

Press Release

Racism Thrives in the Secular Capitalist Ideology

Protesters are coming out in increasingly large numbers venting their frustration and telling the world that they cannot tolerate the systematic racist oppression anymore. The obscene racism of the American society is being exposed, once again, and even the more hidden systematic racism in Britain is being discussed.

Police brutality, economic standing, employment and even health statistics all show that America, Europe and Britain are very unequal internally, with divisions primarily along lines of ethnicity. Indeed, it is largely the so-called ethnic minorities that are bearing the brunt of the Coronavirus pandemic, both as its victims and as key workers dangerously exposed to it to keep the society running.

After the open murder of George Floyd, against a background of similar murders and absence of justice, it is not a surprise that people should be angry enough to want to break things, either as demonstration of their anger, or simply as an alleviation of the poverty that has been inflicted upon them by the rest of the society.

For hundreds of years America and the capitalist Western states have exploited and discriminated against those whom the powerful elite deem as inferior or lower class. They invent excuses to justify to the rest of the people why such an underclass may be treated this way. Racial superiority was such an idea, invented by Europeans to justify their African slave trade. The goal for the capitalists was always the exploitation of labour, yet the white majority Europeans and Americans latched onto the racist ideas to distract themselves from the fact they too are just exploited labour for the capitalist elite, yet of a slightly higher class, according to their theories.

Such arrogance has always been condemned by Islam. The Quran tells of Iblees' arrogant disdain for Adam which was his downfall. Other religions and moral philosophies have also condemned racism and the superiority complex of its adherents, such that it had largely fallen out of fashion, yet it still has many supporters just below the surface. It has recently started to gain some popularity again, as populist leaders have tapped into it the growing discontent with the failure of the capitalist economies, and stirred nationalism and its equally foul racist sibling to garner support for their grab for power.

Trump, and populist leaders like him throughout Europe, know that scapegoating minority groups is an easy means to activate their support base, and to distract them from their own oppression. Hence the society is divided between the shallow supporters of the populist, despite their own low oppressed status in actuality, and the overtly oppressed minority, and this is all justified with the hateful insinuations, speech and actions of the populist leadership. The capitalist elite are unaffected by all of this, as they really do not care who their exploited labours are, so long as they continue to allow themselves to be exploited.

Damaging the symbols of the white privileged capitalists is an understandable reaction to pent up anger built over generations of exploitation and oppression. However, the capitalists realise that it is like a pressure valve, which needs to be released from time to time. They allow the use of protests, even some destruction, in order that the oppressed communities can realign themselves with the capitalist system. Some token adjusting of power and roles within the society may be allowed, but ultimately the capitalist elite and their corrupt system remain to exploit everyone else with a renewed energy.

The goal of most protesters will be to make their voices heard, to stand up and be counted, and to make the state listen, so that changes can be introduced to alleviate some of the suffering. Changes most certainly must be made, even short-term ones to address the massive inequality; however, protests rarely achieve anything more than token gestures that do not really begin to fix the broken system which underlies all of the exploitation and oppression.

The capitalist system exploits the people, by hook or crook, as its secular foundation made everyone believe that might is right and that the majority desire trumps that of the minority. For sustainability, the capitalist elites shared a little of their obscene wealth with a privileged middle class to keep the majority lower class workers in order, justifying the inequality of status and opportunity with all manner of excuses.

It is the capitalist ideology with its secular foundation that will continue to oppress and exploit people, for as long as it is allowed to do so. If some of the privileged middle classes are made to feel guilty for their ill-gotten status, and seek absolution from the people on the bottom rung, even sharing a little of their wealth and power with them, it will ultimately not lead to an end to oppression, as the oppressive system still remains. The oppression will just shift onto other people, perhaps overseas, and so the sick cycle continues.

Muslims in Britain need to have awareness of the causes of systematic racism in the West as well as Islam's solution for the world. Exposing the manifestations of racism when they occur is a commendable act; however, we should not stop at that. When there is a deeper root, we should seek to pull back the dirt and expose that too.

It is true that Islam condemns racism, nationalism and all discrimination of colour and ethnicity; however, this is a goal that remains theoretical unless achieved practically. Islam also has a way to prevent racism, which is the Khilafah (Caliphate) established on the way of Prophethood. It applies the practical rules of the economy, judiciary and social and education systems that do not tolerate exploitation of one class over the other, does not recognise classes between people, and does not permit populist pretenders to sew divisions among their people.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ﴾

“O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.” [Al-Hujurat: 13]

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