



Melanie Phillips: We must call out the Muslims who hate Jews

'If a particular group is disproportionately involved in hatred of Jews, the community should denounce this... it does not. It brushes it under the carpet'

by Melanie Phillips | April 11, 2019



Board of Deputies president Marie van de Zyl

The Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) provides an invaluable service translating material from Arabic into English and thus lifting the curtain on the deranged antisemitism coursing through the Arab and Muslim world.

Recently its founder, Yigal Carmon, observed that this Jew-hatred had spread to America and Europe where it was turning into “really violent threats based on Islamic texts”.

And yet, he added, the American Jewish community targeted by such attacks was silent. “Not a protest, no public activity, nothing at all. They are afraid to be thought of as Islamophobic”.

Carmon’s observation is also true of British Jews. With a few exceptions over the years, the secular and religious leadership has been silent about Muslim antisemitism. Yet the problem is serious.

In 2015, an opinion poll of British Muslims showed that 30-40 per cent subscribed to antisemitic beliefs, such as Jews having too much power over government, media, business or global affairs.

In 2018, a study by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research and the Community Security Trust revealed that anti-Jewish and anti-Israel attitudes were two to four times higher among Muslims than the population in general.

Although the CST’s reports on antisemitic incidents don’t record religious affiliation, its ethnic breakdown of offenders suggests the proportion of Muslims involved is many times higher than their proportion in the population.

Surely, if a particular group is disproportionately involved in hatred of Jews the community should denounce this? In this case, it does not. It brushes it under the carpet. What it targets instead is “Islamophobia”. In other words, the people in its sights aren’t Muslim antisemites but those who call out Muslim antisemitism and extremism.

This is because Jewish leaders equate Islamophobia with antisemitism. They have thus fallen for the Islamists’ propaganda ploy in making a grotesque comparison.

The key difference is the distinction between truth and lies.

For while antisemitism is based entirely on deranged fantasies about the Jewish people, Islamophobia labels as bigotry all adverse comment about Muslims, including truths about Islamic extremism and jihadi terrorism.

Some people are indeed irrationally prejudiced against Muslims. But the term Islamophobia was coined to suppress rational, legitimate and necessary acknowledgment of the dangers within the Islamic world.

Antisemitism is a form of fanatical, murderous, deranged hatred. The term Islamophobia was invented to silence acknowledgement of another form of fanatical, murderous, deranged hatred.

A frighteningly high number of British Muslims subscribe to extremist or antisemitic views. Yet, last year, the Board of Deputies president Marie van der Zyl said: “You can count on me as a committed ally of the Muslim community.” Really? All of it?

Jewish leaders rightly call out the Labour party for failing to deal with the rampant antisemitism in its ranks. Yet they fail to hold the Muslim community similarly to account.

For sure, many Muslims are decent people. Indeed, a group called Muslims Against Antisemitism has taken out full-page newspaper adverts to show their solidarity with Jews. One of its organisers, Fiyaz Mughal, has said that “antisemitism from segments of Muslim communities needs to be challenged and robustly challenged.”

Jews, however, are not doing so. They regularly identify antisemitic threats from two sources, the left and the far right. But on the people from the Islamic world who pose the biggest such threat, they are all but silent.

Worse, some Jews are now even joining the manipulative campaign to camouflage Muslim antisemitism and extremism by claiming the biggest threat to the world is coming from the far right.

Certainly, there’s a growing threat from white supremacists. But this is vastly exceeded by the threat from the Islamic world.

Worse still, people on the left are now smearing all anti-Islamists by lumping them together with white supremacists under the labels of “far right”, “alt-right” and “Islamophobes”.

After the New Zealand mosques massacre a stupendously brave Muslim leader, Yahya Cholil Staquf, wrote: “It is factually incorrect and counter-productive to define Islamophobia as ‘rooted in racism’. In reality, it is the spread of Islamist extremism and terror that primarily contributes to the rise of Islamophobia throughout the non-Muslim world.”

Furthermore, the antisemitism of the left is being fuelled by the antisemitism of the Muslim world — which is in turn emboldened and incentivised by the refusal of the non-Muslim world to condemn it.

These are the vicious and lethal circles to which the silence of the Jewish community is making an unwitting contribution.

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