

# Muslims' differences fester with growing liquor sales

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

OAKLAND—They weren't your average thugs.

Dressed in bow ties and dark suits, the group of nearly a dozen men entered a corner store and smashed bottles of liquor, wine and beer with metal pipes, shattering refrigerator cases and leaving behind a terrified clerk along with piles of broken glass.

No one was held up. Noth-

ing was stolen. The vandals just wanted to leave a message: Stop selling booze to fellow Muslims.

In urban America, friction between poor residents and the immigrant merchants who sell cigarettes, bread and alcoholic beverages from neighborhood markets is nothing new. But the recent attack at San Pablo Liquor has injected religion into the

old debate over whether a glut of such stores contributes to violent crime, vagrancy and other social ills.

Followed by an identical attack at another West Oakland store the same evening, the episode highlighted tensions—and different interpretations of doctrine—between black Muslims hoping to reclaim troubled parts of the

Please see MUSLIMS/5B

# Credit to Christianity for freedom

Continued from page 8B

that was invented by 18th-century intellectuals who hated religion and especially Roman Catholicism. In reality, he says, the centuries before Protestantism and modern secularism saw huge progress in technology, education and human betterment. His story of inventions that transformed farming, wind and water power, and global sea travel is fascinating indeed.

All this, of course, treats Christianity as useful and says nothing about whether it is true. Nor is this any fully rounded history, since Stark's thesis sidesteps Christians' embarrassing past deeds of oppression.

In addition, Stark's praise for Christian accomplishments includes the controversial claim that non-Christian religions help explain why the West transcended other lands. "Christianity was oriented to the future while the other major religions asserted the superiority of the past," he contends.

In most religions, he explains, the material universe is regarded as eternal, without begin-

ning or purpose and without a creator, and the cosmos is "a supreme mystery, inconsistent, unpredictable and arbitrary. ... The path to wisdom is through meditation and mystical insights" that do not produce empirical knowledge.

Here, Stark ignores the impact of the Jews' biblical view of the world that was later adopted by Christians. He also impugns Islam, arguing that a major segment of Muslim thought "condemns all efforts to formulate natural laws as blasphemy in that they deny Allah's freedom to act. Thus, Islam did not fully embrace the notion that the universe ran along on fundamental principles laid down by God at the creation."

Whether in ancient or modern times, Stark writes, centralized command economies, slave labor and tyranny always prevent progress, and Christianity helped defeat all three scourges.

On the Net:

Stark page:

[www.baylor.edu/Sociology/index.php?id>equals21715](http://www.baylor.edu/Sociology/index.php?id>equals21715)

# Students encouraged to be leaders

Continued from page 7B

work with others from across the country.

"We needed a time for staff and students to gather and hear what others are doing around the country," said the Rev. Boris Collins, a conference director who has his own interdenominational church in Faramingham, Mass.

Melissa Metcalfe, a senior at Washington University in St. Louis, attended the conference for the first time this year and she said it was worth the trip. In the opening days, she learned different Bible studying methods and

ways to praise in different languages.

"We sang songs in so many different languages, like in Spanish," Metcalfe said. "The conference tries to make everyone feel comfortable and they do just that."

Ollie, who is now associate regional director for the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, the parent organization of Black Campus Ministries, said he looks forward to giving back to a conference that helped shape his life. He wants to challenge the students' beliefs and emphasize their roles in the future.

Ollie, who has been working with the group's clubs in Iowa, Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska, said he is once again considering going to law school.

"One author said, 'A leaders job is to define reality and say thank you,'" Ollie said. "I feel that the InterVarsity has given me a chance to define reality and a chance to say thank you to those who have been influential in my life."

On the Net:

Black Campus Ministries:

<http://www.intervarsity.org/bcm/>

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January, 2006 Newsletter - Part I  
J.M. Little, Teacher

My Dear Friends:

I praise the Lord for saving me by His grace, revealing Christ to my heart, as my Lord and Saviour. The greatest thing in all this world is just to know Christ as your Lord and your Saviour. Do you know Christ? Another year has come and gone, and the multitudes of you are not saved. You are religious and in a church, but you do not know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Lord and your Saviour. It is a mystery to every unsaved religionist how the believer knows that those around him are not saved. You just don't see how we know that. As a religious fool spoke up one day: "I don't see how anyone can say a man is not called to preach." Well, the reason he can't see it is because he sees through the eyes of the devil and he is not saved. He is a church leader that does not know anymore about Christ than a doodlebug knows when Sunday comes. An awakened sinner called me last night, crying their heart out wanting to know Christ. Before I go further, let me say: "The outstanding mark of a false teacher is that he does not understand an awakened sinner." This awakened sinner is struggling with a heart of unbelief. I understand what the sinner is going through because I've been there. They are under "another gospel", which is being taught and preached all over the whole world: "Now, sinner, you are awakened. It is up to you now to believe or accept Christ. Just trust Jesus as your Saviour and you are saved." Let me tell you something, friends: That is not salvation! And God never calls a man to misrepresent Him! When I was under conviction, those around me here in North Carolina said: "Bro. Little won't go ahead and trust the Lord." Hold your seats now because I am going to jump a creek down here, as my old late pastor used to say. And if you don't hold on, you may drown. And if you drown, you may just go on to Hell.

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