

WHY DO WE RESPECT EVIL?

by Howard Rotberg



“Respect”, according to the *Oxford Dictionary*, is defined as a “feeling of deep admiration for someone or something elicited by their abilities, qualities, or achievements.”

Hillary Clinton, whose chief aide, Huma Abedin, was associated with the evil Muslim terrorist-supporting organization, the Muslim Brotherhood, seemed to counsel respect for our enemies, and that women were more moral at that than men. In fact, she once argued that women were better at diplomacy and security because of something she termed “Smart Power”:

“Smart Power (is) using every possible tool ...leaving no one on the sidelines, **showing respect even for one’s enemies**, trying to understand, and insofar as is psychologically possible, empathize with their perspective and point of view... to change the prospect for peace.” (my emphasis)

I am in my 70th year, and I was raised to respect police but not to respect criminals. However, later as a lawyer I believed in giving criminals due process and extending the benefit of our justice system to require the state to prove a crime beyond a reasonable doubt before depriving someone of his or her liberty.

Moreover, I have always subscribed to the definition of "respect" as a deep admiration based on "abilities, qualities, or achievements."

Our problem today, is that we are told by the "woke" of the leftist-Islamist-Globalist alliance that we should respect people solely for their gender, gender-identity and their race. I thought of myself as color-blind, but now we are told that equality has been cast aside for "equity" in passing preferential laws, or corporate or institutional policies that disrespect the historical "privilege", so called, of white males. Instead we are supposed to give our supply of "respect" to such people as George Floyd, a career criminal, drug addict, father of 5 children who he abandoned, who assaulted a pregnant woman in a home invasion, and thus is a symbol of what is evil in America.

Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib, was raised with the Palestinian hatred for the western liberal democracies of Israel and the United States. She no doubt absorbed the lesson from the universities that terrorist Palestinians who raise their children to hate and kill moral equivalency or perhaps moral superiority with the liberal and tolerant Jewish state and thus are equally deserving of respect. Never mind that Israel has given land for peace, unsuccessfully in Gaza, has attempted through the Oslo Accords to give the Palestinians a state, only to be met with maximalist demands that said state should not be in addition to Israel but in place of Israel. Tlaib of course does not respect police and has now demanded that police be not just defunded, but *abolished*.

In this she has been joined by another leftist – Alexandria Octavio-Cortes – who is the recipient of leftist respect despite having achieved little, except promoting communism. Octavio-Cortes reacted this week to the accidental shooting by an experienced female officer of a young black man, where she appears on video to be trying to taser the fellow but mistakenly took out her pistol, even while shouting she was going to taser him if he didn't cooperate.

She said: “Daunte Wright's killing was not a random, disconnected ‘accident’ – it was the repeated outcome of an indefensible system that grants impunity for state violence, rewards it with endlessly growing budgets at the cost of community investment, and targets those who question that order.”

In other words, these young women say it is the “system” or the established “order” that is bad and anyone who questions that order is to be respected, even if that person is a hardened criminal with low morals like George Floyd.

And so, if we change the meaning of the concept of respect so that it is meant to describe a “deep admiration” not for achievements, qualities or abilities, but only for their usefulness to the latest leftist or Islamist narrative or ideological framework, we have a problem.

Most of us know that policing is a dangerous job but that it is an essential job. Of course it can be dangerous both to the officer and those around him or her. That is why proper training and use of non-lethal weapons should be implemented as soon as possible. At the same time, we need to respect those who write our laws, debate our laws, administer the legal system, and enforce our laws. Law enforcement is a low-paying job but I respect 99% of the people who do it, until I have proof that they are not deserving of my respect.

If we don't understand that respect must be based on

achievements and personal qualities, that it must be earned by actions as well as talk, we have a problem. We used to understand achievements on the basis of what are called the “Judeo-Christian” ethics. If we now are tossing out traditional ethical standards and embracing immorality of every kind, then the very idea of respect is in danger.

This is especially so when our woke cancel culture *disrespects* every conservative, including some great conservative thinkers and writers. Our culture respects China when it should disrespect it – but money talks, especially at our universities and high tech corporations. Our culture disrespects Israel, when such disrespect is founded in antisemitism and obsessive hatred of the good and embrace of the evil. Many Americans react to their personal challenges by disrespecting their own country – one that has certain challenges and is not perfect – but one that has adhered most of the time to a wonderful Constitution with a Bill of Rights, and is admired for its achievements and qualities. Simply take a look at how many people want to get in to America versus how many leave America.

I wrote a book called *Tolerism: The Ideology Revealed*, about the excessive emphasis these days on tolerance, instead of traditional values of justice, freedom and responsibility. Much of what passes for respect makes so little sense that it is really about tolerance or its ideology of tolerism.

Confusion about the concepts of respect and tolerance is at the heart of today’s moral confusion.

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