

Which \223Defamation of Religion\224 Does the UN Human Right Commission Dislike?  
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Some people claim that the Norwegian mass murderer was inspired by \223Islamophobes,\224 people critical of Militant Islam. They say that warnings by such scholars as Robert Spencer and Brigitte Gabriel about Islamists infiltrating European culture fostered Mr. Breivik\222s rampage. Perhaps, they may think, if nobody said anything unpleasant about Islam, the European Right Wing might have gone after their usual target, Jews, rather than Muslims, and nobody would care. But the problem of integrating hordes of immigrants is not just racism.

It doesn\222t matter that Breivik went after Norwegian liberals, not Muslims. And it does not matter that young Muslim thugs regularly target European Jews for abuse. In France, the kidnapping and murder of a young Jewish man (taken at random) roused many French to demonstrate and hold a memorial for the tortured and murdered man. But elsewhere in Europe, many Jews are leaving because they feel little protection from the powers that be.

The kind of political correctness that now permeates universities, as well as liberal governments, and, of course, the United Nations Human Rights Commission, focuses on protecting Islam from criticism. In the West, unlike in Muslim countries, religious criticism is part of our dialogue; critics are not murdered. But the Muslim prohibition against defamation of religion applies only to defaming Islam, not defaming Judaism or Christianity, which are fair game.

This is folly. None of the western critics of Islam have urged violence. They are not putting \223fatwas\224 on people\222s heads, not offering prizes for murdering someone for a cartoon that \223insults\224 the Prophet Mohammad, nor advocating depriving such people of protection of law.

Since the European Enlightenment, it has been the practice of intellectuals to criticize Christianity, something never permitted before that. This criticism was demonstrated by one of our own founding fathers, Thomas Jefferson, who took apart his family bible, deleted all materials he considered \223superstitious,\224 and rebound the much diminished bible\222s messages of wisdom. Within Judaism, with a tradition of religious analysis and criticism, reform was possible and new and modernized forms of the religion emerged, permitting that long-ghettoized group to join and benefit the larger Western society.

Islam has not had this sort of history\227until now, when scholars of the religion and dissidents are finally coming out with criticism that might some day create a form of Islam compatible with modern life.

No religion should be protected from criticism, certainly not in the United States, which has no \223established\224 religion. An American Muslim doctor, Zuhdi Jasser, president of a new American-Islamic Forum for Democracy, has bravely stepped forward to advocate for an American form of Islam. His is a new voice\227much welcomed by some American Muslims finding their way toward total integration.

Until now, CAIR (the Council on American-Islamic Relations) has claimed to represent American Muslims. They have an active legal wing that sues for \223racism\224 any critics of Islam and cries \223prejudice\224 whenever possible. In a recent survey taken of American Muslims, 89% of women and 88% of men rejected the idea that CAIR represents them. Even more respondents denied that other Islamist groups represent them either. CAIR\222s membership plummeted 90% after the 9/11 attack, and recently CAIR was named as an unindicted co-conspirator in a case that convicted the Holy Land Foundation and five of its top officials for diverting money raised for charity to support terrorist organizations in Gaza and elsewhere.

CAIR has enjoyed undeserved access to the ears some in our government for too long. In this country, there has been an amazing lack of overt prejudice against Muslims, and certainly little violence. However, Americans have been killed by Muslim fanatics such as the Ft. Hood massacre and foiled attempts to repeat such attacks. Who protected young Muslim-American women murdered by their relatives in honor killings or, in one case, an outraged husband who decapitated his wife for trying to divorce him? These were all honor killings, not \223tribal custom.\224

When a religion mandates such things, it defames itself.

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