

How Can European Muslims Protect Their Children Against ISIL?



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HOW CAN EUROPEAN MUSLIMS PROTECT THEIR CHILDREN AGAINST ISIL? – OPED

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By [Harun Yahya](#)

Review

Islam is the second largest religion in the Netherlands. Rotterdam, for example, harbors a Muslim population of about 15 percent. A couple of weeks ago, in the aftermath of the Charlie Hebdo attacks, the city Mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb, himself a Muslim, said extremists who do not like freedom and the country's peaceful way of life, and wish to fight along with ISIL can pack their bags and leave. There are even those who believe that it would be better for them to die fighting than to return.

As ISIL keeps attracting recruits from the country, apparently there is a struggle for the minds of the young Muslims. The question "How can we prevent our children joining ISIL?" is a topical one today among Muslims living in the U.S. and Europe. European countries are presently approaching this threat in terms of security measures.

To prevent people joining ISIL, checks at the borders have been stepped up. Yet the way that three British girls managed to cross into Syria from Turkey despite all the precautions clearly shows that security measures by themselves are not enough.ⁱ

To combat this problem, it is very important to identify its source. Monitoring, arresting, and jailing youth, or telling them to “get lost” is not the solution. One of the factors turning young people toward ISIL is the conditions in and histories of the countries they live in. Such statements will only increase the resentment these Muslims harbor.

Many European Muslims believe they are being treated as second-class citizens in their countries. They are unable to enjoy the average levels of prosperity. Many of them, as in France, live in the slums around the major metropolitan areas.

Henri Astier, author of a piece titled “French election irrelevant in poor suburbs,” featured on the BBC website, says that Muslims in France feel marginalized and neglected. The piece also says that discrimination still occurs in employment and that the police mistreat migrants of Muslim origin.ⁱⁱ

When inappropriate legal regulations introduced by governments are added to this discontent, feelings of social exclusion grow even stronger. Muslims working in *crèches* in France, or even those looking after other people’s children in their own homes, being forbidden from wearing headscarves is one example of this. The outcomes of such measures need to be well thought out.

Attacks on mosques in European countries,ⁱⁱⁱ the ‘kebab murders’ by the NSU organization in Germany^{iv} and movements such as PEGIDA further encourage the trend to radicalization among Muslims in Europe.

Another factor is events from the past. France colonized several Muslim countries and imposed an authoritarian rule over them for many years. The French Army has been accused of committing massacres and torture during the War of Independence in Algeria.

While French President François Hollande referred to this repression on the part of France in a speech, he did not feel it necessary to apologize for it.^v A similar attitude can also be observed in events in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria.

The U.S. attacked Iraq on the grounds it was producing weapons of mass destruction. When it became clear that this was untrue,^{vi} it declared that the reason for the war was to bring freedom and democracy to Iraq.^{vii} Yet it brought neither freedom nor democracy to Iraq, only death, sectarian violence and conflict.

According to an academic study by university researchers from Iraq, the U.S. and Canada, more than 400,000 civilians lost their lives in Iraq in fighting between 2003 and 2011.viii The words of General Tommy Ray Franks, the commander of the U.S. Army occupying Iraq, 'We don't do body counts', showed the insensitivity of the U.S. to civilian deaths.ix

When there is a threat to their own citizens, Western countries have no qualms about bombing and destroying another country and killing its civilians. In the face of all this, ISIL attracts supporters by saying, 'We are protecting Islam against those attacks.'

Although the Western media claim that the reason why ISIL is attractive to Muslims is because it pays each fighter \$1,500 a month, there are much more important reasons. To justify its actions, ISIL refers to sources regarded as legitimate by Muslims; these works consist of statements largely based on nonsense alleged to be the work of various Islamic scholars. ISIL claims that many Muslims lack the courage to apply them, but that it, however, is implementing them successfully.

People with insufficient or inaccurate information concerning Islam and the Qur'an believe what ISIL tells them and think that Islam does indeed encourage bloodshed, despises women and rejects science and art. However, all those ideas are diametrically opposed to the Qur'an. What is asked of Muslims in Islam is to be forgiving, to study science and to consider women superior and be affectionate and protective towards them. Yet, the majority of Muslims are unaware of this since they abandon the Qur'an and follow superstitions instead.

So what needs to be done? First, it should be accepted that coercive or suppressive legal measures have negative effects. It should be emphasized that Islam is not to be equated with radicalism and that Muslims should not therefore be treated as potential terrorists.

European Muslims' social and economic conditions must be improved. Mistreatment of Muslims as second-class citizens by government officials in Europe should be prevented. The main thing that can be done, however, is to make it clear that the extremist conception of Islam is wholly incompatible with the Qur'an; a comprehensive and rapid education policy should be initiated.

Western governments should initiate mandatory education based solely on the Qur'an and divorced from the superstitions in Islamic institutions. It should also be made clear to the rest of the community that the Qur'an has nothing whatsoever to do with radicalism.

If all these suggestions are ignored and the old familiar policies that do not produce any solution are persisted with, then the number of people joining ISIL and acts of terror in Europe will simply grow even further, and radicalism will grow stronger.

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