

Islamophobia: Is it a Problem?

by Phillip W. Weiss

On October 19, 2023, in an address to the nation, President Joe Biden specifically discussed Islamophobia. He said the following:

On Oct. 7, terror attacks have triggered deep scars and terrible memories in the Jewish community. Today, Jewish families worried about being targeted in school, wearing symbols of their faith walking down the street, or going out about their daily lives. And I know many of you in the Muslim American community, the Arab American community, the Palestinian American community and so many others are outraged and hardened saying to yourselves, "Here we go again with Islamophobia and the distrust we saw after 9/11."

Just last week, a mother was brutally stabbed. A little boy here in the United States, a little boy who just turned 6 years old, was murdered in their home outside of Chicago. His name was Wadea. Wadea, a proud American, a proud Palestinian American family.

We can't stand by and stand silent when this happens. We must without equivocation denounce antisemitism. We must also without equivocation denounce Islamophobia.

While it is unfair and unconstitutional to target anyone solely on the basis of their religion or national origin, and the death of that little boy was indeed a deeply tragic event, and that the vast majority of persons of the Islamic faith are peaceful and law-abiding citizens who reject violence, the fact remains that the fear, consternation, and uneasiness inspired by the mere mention of the term Islamic is neither unreasonable nor phobic. The trauma of 9/11/2001 still resonates today. That vicious attack, the goal of which was to destroy the United States, was perpetrated by a gang of Islamic militants, mostly from Saudi Arabia, an Islamic country, who had links to Al-Qaeda, an Islamic terrorist organization.

The CARNAGE, DEATH, AND TERROR caused by that awful sneak attack shook the entire nation to the core, and the groups who cheered when the twin towers crumbled are still at large and chant DEATH TO THE UNITED STATES. Under these circumstances, how can the United States as a nation NOT feel at least a measure of collective uneasiness and wariness about Islam? Can Mr. Biden or any other elected official assure the American people with absolute certainty that what happened on 9/11/2001 will not happen again?

It is one thing for Mr. Biden to counsel the nation not to target anyone based upon their religion or ethnicity; however, it is entirely something else altogether to mischaracterize legitimate fear based on incontrovertible historical facts as a mental aberration. That denigrates the victims of 9/11/2001, does nothing to mitigate the fear or its underlying causes, and instead only makes the fear worse.

Sources

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