

A Final Word On Trump's 'Muslim Ban'

by Hugh Fitzgerald



As promised, President Biden by Executive Order has undone what has become universally known as the “Muslim Ban.” This has been reported on as an event that should cause all right-minded people to share in the “joy and relief” of Muslims everywhere.

[expressed](#) “delight” at Biden’s “decision to lift the travel bans imposed on 13 nations with predominantly Muslim populations.”

There are two things to notice in this statement. First, the Ecumenical Patriarch, who ought to know what happens to Christians when Muslims invade (after all, what is now Turkey was once entirely Greek; today there are hardly any Greeks left, no more than 4,000 in a sea of 80 million Muslim Turks) expresses his “delight” that the travel bans have been lifted

on “13 nations with predominantly Muslim populations.” Why is the Patriarch Bartholomew delighted? Does he think it splendid that more Muslims will be entering and settling down in the United States? Does he not recognize, as the American Supreme Court did, that the ban was justified as a security measure?

Second, he claims that “13 nations with predominantly Muslim populations” will no longer be subject to that ban. How did he arrive at “13 nations”? He simply assumed that all seven of the countries covered by the first ban, and all six of those covered by the second ban, were Muslim countries. Couldn’t he, before issuing this statement, and looking foolish before much of the world, have bothered to inform himself about the six countries that were covered by the two travel bans that are not Muslim-majority? To repeat, these are Venezuela and North Korea, covered by the first ban, and Myanmar, Tanzania, Eritrea and Nigeria, covered by the second. It is intolerable that the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople chose to express his “delight” with the rescinding of the bans, out of a feigned solidarity with his “Muslim brothers,” the descendants of those who expelled or killed millions of Orthodox Greeks and Armenians from what is now Turkey. On the subject of Islam, he is even more disturbing than Pope Francis. And it is unforgivable that he has misled tens of millions of the Orthodox, who look to him for guidance, in failing to note that only seven, not 13, Muslim-majority countries, were included in what so many will continue to call the two American “Muslim travel bans.”

What should the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople have done? He should have said nothing at all about the reversal of the bans. He could then have expressed his “delight” solely at the American return to the Paris Climate Accords. His silence on the other matter would have been most eloquent. He’s not free, of course, as the Greek Patriarch in Erdogan’s Turkey, to speak his mind. But he needn’t so cravenly mislead; he need not confuse people; he ought to have done a little homework

before spouting off about “13 Muslim-majority nations.” Ideally, he ought to have remained silent.

The Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, Ieronymos II, by contrast with Patriarch Bartholomew, was not – at least initially – to be cowed. On January 17, he stated in a televised address some unexpected, and welcome, thoughts on Islam. [an explanation](#), claiming he meant only to criticize “the perversion of the Muslim religion itself by extreme fundamentalists, who sow terror and death throughout the Universe.” But no one is fooled. Everyone knows he meant what he originally said about Islam. Including you. Including me.

First published in