

A New Chapter in Europe?



by Bruce Bawer

During the last several weekends, supporters of Islamic terrorism have taken to the streets of major Western cities in monumental displays of hatred for Jews, contempt for the West, and – last but not least – sheer, raw power. If the protests in the U.S. have been dominated largely by privileged but ignorant young people who are the products of left-wing academic indoctrination, the rallies in Western Europe have been dominated by fanatical Muslims who recognize this historical moment as a perfect opportunity to exhibit their clout, their rage, their total opposition to the founding principles of Western democracy, and their capacity to shake the free nations of the continent to their roots –and, in time, to topple them entirely.

No, this is far from the first time that European Muslims have publicly [expressed](#) their determination to impose sharia on the West and make it part of the House of Islam; but never before have so many Muslims stated this objective so loudly, so

brazenly, and so defiantly, with many of them going so far, even, as to publicly applaud the name of Hitler and the memory of the Holocaust. Never before, moreover, have European police and other authorities – most strikingly, as I noted the other day, in England, and with certain admirable exceptions, such as German Vice-Chancellor Robert [Habeck](#) – seemed so pitifully cowed, so eager to appease, in the face of mass Muslim mayhem. When a couple of British cops were asked at a rally the other day why they were telling patriots to put away the Union Jack but allowing supporters of genocide to wave Palestinian flags, one of the cops [answered](#) feebly if honestly: “There’s way more of them than there are of us.”

What we are seeing, then, is a terrifying new chapter in the story of the Islamization of the West. And whether by design or not, just as this chapter was getting underway, a remarkably under-reported meeting took place in Copenhagen on October 30 and 31. At this meeting, government ministers representing the five Nordic nations and belonging to something called the High-Level Nordic Cooperation on Refugee Issues, agreed to set up three joint initiatives to address illegal immigration. One of these initiatives would involve working together to facilitate the voluntary return to their homelands of people who’ve settled in one or another of the Nordic countries. Another would help illegal migrants who’ve been stranded in North Africa on their way to Europe to return – again, voluntarily – to their countries of origin. The third would compel the forced return to their native lands of persons who are residing illegally in a Nordic country.

Yes, at first glance it sounds rather underwhelming. Two of the three initiatives, after all, assume the readiness of the immigrants involved to return home. The third – the one that stipulates the forced return of illegals – comes under the category of “I’ll believe it when I see it.” When the alternative Norwegian news and opinion website [document.no](#) [reported](#) on the new initiatives, the reader

comments were almost uniformly cynical: “Skeptical.” “Playing to the gallery.” “Wow! Only 50 years too late.” “For every return they’ll be 100 arrivals. At least.”

There’s ample reason for this skepticism, of course. For governments to compel illegal immigrants – notably people whose asylum applications have been rejected, often years ago and on multiple occasions, in response to repeated appeals – sounds like a no-brainer; but in fact it’s been standard practice in many Western Europe countries to go through the elaborate process of considering and then turning down an asylum application only to let the matter drop at that point, with the individual being permitted to stay anyway. The whole thing has never made the slightest bit of sense, and it’s had catastrophic consequences, with failed asylum seekers becoming familiar figures in crime-news reports. And even after they’ve been found guilty of serious felonies, many of these miscreants still haven’t been put on a plane.

Presumably this will change now. We’ll see. Unfortunately, the accounts of the Copenhagen meetings – which have been unusually few in number on English-language websites, and almost nonexistent in the mainstream Nordic media – have been skimpy on detail about the new initiatives. Breitbart’s [report](#) quoted Kaare Dybvad Bek, Denmark’s Minister of Immigration and Integration, as saying that *of course* “foreigners without legal residence” should go home – it’s a matter of “principle”; Finland’s Interior Minister, Mari Rantanen, confessed that “immigration rules” – and particularly the business of sending people back where they came from – “have been the weak link in our system.” But I couldn’t find much of anything about the background to these new initiatives, about when they’ll get underway, and about how exactly it’ll work. So one is left to try to make sense of the situation based on the known facts.

One of those facts is that, of the five Nordic countries, it’s Denmark that has set the most responsible standard for dealing

with questions of immigration and integration. (Of course these things are all relative: it's also the Danish government that decided last summer, in response to Muslim outrage over public burnings of copies of the Koran, to limit the right to express one's opinions in such a manner.) Another important fact is that politicians in Sweden, after observing years of steady growth in the size and number of sharia-run no-go zones – accompanied by a relentless increase in such acts of Islamic mischief as gang violence, car-burnings, shootings, bombings, and the like – have stopped looking down their noses at Denmark for its purportedly Islamophobic policies and have instead, especially in recent months, begun to talk seriously about instituting similar policies within their own borders. After the new Nordic initiative was announced, Swedish Migration Minister Maria Malmer Stenergard admitted that her government was now looking at Denmark's approach to "migration issues" as a model.

