

Terror, Security and Human Rights Fundamentalism

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Human rights, which has been referred to as the “secular religion of the 21st century” has failed, catastrophically. The first, most fundamental right is the right to life — the right be protected from murder, regardless of the cause that is proclaimed to justify the killing of innocent people, whether in Europe, America, Israel, Syria, or anywhere else.

When judged according to this basic truth, the religion of human rights has been a catastrophic failure. As the victims are buried and the families mourn, the high priests — leaders of powerful global organizations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, and the officers of parallel international bodies — stand exposed as sophists, preaching a rigid liturgy far removed from reality. The institutions that they direct, such as the United Nations Human Rights Council, are monuments to hypocrisy, promoting ideologies of incitement and discrimination.

These values and institutions do not exist in a theoretical vacuum, and when they are presented and marketed as if terrorism and mass murder did not exist, they lose all meaning. When people speaking in the name of human rights revile and demonize every step taken by governments and security forces to provide safety and security, nothing is acceptable, and many innocent lives are lost. This fundamentalist, uncompromising and distorted interpretation of human rights has destroyed its moral foundation.

Like other universal moral values, human rights are not simply rules (real or imagined) and prohibitions, but encompass vital obligations. In the world of nation-states, the first job of the government is to protect its citizens, and when the officials fail at this task, as tragically seen in France and Belgium, they lose their legitimacy. In the real world, without security, there can be no other human rights.

In an age of radical ideology and religious hate, the aspirational principles that characterize ideal societies must be weighed against the primary requirement for security. Invasive intelligence-gathering to identify mass terrorists and administrative

detention to hold them before they are allowed to strike become vital, despite intrusions on the civil liberties of a “normal” democratic framework. Governments and security forces faced with imminent threats that do not use check points, profiling, preventive arrests, raids on suspected safe houses, and similar tools will fail repeatedly and tragically, and thousands of innocent people will be blown to bits.

Indeed, these are the measures for which Israel has been condemned for decades, and which have saved countless lives. The human rights industry, including both the global powers and their Israeli and Palestinian allies, and largely funded by the European Union and by individual governments (including France and Belgium), has consistently condemned these actions, erasing the context of mass terrorism and incitement. With taxpayer-provided budgets amounting to tens of millions of Euros, these false prophets and their professional public relations agents invented a narrative using the language of international law in order to demonize Israeli leaders as “war criminals” for fulfilling their core obligation — providing security.

Although much damage has already been done, the process of reforming the institutions and processes must begin immediately, bringing them into balance with real-world requirements. New institutions are necessary, and the fundamentalist high priests should be replaced and held accountable, so that others will learn and avoid following this destructive path. The careful efforts made by the Israeli government and courts to prioritize and balance between contending rights — between security and rights — provide singular guidance. The alternative is many more years of mass terror, many more tragedies and the end of any ability to navigate between life and liberty.