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Palestinian terrorism and Muslim hypocrisy: An open letter from a Muslim woman

NADIYA AL-NOOR | JULY 1, 2016, 6:40 AM |

While millions of children got out of bed on the morning of June 30, 2016, excited for summer vacation, one child did not. A young Israeli girl, 13-year-old Hallel Yaffe Ariel, was brutally murdered in her own bed by a 17-year-old Palestinian terrorist. He broke into her house and stabbed her to death. Another life lost to senseless violence. Another poor soul taken too early from this world. But few Muslims in this world will be mourning her death, because Hallel was an Israeli Jew.

I am a Muslim, and I know that when it comes to Palestinian terrorism, too many Muslims are hypocrites. I have seen firsthand the casual, destructive anti-Semitism that plagues the Muslim community. I have heard it from the mouths of our religious leaders, from our politicians, and even from our otherwise peaceful, liberal Muslim activists. I have witnessed in horror the desperate attempts to justify Palestinian terrorism from people who I once respected. Why? Why do we decry all other types of terrorism, but bend over backwards to legitimize violence against Israeli Jews?

We blame it on "Zionism." We blame it on "occupation." We blame it on "apartheid." We lap up the tired, anti-Semitic lies fed to us by Al-Jazeera: "Israelis cut off the water supply!" "Israelis are going to destroy the Al-Aqsa mosque!" We're not even willing to admit that Israel is a country. We call it "Palestine." We refuse to call violence against Israelis "terrorism," and we hypocritically scream, "Resistance is not a crime!"

Let me tell you something. Stabbing pregnant women in the stomach is not “resistance.” Shooting people at a cafe is not “resistance.” Driving your car into pedestrians is not “resistance.” Bombing a bus is not “resistance.” Breaking into a woman’s home and murdering her in front of her children is not “resistance.” And stabbing a little girl to death in the one place where she was supposed to be safe is certainly not “resistance.” Terrorism is not resistance. Terrorism is an unjustifiable crime.

Muslims around the world are constantly decrying ISIS and most terrorism in the name of Islam. I know Muslims who are interfaith activists, peace advocates, doctors, gay rights activists, and more. We sincerely hate ISIS and terrorism with a passion. We’ll stand up against the persecution of Christians, atheists, Hindus, Shias, Ahmadis, and anyone else who is persecuted. We will sob to the heavens if a Palestinian is killed, but when it comes to Palestinian terrorism against Jews, we either turn a blind eye to it, or we twist the story to make the terrorists into the victims. This is unacceptable.

British Prime Minister David Cameron [said](#), “If you say... ‘Violence in London isn’t justified, but suicide bombs in Israel are a different matter’ – then you too are part of the problem.” He is absolutely right. Terror is terror, even when it’s against Israelis. Do not try to justify or make excuses for the terrorism that happens much too often in Israel. Innocent people are being killed. Their lives are just as important as those killed in Paris, Brussels, Nigeria, Turkey, Pakistan, Jordan, Indonesia, Yemen, Lebanon, Iraq, or Syria. Their deaths are no more deserved.

Of course we must condemn instances where injustices are committed by the Israeli government or any other government or authority of any sort. Of course we must affirm the right to life of Palestinians, but one life is not worth more than another. An Israeli life lost is equal to that of a Palestinian. Tragedy is not a competition. We must mourn for both, and fight to prevent the loss of both. We must decry all terrorism committed. We must not bend over backwards to try to justify it. We must not blame innocent people for being slaughtered, or justify the actions of the terrorists who slaughter them. If we justify acts of terrorism, it is an indication that we do not really believe in peace.

When you make excuses for terrorists, you support terrorism. Period. Until we stand against terrorism in all its forms, against terrorists from every background, we Muslims are hypocrites. Allah does not love hypocrites.

The world lost a beautiful little girl on Thursday. We must not let Hallel’s death be ignored. We must fight anti-Semitism in all its forms, and that includes fighting against Palestinian terrorism. This was a terrible tragedy, and we must work to prevent it from happening to someone else’s child. In the words of my friend Afshine Emrani, an Iranian-American, “Dear God. Help us. We are not supposed to say Kaddish for a bat mitzvah girl.”

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