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Peter Noordhoek: From Burqa to a pardon - In Dutch politics the integration debate rages on

Last week the Dutch cabinet approved a proposal to ban the wearing of the Muslim burqa in public places. Here, Peter Noordhoek, member of the Dutch Christian Democratic Party discusses the ban. A ban he supports, not for security reasons, but because he does not want to live in a society "where eyes cannot meet".



In politics, timing is everything. Jack Straw's remarks about the wearing of the Burqa were somehow spot on time. In the Netherlands a proposal was launched this month to ban the Burqa and the Niqab, a similar garment. This drew considerable attention abroad, today even leading to a protest by the 57-nation Organisation of the Islamic Conference. But the attention abroad was not reflected in the Netherlands itself. Here it seems like the end of a discussion, not the beginning of it. There have been earlier attempts to ban the Burqa in Holland. Proposals were launched by major politicians even before the murder on Theo van Gogh. However, they ran into legal problems, so nothing came of it. The new element is that lawyers connected to the Ministry of Justice seem to have found a way around the legal objections, based on security considerations and a new law against terrorism. Considering the fact that there is a parliamentary majority for banning or limiting the use of 'face-covering clothes', the passage of a law has come into sight.

Has it really? It is election time in the Netherlands. Ms. Rita Verdonk, the Minister for Integration and a Thatcher-like figure in Dutch politics, is the source of the new initiative and everything coming from her has an edge to it. She is not afraid of using drastic measures, nor is she afraid of breaking an egg in the process, as was evident when she denied Ayaan Hirshi Ali Dutch citizenship, leading to the fall of the Cabinet. The reflex is to put everything she does in a rightwing perspective and in the perspective of the infighting that is going on in her party, the VVD. She, her party's number two, is steering a course that is much more far right than her leader, Mark Rutte. Her initiative concerning the Burqa, though backed by the Cabinet, is seen as another campaign non-event produced by the disunited VVD.

More significance should be put on the debate about a 'general pardon'. A few years back an action was taken by the now defunct Cabinet to oust 26,000 people who were living here without an official status. Many of them had been living here for years and were quite integrated into society. Their children were born here and went to Dutch schools. The removal of these people proved to be both very painful and very visual. Of the 26,000, most have left the country or have been given Dutch nationality because of 'extreme circumstances', but many thousands are still in the country, awaiting a decision. This has caused such an alarm, not least within the rank-and-file of the leading Christian-democratic party, the CDA, that a proposal for a 'general pardon' has been launched. So far, the CDA has been against this pardon. The election that is now taking place

is mostly a contest between the CDA and the Labour party.

Because the VVD is destroying itself in the struggle between Ms Verdonk and the old leaders of that party, it looks likely that the two main adversaries will also have to form the next government. Labour has now put the knife in by stating that a general pardon is a pre-condition for any future Cabinet that includes the Labour party. As a result it is the 'general pardon' and its claim for a softer integration policy that has now taking centre stage in Dutch politics and not the dark veil of the Burqa. The most likely result is a deadlock in Dutch politics.

Related link: [Paul Goodman's Islamism and the 'deep, deep sleep of England'](#)

November 20, 2006 at 00:01 in [Peter Noordhoek](#) | [Permalink](#)

Comments



Denis Cooper zei...

I've posted on here before about New York's "anti-mask" law:

<http://www.nlgny.org/pdf/MaskMemo.pdf>

and according to this:

"Dutch government proposes a ban on wearing burqas in public"

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"Italy has a law requiring people to keep their face visible in public that dates back to the country's crackdown on domestic terrorism decades ago."

That edition of the Independent also had a letter asking people not to confuse headscarves and veils. Of course there are those who do this deliberately to muddy the waters, and that's one reason why I prefer plain English rather than the Arabic terminology as far as possible.

This Dutch proposal seems fair enough to me, simply on security grounds.

On the general pardon: if an individual has managed to live in a country for many years, without breaking any laws other than the immigration laws, and has a job and a family, possibly with children at school etc, there does come a point at which it is simply too inhumane to deport them and they should invited to apply for citizenship. After all, it would not be their fault that the authorities were lax and had failed to pick them up earlier. But that should not be publicised as a general amnesty, which would certainly encourage more illegal immigration.

[Antwoorden November 20, 2006 at 12:11](#)



TomTom zei...

Interesting book review

http://www.americanthinker.com/articles.php?article_id=6031

[Antwoorden November 20, 2006 at 12:24](#)

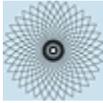


Franck Guillory zei...

You may wish to read extracts from Douglas Murray's speech at The New Culture Forum, an event organised earlier this month and very kindly announced by CH. A more pessimistic - but so well-informed - approach to the Dutch issue.

<http://newcultureforum.blogspot.com/2006/11/douglas-murray-at-new-culture-forum.html>

Antwoorden November 20, 2006 at 14:16



Denis Cooper zei...

The book is by Mark Steyn, and the review is depressing ...

