

Press Release

Prohibitions, Coercion, and Relentless Attacks on Islam and Muslims The Political Bankruptcy of Denmark

One has to look far back to find a single day when there was not, either from the government or the opposition, a new hateful attack launched against Islam and Muslims. In the past ten days alone, we have seen the following displays of Islamophobia from the government:

The rabid Minister for Integration, Rasmus Stoklund, stated in a video published on Facebook on December 12 that “Islam should not take up more space in Danish education,” which is why the government views positively the closure of the prayer rooms at the University of Copenhagen. This, despite the university’s own working group not finding a shred of documentation for the political claims of “religious pressure,” “negative social control,” or “female oppression” originating from these rooms.

The same minister has unsuccessfully searched the entire country for non-existent public Islamic calls to prayer to justify yet another ban and further fuel hatred and unrealistic problem-making directed at Muslims.

On December 17, it was announced that the government intends to expand the niqab ban to also include classrooms. When asked whether the extent of this also non-existent problem should be investigated before resorting to bans and coercion, Stoklund told DR on December 18: “I don’t think that’s necessary.” As the basis for expanding the ban, he stated in the same interview: “We have received a recommendation from the Commission for the Forgotten Women’s Struggle, and I think it’s a good recommendation.”

This is the same commission that in 2022 recommended a ban on the Islamic headscarf in all primary schools — a proposal Stoklund’s predecessor, Kaare Dybvad Bek, called “exciting” and “courageous.” The government’s renewed eagerness to undress Muslim girls and women, combined with the mantra that Islam should not take up space in Danish education, can hardly be interpreted as anything other than another step toward an outright headscarf ban, as we have seen in France and, more recently, Austria.

But even more bans were needed. At the end of the week, the government announced its desire to ban marriages between cousins to combat “social control” among Muslims.

Amid this cavalcade of special legislation targeting Muslims — in what appears to be a vengeful attempt to force through failed assimilation and fish for votes in the political mud — and between political discussions about everything from ideological screening of Muslim applicants for citizenship, reopening cases of early retirement benefits granted to non-Western residents, re-education trips, and “remigration” (deportation and ethnic cleansing) — Weekendavisen published a new poll on December 18 showing that

“approximately one in four Danes wants to send Muslims out of the country — and that nearly one in three wants to ban Islam in Denmark.”

These are undoubtedly frightening numbers, reminiscent of Europe nearly a century ago. Today, as then, the hatred did not arise in a vacuum. It has been sown and cultivated through decades of anti-Muslim and Islam-hostile politics and rhetoric under successive governments.

The recent municipal elections have decimated especially the Social Democrats as the leading governing party and revealed the deep crisis of trust in the population, which has long been growing.

Therefore, the desperation is plain to see. After a lifeless government project, dictated by industry, has only worsened the parties' unpopularity and the system's crisis, the Social Democrats are now attempting to use anti-Muslim sentiment as a worn-out lever to pull themselves out of the mud — the only constant in Danish politics they seem to have any faith in.

Thus, the government is not only undermining the remnants of its own credibility but also the foundation of society — the deceptive freedom and the so-called democracy.

Instead of defending these false ideals, they are providing active euthanasia to them, which will only open more people's eyes to the inherent contradictions and incompetence of liberal democracy.

Two facts deserve to be made clear:

1. Muslims in Denmark, and in the West in general, do not bow to state control, secular pressure, bans, and coercion. On the contrary. Thanks to Allah, young people are flocking to Islam, and more Danes are choosing to convert to Islam. This is simply because Islam offers true values — something sorely lacking in the Danish parliament.

2. It is not the Muslims in this country who undermine society's principles and sow division among the population. On the contrary, these seem to be the only disciplines in which the government and the right wing truly excel. Coercion in the name of freedom and bans in the name of tolerance have become the hypocritical norm, while problems are constructed, hatred is poured out, and conflict is inflamed in the hope of covering up their own moral bankruptcy with grand words. It is an intellectual bankruptcy like no other.

Elias Lamrabet

Media Representative of Hizb ut Tahrir

in Denmark