

PASTOR PREFERS JAIL **OVER APOLOGY**

By Mariza Fiamengo – from Australia
22 June 05

A CHRISTIAN pastor who has been ordered to apologise for vilifying Muslims says he will go to jail rather than say sorry for his comments.

Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) deputy president Michael Higgins ordered two pastors of an evangelical order, Catch the Fire Ministry, to apologize for comments they made in a speech, on a website and in a newsletter.

In a landmark ruling, the tribunal found Muslims were vilified by claims that Muslims were training to take over Australia, encouraging domestic violence and that Islam was an inherently violent religion.

The case was the first to be heard by VCAT since the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act took effect in Victoria at the start of 2002.

Outside the tribunal, Danny Nalliah – one of the pastors taken to VCAT by the Islamic Council – described himself as a martyr and said he would go to jail before apologizing. "Right from the inception, we have said that this law is a foul law, this law is not a law which brings unity," Pastor Nalliah said. "It causes disunity and as far as we are concerned right from the beginning we have stated we will not apologise. "We will go to prison for standing for the truth and not sacrifice our freedom and freedom to speak." He said the Evangelical group had nothing against Muslims and its comments were taken out of context.

Judge Higgins said an apology was "appropriate" as the intention of the Victorian legislation was to protect freedom of speech, while placing limits on such freedom by prohibiting the vilification of persons or classes of persons.

He said he took into account that the pastors were of good character, but their passionate religious beliefs caused them to transgress the law.

Catch the Fire is appealing the VCAT decision in the Victorian Supreme Court.

Note from Pastor Kevin Lea:

The demonically inspired religion of Islam demands 100% devotion by all citizens of Islamic countries (like Saudi Arabia). At threat of the sword all must swear allegiance to Islam. Any Muslim who converts to another religion in a fundamentalist Islamic country like Saudi Arabia is killed, often by members of their own family. No Jew is allowed to set foot in Saudi Arabia, the home of Islam. There are no openly Christian churches allowed in Saudi Arabia. How is it that a Muslim can go to Australia and demand that citizens of Australia are not allowed to tell the truth about Islam? The truth is that the Koran calls for the subjugation of the entire world under the rule of Islam. It is the goal of fundamentalist Muslims to spread Islam to all countries, with a happy face until they have the power, and then with the sword. What fools we are to not see this threat for what it is and sound the alarm, rather than knocking our own sentries off of the wall.