

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

News and Comment

Another Attack on Islam by Politicians and the Media: The Muslim Community Must Now Respond

The outcry that was unleashed within the media, and by politicians including even Prime Minister David Cameron, about gender segregation of Muslims could have been seen as surprising, to say the least. The segregation took place in University Islamic society events, organised by Muslim students. However the outcry made it appear as though Muslims were enforcing their practices across the country.

What the entire debacle of bashing Muslims showed was the reality of the perception of Islam in Britain, and the position of the Muslim community. With the ink not even drying from the elongated attack on the niqab, the Muslim community faced another bashing and have been forced to realise that Islam will continue to face heat and fierce scrutiny in this secular society. With all the violent extremism policy by Government, deeming normative Islamic practices as 'extremist' such as views towards Shariah, homosexuality and even Palestine, Muslims must be prepared. Prepared for what lies ahead. And how?

1. To keep holding onto Islam for no other than Allah

Despite the pressure we face to abandon segregation, or niqab or whatever else they attack from Islam, if the Quran has not changed, the Sunnah has not changed then our practice of this Deen must not change. Every Islamic practice we undertake is for no other than Allah, and this be remembered however difficult things get. Because Allah (swt) has laid out the very purpose of our existence when He said:

﴿قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“Indeed my prayer, my acts of worship, my living and my dying are for Allah Lord of the worlds.” [Anam162].

And the Prophet (saw) gave us advice even for this time, when he (swt) said:

«يأتي على الناس زمان القابض على دينه كالقابض على الجمر»

“There will come a time when holding on to your Iman (belief) will be like holding on to hot coals” [Tirmidhi]

2. To speak out against the attack

We need to speak and raise a debate of how this gender segregation attack exposes the absolutely double standards of the secular liberal system, who attack a practice that they carry themselves in every single public building - in gender segregated public toilets.

They talk about secularism being the only system to cater for every religious group and minority, claiming religious rule can't. Yet they forcefully want to remove basic religious practices of one community. Pluralism is a lie when practices of Muslims which have no impact in the lives of wider society are hounded one after another.

So really secularism has proved itself unable to cater for a minority however different they may be to the dominant majority. It proved this inability in the last century with a minority of Jews in Germany. And we have to ask how much has really changed since then.

3. To raise the discussion about the practice of segregation within Islam, and what it actually seeks to achieve

We must explain how segregation is one rule as part of an entire social system which aims at regulating the relationship between men and women, so that the sexual instinct doesn't dominate and taint relationships in society. These rules aim to take the focus away from this instinct so real focus can be given to productive relationship between men and women in work, education and across society. This in actual fact can liberate women and enable them to participate more in society.

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