"... according to a recent poll (cited by Steyn), only 8 percent of Muslims living in Great Britain consider themselves British first, whereas 81 percent consider themselves Muslim first. Given the stark differences between what it means to be British and what it means to be Muslim, these poll results portend a disastrous future for the British nation."

"Steyn emphasizes that, with birth rates among native Europeans well below "replacement level" (2.1 children per woman), the Western populations in these countries will shrink with each new generation. At the same time, millions of Muslims are moving into Europe (naively welcomed by the existing governments as a source of labor to maintain their lavish welfare states), and are having many more children than their neighbors. Steyn reports that Western women in Europe have an average of 1.4 children, whereas Muslim women have an average of 3.5 children. The result is a "baby boom" among Muslims that, within our lifetimes, will completely change the European countries in which they live."

"Yet after spending page after page highlighting the demographic disaster that awaits Europe (and to a much lesser extent the United States), Steyn fails to state the logical conclusion, which is that Muslim immigration must be stopped. Period. If one believes, as Steyn clearly does (with strong support from the evidence), that Muslims as a group not only are not assimilating into Western culture but are actively hostile toward the very principles upon which our societies are built, then it is "suicidal" (a term frequently used by Steyn) to permit millions of Muslims to take up residence within our countries."

" However, nowhere in America Alone does Steyn dare utter this obvious, if uncomfortable, truth."

" ... multiculturalism was conceived by the Western elites not to celebrate all cultures but to deny their own."

Thinking about suttee last night, I was interested in

"... his favorite anecdote about a British general in colonial India who, when faced with the traditional Hindu practice of "suttee" – the burning of widows on the funeral pyres of their dead husbands – told his Indian subjects:

"You say that it is your custom to burn widows. Very well. We also have a custom: When men burn a woman alive, we tie a rope around their necks and we hang them. Build your funeral pyre; beside it, my carpenters will build a gallows. You may follow your custom. And then we will follow ours.""

Antwoorden November 20, 2006 at 14:59



anthony scholefield zei...

Denis,

You are correct. At our research body the next work is likely to recommend the repatriation of Muslims noting that this was the normal policy of European Liberals such as Gladstone Woodrow Wilson Lloyd George etc

Antwoorden November 20, 2006 at 15:30



Angelo Basu zei...

The thing about the banning of the practice of suttee was that it was welcomed by the majority of Hindus as it really WASN'T a traditional practice at all but rather an extreme interpretation. Really very much like the full on wearing of veils amongst a minority of Muslims. The difference is that it is easier to ban an obviously harmful practice like suttee or female circumcision than something as apparently innocuous as wearing a veil.

[Antwoorden November 20, 2006 at 17:00](#)



SimonNewman zei...

14:59:

"Steyn fails to state the logical conclusion, which is that Muslim immigration must be stopped"

Steyn and like-minded commentators think "old Europe" is demographically doomed, will be inevitably destroyed by an Islamist takeover, and nothing can be done about it, ergo no point calling for an end to Muslim immigration into Europe. Since he rather seems to relish the prospect, I think we can only draw limited lessons from his analysis.

[Antwoorden November 20, 2006 at 17:03](#)



SimonNewman zei...

I think my own view is that there is a danger that western Enlightenment civilisation will be destroyed in western Europe within the next 20-50 years, but this is far from inevitable. Also, I think it is only because western Europe is in the grip of cultural Marxism that political Islamism poses a strategic-level threat to the survival of western civilisation in Europe. The unfortunate thing is that currently the situation might be rectified by a mild reassertion of the norms of traditional western European civilisation here (eg no lawyers in burkas in British courts); but the longer it goes on, the stronger the anti-Islamist reaction has to be if it's to be successful. Ten years from now it might require harsh Turkey-level laws enforcing secularism; twenty years from now it could take a civil war. Start today and such dark scenarios should be avoidable.

[Antwoorden November 20, 2006 at 17:12](#)



Michael McGowan zei...

Simon, I agree entirely. We have a cultural Marxist government and an opposition which either does not understand cultural Marxism or if it does, seems pretty relaxed about it.

[Antwoorden November 20, 2006 at 18:08](#)



spagbob zei...

here's an idea, convert all the muslims to christianity and you eliminate the threat.

i dont see what the problem is with women wearing face covering veils e.t.c. ok its not very helpful when talking so maybe they need to take it off then, but the whole point of it is to stop men gawping at women all the time. by banning them, it is sending a message to muslims that the west doesnt respect women and see's

them as sex objects. im sorry but thats not the right message to be sending is it, especially when we're in a fight for which value system is the best. why should we have laws saying what people can and cannot wear...next they'll be banning football shirts because some fans who wear them are hooligans, get a life.

and as for muslims seeing themselves as muslims first and britains second, so what. i am a christian and consider myself christian first, british second (and definitely not european in any way, shape or form - we would be better off out). does that mean im not patriotic, that i wouldnt fight for my country if i was needed, that i didnt value britain and its customs, no! it just means that religion has a higher value for me than nationality. it doesnt mean ill go round blowing things up if i dont agree with them. there are things about britain i dont like - labour government for one, and the lack of morals. in fact i think it is the immorality and decadence in the west, not foreign policy that is the primary reason why muslim extremists in britian are successful.

