



Monthly Update

February 1, 2017

Fear in the Market Place

Islamophobia

This week's attack on the mosque in Quebec City is but the latest reminder of the ever-present nature of Islamophobia that continues to grip our own land. Though an easy mindset to fall prey to, the downside consequences of doing so are sobering and should be taken into full account before capitulating to the temptation. Aside from its unfair implications for law-abiding Muslim citizens, islamophobia is actually self-defeating for several important reasons:

1. To the extent American Muslims are perceived to be marginalized or otherwise discriminated against, that perception plays directly into the hands of the extremists and significantly enhances their ability to attract additional recruits.
2. Such a perception also exacerbates the mistreatment of Christians and other minority faiths in Muslim-majority countries.
3. Finally, islamophobia risks alienating the American Muslim community, our foremost strategic asset in the global contest with militant Islam. American Muslims have alerted U.S. security officials close to 40 percent of all terrorist plots against the United States since 9-11.

The Japanese internment camps of World War II provide a stark reminder of how fear often drives us in directions we later come to regret. If we are not careful, current attitudes in some circles toward American Muslims could drive us in that same direction.

Two years ago, ICRD initiated and co-sponsored a two-day conference on Islamophobia for evangelical pastors to explore the way in which it manifests itself and the role they can play in arresting its spread and impact. The conference proceedings, which dealt with everything from sleeper cells to religious liberty, were captured by Fuller Seminary in the Fall 2016 issue of its journal on interfaith dialogue ([link here](#) to "Evangelicals and Islamophobia: Critical Voices and Constructive Proposals").

Anti-Semitism

Last Friday was International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Pictured below is how Imam Mohammed Magid, last year's recipient of our annual Faith in Action Award, addressed this topic at Auschwitz a few years ago. May we all internalize the urgency of his words.



"Whether in Europe today or in the Muslim world, my call to humanity: End racism for God's sake, end anti-Semitism for God's sake, end Islamophobia for God's sake, end sexism for God's sake... Enough is enough,"
Imam Mohammad Masjid (Third from the left, praying for holocaust victims at Auschwitz.)
(Image: Susan Barnett)

With best wishes,

Douglas Johnston
President, ICRD

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