

"Round Up the Usual Suspects!"

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The Vichy French police chief in the delightful movie, Casablanca, hid his scorn for his Nazi bosses by "rounding up the usual suspects." The usual suspects were a roster of hapless escapees waiting to leave Casablanca for the United States. This standing joke has surfaced once more in today's global war with Militant Islam.

Some of the "usual suspects" are real. France has just revoked the passes of 70 workers at Charles de Gaulle and Orly airports. These are baggage handlers and others with formerly unchecked opportunity to commit terror acts. All 70 have been found to have radicalized Islamic materials in a search of 4,000 workers' lockers. This was a good call and could well save lives!

But the "usual suspects" declared by many academics, particularly those in Islamic Studies departments, are always the United States, Europe, and Israel. Muslim terrorists around the world are reacting to "colonialism" (which no longer exists), "the invasion of Muslim lands," and "Western support for the state of Israel." This assumes that Islam is rightly responding to western aggression, whereas the rise of Muslim militancy was born decades before Israel existed or America invaded Iraq. The 9/11 attack on the US came before we invaded Afghanistan and Iraq. We were responding to a war declared on us, not the reverse.

But claiming that Donald Trump-led Islamophobes inflame the entire Muslim world ignores history. Many hated us before Donald Trump spoke and a vast majority has hated us for 1400 years.

Although other "usual suspects" are ignorant Americans (and Europeans) who dislike and suspect all Muslims, not all Muslims are Islamists. It is unfortunate when children bully Muslim classmates or adults frown at women in headscarves, but put it in perspective. Being rude to Muslims is not the same as when Islamists plant bombs in a Boston Marathon, firebomb nightclubs in Bali or Berlin, or carry out multiple terror murders in Bombay, London, Madrid, New York, or Paris. More unfortunate is how many non-violent Muslims approve of these actions (Google opinion polls).

We have our work cut out for us to preemptively round up real suspects in our own country. This is not easy to do in a country that values rule of law, human rights, and religious tolerance. It is ugly to ban all those fleeing the horrors of today's Muslim world, but it is also foolish to ignore that some of these migrants are radicalized and dangerous.

It is troubling to discover, as the French recently did, how many mosques are housing weapons, explosives, and inflammatory propaganda materials. A well-meaning American Synagogue recently invited a nearby Mosque to hold joint Friday services with them. When they read the translation of the Muslim sermon, they were horrified at what was being said.

The public is told by authorities: "If you see something, say something." However, if you say something, you might be sued, a prospect facing the school district that questioned a student for bringing what might have been a bomb to school. It was a clock that time, but that student is now living with his family in Qatar. His lawyers are suing everybody.

Many in our culture are like the rooster that thinks his crowing makes the sun come up. Too many of us are sure that every misfortune in the world is our own fault. If only we were nicer to the Muslim World they wouldn't hate us. If we had not colonized them, they wouldn't be so angry. If women did not dress so immodestly or speak out so aggressively, they would not be raped. Really?

Islam was colonized by the west because the once prominent Muslim world went to sleep in the 13th century. It failed to progress technologically, politically, or religiously. Rather than creating an industrial revolution, it assaults the world using the technology made by the very West that it scorns. It creates a death machine, not a civilizational system. Their chief victims, we should remember, are other Muslims!

We need to round up the real suspects and put our self-loathing away. We are not the problem. We are the solution.

684 words

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