we want to integrate muslims into the british way of life, yet to most of them it is morally decadent so why should they want to - lets get back to a christian moral code in britain and im sure muslims would be happy to be part of our society. to be quite honest, most muslims are moral people and the only reason they would want to distance themselves from british culture is because of its decadence. thats one of the reasons extremists want to destroy it (it is hypocritical and evil on their part to claim to want to create a moral country by killing people tho).

now im not minimising the fact that some extremist muslims would like to take over britain and make it an islamic state. think about it - what are the aims of the muslims in trying to create an islamic state - it is because they want britain to be a country run on moral principles. why do many moderate muslims want sharia law brought in - because they see it as a moral code that could make britain a moral country again. now i dont think its a good idea to bring in sharia, and some aspects are clearly not very moral at all, hence why i think getting back to our christian roots for a moral code would be a better idea and im sure it would sort out the problems.

Antwoorden November 20, 2006 at 19:19



spagbob zei...

p.s. im not claiming that muslim extremists are moral in any way, they are evil. but the vast majority of moderate muslims are moral people and extremists can use western decadence as a recruiting agent for terrorism.

Antwoorden November 20, 2006 at 19:29



sjm zei...

If western society is so morally reprehensible to Muslim immigrants, why do they come here in the first place? Could it be that the Muslim homelands they have left are economically stagnant and politically corrupt, so they can benefit from us yet still harangue us about how awful we are?

And why is the wrapping up of women from head to toe the only way to stop men misbehaving sexually? How about bunging men into full burqas, and restricting their freedom in public places, since they are the miscreants, not the women?

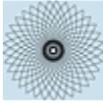
Antwoorden November 20, 2006 at 20:04



Denis Cooper zei...

Anthony @ 15:30 - We're a very long way from "repatriating" Muslims, and the barriers - moral, legal, political and practical - are very high. But that's not to say that the question could never arise, if the situation became sufficiently desperate.

Antwoorden November 20, 2006 at 20:15



Denis Cooper zei...

spagbob, I've never been keen on the spread of CCTV cameras, but the majority seem to want them and now I have to show my face to all 4.3 million of them - so please explain to me why an extreme minority of a minority which is producing terrorists should be allowed to claim an exemption from that requirement on highly dubious religious grounds. Please don't couch your answer in terms of football shirts, not unless you're imagining people wearing them over their heads! This is why it is best to use plain English, and distinguish between an innocuous headscarf (which many women often wore in this country only thirty years ago), and a veil or other face covering, mask or disguise.

Antwoorden November 20, 2006 at 20:29



TomTom zei...

If western society is so morally reprehensible to Muslim immigrants, why do they come here in the first place? Could it be that the Muslim homelands they have left are economically stagnant and politically corrupt, so they can benefit from us yet still harangue us about how awful we are?

"They" are not always the same people.....we allowed ignorant tribal "imams" to come here on special visas when many have no education and are simply village elders who behave like politicians stirring discord to retain their power.....our churches play a similar game but focus their politics on The Guardian agenda.....whereas the Imams focus their politics on the decadence of The Guardian society

Antwoorden November 20, 2006 at 21:50



Ragnar Vagmornasson. Berlin, Preussen zei...

""I've posted on here before about New York's "anti-mask" law:

<http://www.nlgnyc.org/pdf/MaskMemo.pdf>

and according to this:

"Dutch government proposes a ban on wearing burqas in public"

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"Italy has a law requiring people to keep their face visible in public that dates back to the country's crackdown on domestic terrorism decades ago." Posted by: Denis Cooper | November 20, 2006 at 12:11""

There were similar laws under Prussian law, and there are laws now in Germany banning the covering of the face. (Ski masks are illegal, for instance).

But yiu miss out the most important;

Town police clauses act 1847, "It is an offence for any person to go abroad (Ie, out of the house), with the face masked or disguised".

Now tell me what THAT has to do with burkas.

Antwoorden November 22, 2006 at 09:48



Ragnar Vagmornasson. Berlin, Preussen zei...

""next they'll be banning football shirts because some fans who wear them are hooligans, get a life.

Posted by: spagbob | November 20, 2006 at 19:19""

You obviously have never tried to get a pint in a Glasgow or Edinburgh pub wearing a football shirt, have you? (Not that I have, I would not be seen DEAD in ANYthing relating to that, or any other, pathetic sport)But the people I go out with DO.

You also, obviously, have not tried to get a pint and pub luch in Southern England wearing bike leathers either.

Antwoorden November 22, 2006 at 10:00



Patsy Sergeant zei...

sjm on 20/11 @ 20.04 - I agree with absolutely every word of your post, although I did have a slight pause when I got to 'bunging' for a moment I thought the dictionary version of bung was meant, and I nearly went here! here!, but quickly read on.

Antwoorden November 25, 2006 at 13:24

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