

You Can't Be Both a Republican and a Sharia Supporter, O Erdogan!

News:

In a statement made at the graduation ceremony of religious officials by the Presidency of Religious Affairs Academy, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan stated the following: "We see that a dual-track campaign is being conducted against Turkey by some circles hostile to Turkey in recent times. The first of these is the 'Turkishness without Islam' definitions attempted to be brought up by lumpen fascists. Let me say it very clearly, a definition and project of Turkishness that does not carry the spirit of Islam is actually attempts to put the Turkish nation in a museum, to turn it into a folkloric element. In the second lane of the campaign, there is hostility to Sharia, staged under different masks. Hostility to Sharia, which represents all the rules of life in Islam, is actually hostility to the religion itself." (NTV, 01.02.2024)

Comment:

In Turkey, there is a famous idiom everyone knows, "Serve the syrup according to the pulse." Its meaning is as follows: "Behaving in a way that will please someone, respond to their tendencies, stroke their pride." This idiom, which means acting without principles to gain advantage, lies at the heart of an interest-focused democratic political understanding, as well as aligning perfectly with President Erdogan's political profile, which has been serving the pulse of society for 23 years. Because you can see President Erdogan as a nationalist one day, a ummah supporter the next, anti-Western one day, pro-Western the next, secular one day, religious the next, republican one day, and advocating for Sharia the next. Speeches made to win elections adapt to the political atmosphere in society.

Erdogan's recent statements embracing Sharia by equating it with Islam should also be read in this context. It can also be interpreted as "a true word sought with false intention." Because any statement not validated by action cannot be trusted within the framework of sincerity. If only President Erdogan had defended Sharia not only with his words but also with his deeds, as he claims to represent the entirety of Islam. If only he had implemented not only Sharia but also the Islamic Economic System, the Islamic Social System, the Islamic Penal System, the Islamic Educational System, and everything else, starting with the system of governance that considers ruling by what Allah has revealed as the basis of the state. If only he had adopted and implemented Islam's foreign policy, aiming to spread Islam as a light and guidance to the world through dawah and Jihad. Then his words against the Turkification project that does not carry the spirit of Islam could have been credible. If he had mobilized the Turkish army to help their Muslim brothers in Gaza, then we could have thought that Erdogan himself was leaning towards a correct path in implementing Islamic Sharia. However, by using the phrase "We must raise a generation that will not fall into the same situation as Palestine." in the same speech, he showed that he

separates Palestine from Turkey, demonstrating that his reference to Sharia was merely rhetoric.

So the question remains: why did Erdogan suddenly make a statement supporting Sharia? The answer to this question should be sought in the idiom mentioned at the beginning of the text, "Serve the syrup according to the pulse." Because the same Erdogan, just two weeks ago, after a Cabinet meeting, ended the debate on Turkey's regime with the slogans 'Long Live the Republic' saying, "Doubts about Turkey's regime ended with the slogans 'Long Live the Republic' on October 29, 1923." and defended the secular republic against Sharia.

Firstly, the audience Erdogan addressed in that speech is the Diyanet community consisting of imams and preachers. Imams, whether giving sermons on Fridays or convincing Muslims, are the people from whom Erdogan can benefit the most during election periods. Any criticism they make of him will negatively affect the government, while praising him will have a positive effect.

Secondly, the reason for Erdogan's Sharia statement, including Gaza, is the peak of Islamic sentiments among Muslims, especially in Turkey, due to the massacre in Gaza. The anger towards leaders, including President Erdogan, who do not lead the 57 Muslim countries as a caliph, is growing rapidly. If this anger is not softened and controlled, the Aqsa Flood can turn into a flood of the ummah. Therefore, Erdogan's statement on Sharia, including Gaza, aims to regain the confidence of the Islamic public opinion in Turkey on the eve of the local elections in March.

Moreover, expecting the establishment of an Islamic state from those who neglect Sharia rulings while governing, relationships between people is a bit absurd. Because the Islamic state and the Islamic way of life that comes with it can only be built on Sharia rulings and continue by maintaining the importance of adherence to Sharia. Therefore, those who claim Sharia must first fully comprehend these truths and act accordingly in order to deserve the help of Allah in this world and the Hereafter.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ * كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾

“Why do you say what you do not do? It is greatly abhorrent to Allah that you say what you do not do.” [Surah As-Saff: 2-3]

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