

# In Norway, Close But No Cigar

By Bruce Bawer

How frustrating it has been in recent years to follow the results of Western European elections! In one country after another, the parties that are serious about addressing the continent's Islamization have gained massive electoral support – and have come tantalizingly close to power – while still being kept out of the driver's seat.

In Sweden's 2022 elections, the Sweden Democrats overtook the Moderates to become the largest of the so-called right-wing parties, second in size only to the Social Democrats (SD) – yet when the right-wing parties formed a government, it included the Moderates, the Christian Democrats, and the Liberals, but not the Sweden Democrats.

In 2023, Geert Wilders's Freedom Party (PVV) finally came out on top. Under ordinary circumstances, it would have been natural for Wilders to form a coalition government with himself as prime minister. But because the tough, truth-telling Wilders is radioactive to so many mainstream Dutch politicians, a politically unaffiliated civil servant named Dick Schoof – whom I'd never heard of before – was named prime minister.

In Germany, Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) has come within an arm's reach of victory. So, time and again, has Marine Le Pen in France, where just the other day Macron's prime minister (his sixth!) lost a vote of "no confidence" and was quickly replaced by yet another hack – whom, again, I'd never heard of before.

Then there's what happened on September 8 in Norway, where I live. In the parliamentary elections, the Progress Party (FrP), which like SD, PVV, and AfD used to be treated by the political and media establishment as anathema, had its most

impressive results ever, doubling its percentage of the vote from 11.6% in 2021 to 23.9%, winning almost twice as many seats (47 as compared to 24) as the Conservative Party, which has long been the dominant “right-wing” party. (I put “right-wing” in scare quotes because in Norway it can mean just this side of Communist.) Nonetheless, FrP was edged out by the ruling Labor Party, which received 28.1% of the vote, and will thus remain in power, enjoying the support of the other so-called “red-green” parties – Center, Socialist Left, Green, and Red.

FrP members exulted over their party’s growth, but the prospect of four more years of Jonas Gahr Støre as prime minister was disheartening. I won’t go into all the issues that were raised during the campaign; let me just say this. Under Støre, Norway has become the most anti-Israel and pro-Muslim – not to mention Hamas-friendly – nation in Europe. Meanwhile, violent Muslim crime in Norway, and especially in Oslo, has risen steadily. I lived in Oslo in the first decade of this century and felt pretty safe there; these days I’m uneasy just passing through town, and walking through the downtown area at night makes me more nervous than I ever felt when I was wandering around Manhattan, or riding the subway, at 3 A.M. in the pre-Giuliani 1980s and early 90s.

I don’t know exactly how many Norwegians have been killed by Muslims. I do know that some of them were acquaintances of mine. None of them were memorialized in a major way; after they were gone, their deaths were dropped down the memory hole pretty quickly.

This was not the case with Tamima Nibras Jubar, a 34-year-old Muslim woman who was murdered on August 24 by an 18-year-old who apparently admitted that he committed the crime because she was Muslim. Horrible, of course. But also exceedingly rare: infidel-on-Muslim crime in Norway is all but unheard of. What happened next, however, was a perfect example of the Labor-led Norwegian establishment’s *modus operandi*.

On August 31, a week after the murder, about 30,000 people filled Youngstorget, a square in central Oslo, carrying yellow roses in memory of Tamima. Prime Minister Støre delivered an ardent speech in which he recalled the horrific mass murders committed by Anders Behring Breivik in 2011. (The bloody jihadist attack of June 25, 2022, which took place only a couple minute's walk from Youngstorget, went unmentioned, since it doesn't fit the narrative.)

"Hate has struck again," declared Støre, "taken lives, caused fear." But "love, common humanity, and unity are rising up." Once again, he added, "we've seen what right-wing extremist thinking can lead to...When extreme attitudes lead to extreme actions, when extremist opinions lead to racist statements, when words and hate speech on the Internet lead to the use of murder weapons and take lives, then we have to use the right word: This is terror." Yes, continued Støre, "only the perpetrator is responsible for the act, but the thoughts and ideas come from somewhere. Hate and aggression have a source. Radicalization and xenophobia begin someplace. In a dark, angry community, in a hateful view of humanity."

