is whether our political leaders are in favour of prohibiting public burnings of the Qur'an. Let us ask them whether they would object were a municipality to interrupt a Qur'an burning, or were a human rights commission to investigate a complaint about a Qur'an burning, or were the police to charge a Qur'an burner with public incitement of hatred.

Politicians can respond honestly to this question. There's no civil liberties constituency in this country that they need to keep happy.