How much did the atrocities of October 7 and the subsequent pro-Hamas rallies have to do with the apparently sudden determination of Nordic leaders to address Islamic immigration collectively? About this question one can only conjecture. But I can safely say this: it's long been clear to me that a major reason why so many high-level Scandinavian officials have been so blithely indifferent for so long to the dire consequences of Islamic immigration – or flat-out in denial about them – is that those officials tend to live in neighborhoods that are some distance away from the Muslim enclaves. (I speak of "Scandinavian officials" rather than "Nordic officials" because the Muslim populations of Iceland and Finland, which are Nordic but not Scandinavian, are relatively small, and the problems consequently much less drastic – so far, anyway.) It's no secret that many Scandinavian politicians have had amicable relationships with leaders of Hamas, whom they've invited to meetings – often secret ones – and treated as if they were civilized human beings and honest brokers with legitimate grievances.

Yet I suspect that when those Hamas terrorists burst out of Gaza, charged into a number of halcyon-looking kibbutzim near the Gaza border, smashed into one pleasant little home after another, and murdered men, women, and children with subhuman brutality, many of the Scandinavian politicians who've long supported large-scale Muslim immigration (while losing no sleep over the colossal failure of Muslim integration) realized that they themselves, personally, were far less insulated from the problem than they'd believed. When they saw images of the massacred young partiers at a music festival devoted to the celebration of "friends, love and infinite freedom," how could it not have occurred to these politicians that this was precisely the kind of event that their own kids might have been eager to attend? How, in the wake of October 7 and its aftermath, can even the most avid cheerleaders for "our new countrymen" not have begun to question their ardently professed conviction that "diversity is our strength"?

For a long time, a small minority of quixotic truth-tellers, myself among them, have been telling these politicians that they were courting fatal folly with their Muslim policies. In response, they've routinely smeared us as Islamophobes, conspiracy theorists, and devotees of something called the "Eurabia theory" and of something else called the "replacement theory." If anybody's a threat to the multicultural harmony of Western Europe, these politicians have repeatedly contended, it's not Muslims – whose cultural contributions, they've insisted, are nothing but a positive enrichment – but us malignant doomsayers. After the atrocities of October 7, and the subsequent weekends during which veritable armies of "new countrymen" have laid bare, in the largest numbers ever, the depth and breadth of their contempt for the native people and traditional values of their host nations, can even the most benighted European politician believe that mass Islamic immigration is in any way benign?

In the weeks and months to come, it will be interesting to see

if the Nordic nations really go through with their initiatives, and if other European countries follow their lead. If so, it will be interesting to see if those initiatives make any difference. And if they do, it will be interesting to see if they prove, in the end, to be nothing more than pathetic, last-ditch set of half-measures, or if they turn out to be just the beginning of a genuinely serious effort to fight back and save the West before it's too late. For my part, I'll say only that, on the one hand, I believe, with Andy Dufresne in *The Shawshank Redemption*, that hope is a good thing, maybe the best of things; and, on the other, that I've seen more than my share of ambitious-sounding immigration-reform initiatives and heard more than my share of elegant speeches full of big promises that have come to nothing.

My book on the Islamization of Europe, published in 2006, was entitled *While Europe Slept*, and you might expect that the developments of recent weeks would be enough to have finally awakened even the most deep-sleeping – which is to say, obtuse and naive – of the continent's leaders to the horrors they've courted. But the cowardice and inertia of some of these people is frankly beyond belief, as is the fact that so many of them, insane though it sounds, plainly fear being called racist more than they fear the whirlwind. Indeed, many veteran Western European politicians only began to talk about revising their own disastrous immigration and integration policies when upstart parties that challenged those policies began gaining electoral ground and threatening the veterans' careers.

Needless to say, those disastrous policies were never put to a public vote. Nor has the idea of mass deportation. Appearing last weekend on the Triggernometry podcast out of London, my friend Douglas Murray, the British writer (who now lives in New York), declared with refreshing bluntness that he wants Hamas supporters removed from his native country – period. Same here. In the very first article I ever wrote about Islam,

which appeared in the Autumn 2002 issue of *Partisan Review*, I maintained that European Muslims who “make it obvious that they are unwilling or unable to adapt...must be sent home and replaced by deserving individuals who can adapt. This may appear extreme, but there is no reasonable alternative. For at stake in all this, ultimately, are the basic freedoms of all Westerners...At stake, indeed, is Western civilization.”

On that same Triggernometry podcast, co-host Konstantin Kisin noted that according to a recent British poll, 92% of Tory voters and 70% of Labour voters “support deporting people who glorify terrorism.” I imagine that the results of such a poll, taken at this moment in time, would probably be pretty much the same all over Europe. And yet, as Kisin said, who truly believes that the U.K., or any other Western European country, actually *will* deport such people, no matter how great the public outcry? Murray had an answer: if the governments don't act, then eventually the people will. I hope he's right. But I fear that at this point the people of Western Europe are, by and large, as meek as their masters.

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