The whole speech was right out of the same playbook that the left used after the Breivik murders: serve up a *pro forma* acknowledgment that the killer alone is responsible for the killing, but follow up by blaming his motives on critics of Islam. Pretend that there's no good reason to be critical of Islam. Never mind that it's an ideology of violent conquest and mass terror, an ideology that smiles upon child marriage, forced marriage, honor killing, and other horrors; to criticize it, according to Støre and company, is to be hateful, angry, xenophobic.

In 2011, I was one of the critics of Islam who were systematically targeted by Støre and his ilk. They hoped that the public shock and outrage over Breivik's actions would be intense enough to empower them to silence and punish us. They were coldblooded, ruthless. And for a while there, the

constant calls in the media to treat critics of Islam as veritable co-conspirators of Breivik made life kind of dicey. Eventually, to be sure, it all settled down. Now, using Tamama's murder as a pretext, Støre was cynically trying to stir the pot again.

I'm afraid that an awful lot of Norwegian voters – who were, let's face it, brought up to respond positively to sentimental rhetoric about tolerance and solidarity – fell for Støre's rubbish. And I suspect that this is a big part of the reason why, despite Labor's lame record during the past four years, Støre was returned to power.

A parenthetical note. Every major political party in Norway has a youth division, in which young people are groomed to become tomorrow's leaders. After Charlie Kirk's murder, Amrit Kaur, the head of Red Youth, laughed about it in a TikTok video. The fact that an official of a government-affiliated party could do such a chilling thing showed just how phony Støre's rhetoric about "love" and "common humanity" is.

At the opposite end of the moral spectrum from Amrit Kaur is a woman named Lily Bandehy. A refugee from the mullahs' Iran, she has lived in Norway since 1988 and has proven to be a consistently wise and fearless commentator on European establishment attitudes toward Islam. In an op-ed published after the Youngstorget rally, she condemned the murder of Tamina but also denounced its politicization. "In the land of my birth, Iran," she noted, "a person is executed every eight hours. Not



Lily Bandehy

as punishment for any action but to scare others, so that the regime won't lose control and power. In Norway, we now see that the focus is on how a murder can be used in an attempt to limit freedom of speech for those with whom one doesn't sympathize."

Bandehy cited the case of Salwan Momika, an Iraqi who was killed in Sweden last January for criticizing Islam and burning a Koran. For him, she noted, there was no rally filled with roses, no pretty speeches about his freedom of speech. "Hardly any politicians," she observed, "stepped forward to condemn the murder." No national leaders attended his funeral. The five men charged with his killing were released shortly thereafter.

Between 2000 and 2022, added Bandehy, 23 honor killings of women have been reported. (The number is probably higher.) None of those women were memorialized in the way Tamima was. No politicians attended *their* funerals. Nobody remembers their names. "Aren't these women worth as much as Tamima?" Bandehy asked. "Must the victim be a believing Muslim or black in order for politicians to pay attention?"

Norway, Bandehy charged, has become a land in which the ethnic natives feel like second-class citizens who are expected to stand by helplessly and wordlessly while the adherents of an alien religion gradually transform their country into something unrecognizable. They know that if they dare to criticize, they'll be slapped down mercilessly. Also condemned to silence are the "many immigrants from Muslim nations, especially women, who have fled from Islamic regimes, but who now feel that we can't express ourselves freely" because "politicians and people in the media...want to stifle our utterances."

Bandehy is entirely correct, of course. And the government that she's talking about – one that celebrates radical, terrorism-loving imams while trying to crush fair and honest

criticism of Islam – is the one that was just voted in to spend four more years in power. Four more years, in short, of perilously irresponsible immigration policies, of mendacious Muslim community leaders gaining ever more political power and media influence, and of atrocious Muslim cultural practices continuing to go unpunished.

It's tragic. While the Trump administration is taking dramatic and heroic action to save America – carrying out a mass deportation of illegal aliens (though not yet, alas, the expulsion of treasonous Muslims like Ilhan Omar) – many of the countries of Western Europe have come tantalizingly close to installing governments that have promised to take equally vigorous action, but have yet to cross that line.

Some say that it's too late, anyway. It may well be. But it would be pleasant to see at least one of these countries elect a leader who, like Trump, puts his own people, their history, and their values first, and is therefore willing to take actions that the mainstream media would call abominable but that sane citizens would cheer. Even if an Islamic triumph is inevitable, it would be impressive – and, frankly, surprising – to see the people of at least one Western European country refusing to go down without a fight.

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