

Press Release

Hate Speech is Part and Parcel of a Secular System

Hate speech is often a discussion point in the government and media. It is now usually a justification for more intrusive legislation to curb online debate and discussions. This week is no different. The Mayor of London shared some of the abusive anti-Muslim messages that he received, while promoting his Hate Crime Hub initiative.

No doubt the perpetrators of such hate-filled messages deserve condemnation, and it is interesting to note that there have been no mass apologies or media calls for such public collective condemnation from non-Muslims of Britain. However, we need to look beyond the specific perpetrators of such crimes to the ideology that drives them and others to devalue Muslims in this way.

A previous British Prime Minister once pledged to get tough on the causes of crime, while ironically he was one of the greatest criminals and instigators of crime of this century. Had the sentiments been truly meant, then there should be nothing left unexamined in the search to eradicate the causes of criminality. In this light, there should also be nothing that is off limits for introspection when looking into the causes of the current hatred and hate crime.

All too often, the real culprits are avoided, while much effort is put into further policing, more reporting or curbing the ability of haters to spread hate. But, this is only dealing with the symptoms, not the cause.

Those who propagate hatred of Muslims are part of a society in which the government and media spare no effort in spreading negativity and promoting hatred of Islam and Muslims. They are the ones who vaguely divide Islam into moderate and extreme, describing Muslims who do not share their secular values as Islamist and adherents of an evil ideology. In truth though, their favoured modernist Islam is no Islam at all, while most of what they describe as extreme are the basic tenets revealed to the Prophet (saw), practised by Muslims for centuries, and are the core values held by over a billion Muslims today.

This is the background and ideology that fuel the atmosphere of hate against Muslims. In Western secular societies that have made nationalism the basis for their unity, it is no surprise that they suffer greatly from xenophobic, class and racial tension, due to way that “others” worth are devalued to crude caricatures, thinly masking contempt and disdain. With nationalism you only matter when you belong to the same group, however arbitrary that group’s basis might be.

Indeed, the era of secular nation states has seen unparalleled levels of hatred that has actually led to extreme cruelty and bloodshed, with millions of victims. Western hatred for “others”, whether Jewish, black or just foreign should be a source of great shame and a rejection of the secular ideology that causes it.

In a hate filled atmosphere, it is no wonder that people are venting their frustrations at those who happen to be hated the most in their circles. The vigilante approach that is increasingly being taken is fuelled by a general mistrust of the capitalist system to bring justice and address their grievances. Promoters of secularism are often proud that Britain was the first to legislate habeas corpus, yet the majority of people do not fully believe in it, so media allegations lead to suspicions and generalising whole communities with guilt, as is seen today with Muslims.

Despite that no evidence has been examined, perspective is ignored, and no proof provided, Muslims are often seen as guilty, simply for being Muslim.

The cause of hate, of hate speech, of Islamophobia as some like to call it, and vigilantism is the secular capitalist creed and system. It fails the people daily, visibly providing only injustice, while incapable of establishing harmony between different communities. It is inseparable from nationalism, xenophobia, racialism, classism and hatred of others.

Allah (swt) did not leave mankind alone to suffer the tyranny of the mighty elite, who think themselves superior to all others. He sent a final Messenger (saw) to humankind who said in his last sermon at the occasion of his farewell Hajj: **يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، أَلَا إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ وَاحِدٌ، وَإِنَّ أَبَاكُمْ وَاحِدٌ، أَلَا لَا فَضْلَ** «يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، أَلَا إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ وَاحِدٌ، وَإِنَّ أَبَاكُمْ وَاحِدٌ، أَلَا لَا فَضْلَ» **«O mankind your Lord is one and your forefather is one; an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; a red has no superiority over a black nor a black has any superiority over a red. Except by piety.»**

Islam (and Muslims that adhere to its teachings) does not generalise blame for others, nor accuse people on the flimsiest of allegations. Presumed innocence is real in an Islamic system, as the Prophet (saw) said: **«الْبَيِّنَةُ عَلَى الْمُدَّعَى وَالْيَمِينُ عَلَى الْمُدَّعَى عَلَيْهِ»** **“The burden of proof is upon the plaintiff, and the oath is upon the one who is accused”**. **«إِذَا تَقَاضَى إِلَيْكَ رَجُلَانِ فَلَا تَقْضَ لِلأَوَّلِ** **“If two men come to you do not give a judgment for one of them until you have heard what the other has had to say, then you will be able to judge.”** [Tirmidhi & Ahmad]

This was a right afforded to humankind centuries before British kings deceptively promised habeas corpus. Furthermore, Islam gave justice to all, not only the wealthy elite, fourteen centuries ago.

The nature of secularism is that it will continue to divide humanity into the haves and the have-nots, spreading discord wherever its tentacles reach.

We urge the Muslims to stay away from such hateful speech, however it comes to them. Do not give oxygen to the hate of the haters by sending it onto others, even in protest at its contents. At the same time, do not complain only of the one saying the hate filled words, but look to the system which raised him and encourages his hatred every day. **﴿قَدْ بَدَتِ الْبَغْضَاءُ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَمَا تُخْفِي صُدُورُهُمْ أَكْبَرُ﴾** **“Hatred has already appeared from their mouths, but what their breasts conceal is far worse.”** [Al-i-Imran:118]

Finally, while standing up against injustices and the unjust, it is possible that one is subjected to some harm or hardship, just as it is possible that such difficulties come to those who do not stand up against it. In all cases Allah (swt) is in control of what happens to us. We call upon Muslims to remember to put their trust in Allah (swt), following His Shariah (rules) to the letter, not swaying from it out of fear of the imagined consequences.

﴿وَإِنْ يَمْسَسْكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِنْ يُرِدْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَلَا رَادَّ لِفَضْلِهِ يُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَهُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ﴾

“And if Allah should touch you with adversity, there is no one who would remove it except Him; and if He intends for you good, then there is no one who would repel His bounty. He causes it to reach whom He wills of His servants. And He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.” [Yunus: 107]

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