



TASC Media Watch March 2019

From the fear of Islam to the hatred of Muslims: a criticism of the current double standard.

A **TERRORIST** attack, apparently perpetrated by white supremacist Brenton Harrison Tarrant, slackely struck Muslim worshipers gathered in two mosques in Christchurch (New Zealand) on Friday, March 15, 2019. At least 50 martyrs are to be mourned.

At present, it is not legally appropriate to find the accused Tarrant guilty of the charges against him, even though, in the light of the evidence in our presence, his acquittal is implausible (for not to say impossible).

That being said, place to criticism. We - Muslims - have come to the conclusion that savagery and terror are strongly condemned by the international community and by the media only when they are the work of so-called Muslims acting supposedly in the name of Islam to massacre innocent people.

For what reasons did the Western media have so much trouble to call these barbaric acts as « **terrorist attacks** » ? Why have the world's leaders not shown more compassion and empathy for the families of Muslim victims ? The mediatic treatment reserved to the terrorist attacks of Friday, March 15, 2019 would have been the same if the people targeted by these attacks were Jewish, Christian, Buddhist, atheist ?

The answer to the last question is : no. The attacks against the newspaper « Charlie Hebdo » and the theater « Bataclan » in Paris, both of which occurred in 2015, were the subject of unprecedented mobilization by the international community. The world's leaders had even met in January 2015, in Paris, to pay tribute to the victims of the Charlie Hebdo attack. As a reminder, the former Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, took part in the march organized in memory of the victims.

For the moment, the international community has failed to prove to Muslims what they have been hammering us for several decades ; namely, the equal value of all human lives. Given the exceptional shyness of international leaders who would have been expected to be outraged by the commission of these attacks, We – Muslims – came to a conclusion : we are firmly convinced that, in the eyes of the international community and medias, the life of a Muslim is not as valuable as that of a non-Muslim.

If the international community and medias want to prove the opposite, a major initiative will have to be launched. It must be to put on an equal footing all the terrorist and racist acts committed against any human being.

This is especially possible by naming the terrorist attacks targeting Muslims as "***anti-Islamic***" attacks, and by the way, no longer as "***Islamophobic attacks***". Indeed, ***phobia*** is a term that comes from the ancient Greek ***φόβος/phóbos*** meaning fright/fear. ***Islamophobia*** refers to the ***fear of Islam***. However, the attack recently committed against the faithful Muslims of Christchurch can not be the fact of an individual being ***afraid*** of Islam. This can only have been committed by a **terrorist** who has a visceral ***hatred*** of Islam and Muslims.

Moreover, when the targets of terrorists are Jewish, there is no doubt about the ***anti-Semitic*** nature of the attacks. In such cases, in the mind of anyone, the point is absolutely not about a ***phobia*** of the Jews, but it is about a ***hatred*** of them.

A discriminatory treatment is therefore reserved for Muslim victims who are, in any case, only attacked by Islamophobic people; that is, people who are "***afraid of Islam***". **This reinforces the idea that the attacked Muslim (who should only be a victim) is also at fault because he is the source of the fear of the one who attacked him.** This is totally unacceptable and that is why the use of the term "Islamophobia" is, in my opinion, to be avoided today. It is therefore imperative to replace it with the expression "***anti-Islamic actions***", or at least, an expression that highlights hate and not phobia.

It is first by making such a semantic evolution that we, Muslims, could perhaps begin to believe in the good faith of those who claim that all lives are equal...