

When is Freedom of Speech Incitement to Kill?
Posted On:December 31, 1969

We all know that freedom of speech has one commonly accepted exception: when someone falsely yells "FIRE!" in a crowded theater. Obviously this action will result in injury or death.

But another issue that faces us today is the very fuzzy line between free speech and incitement to violence. Such a case is roiling the Canadians today with a case in Toronto, reported on by the Toronto National Post (May 1, 2010). This story illustrates the painful nature of what to do with incitement and "hate speech." We all remember being told that real freedom means granting that right to someone whose opinion we detest. But how far can this go?

A notorious hater, Salman Hossein, was let off from indictment a few months before because he was supposedly undergoing "rehabilitation" for what, we are not told. Now he is being investigated by a team of 13 police terror-task forces for his postings on a hate site, "Filthy Jewish Terrorists.com," that is little short of incitement to kill. This site asserts:

" There are no Muslim terrorists. All terrorists are Jews.
9/11 was a Jewish plot, not Al Qaeda.
The notorious (and still unidentified) Jack the Ripper was really a Russian Jew
Jews, Christians, and moderate Canadian Muslims are all "traitors."
A genocide should be perpetrated against the Jewish populations of North America and Europe."
I never would have been aware of this web site had not been alerted by a friend, who saw it. The web site and a number of comparable links offer a sick view of religious poisoning in this case, Militant Islamism and their conspiracy theory buddies. On Hossein's "Who We Are" page, he launches into a long ramble about all the ills of the world being the fault of the Jews. He suggests that the cure for this is to remove all Jews from Government, the press, education, medicine, and law. "Thus, we will end by saying that the End of the Jews is near at hand. Can you imagine what a world would be like without anymore Jews?"

Normal people with any ability to think will neither seek out such a website nor buy into it. However, it only takes a few nuts or already radicalized fanatics to let this push them into action. I ponder what spurred an American-born Muslim psychiatrist to conduct a murderous rampage in Fort Hood some months ago. Web sites like this?

I would certainly like to see Hossain put out of commission in Canada and his web site closed down. The best news about this story is that Canadian college students, many of them Muslim, want him shut down too. They are tired of being tarred by such a hater.

We have similar problems in the United States. I know that the most volatile web sites are watched by our intelligence community, but shouldn't we begin to separate freedom of speech from actual incitement? This is not easy to do but should be done for public safety.

On CNN's recent program, "American Al Qaeda," they followed the transition of an all-American boy into a Muslim convert ready to murder and die for his religion. Happily, he was not smart enough to keep from getting caught even in Pakistan--and is now in jail, talking voluminously to the FBI.

The mouthy Muslim converts shouting on street corners in New York, London, and elsewhere, seem to know just how far they can go before reaching incitement. One such speaker, who yelled: "To Hell with the US, the US be damned" admitted to the CNN reporter that he knows the law and knows how far he can go. I am sure he does.

In civil law, a person who threatens to kill someone is not arrested until he has killed. We are almost in the same position with these hate sites. Until we figure out how to protect legitimate speech from speech that incites, we are in trouble.

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