

# Islamic Scholar Yasir Qadhi Says There's a 'Brutal' Campaign Against Islam in France

by Hugh Fitzgerald



**Yasir Qadhi is an Islamic scholar living in the U.S.** who in a recent sermon deplored what he describes as an anti-Islamic campaign by the French government. The report on his sermon is here: "Prominent American Islamic Scholar Dr. Yasir Qadhi: The 'Unfortunate' Beheading Of Samuel Paty Is A Pretext For A Campaign Against The Prophet Muhammad," [MEMRI](#), October 23, 2020. Robert Spencer previously discussed it [here](#).

*In a Friday, October 23, 2020 sermon at the East Plano Islamic Center (EPIC) in Plano, Texas, prominent American Islamic scholar Dr. Yasir Qadhi said that the recent beheading of French schoolteacher Samuel Paty was an*

*“unfortunate incident” that is being used as a pretext for a “brutal” campaign in France against the Prophet Muhammad. He said that this attack is one of very few acts of violence committed by Muslims in France and that while the murder of Paty was wrong, it stemmed from anger at the way millions of Muslim citizens are treated in France. He also said that the French government’s “criminalization” of Islam in response to the attack will only make matters worse.*

The beheading of Samuel Paty, for having used some cartoons of Muhammad in a class on freedom of expression, is for Yasir Qadhi not an unspeakable atrocity, but merely an “unfortunate incident.” Qadhi describes it as a “pretext” for a “brutal” campaign against Muhammad. It was not a “pretext,” but a horrible fact that the government could not ignore: in France today, many teachers are now scared to discuss anything that some Muslim students, or their parents, might find offensive. The killing of Samuel Paty, followed a few days later by the killing of three Christians at the church of Notre Dame in Nice, again by a Muslim avenging the supposed insult by the French to the Prophet Muhammad, are “reasons” for the reaction by the government of France and President Macron, which was to reaffirm the primacy of freedom of expression as a value of the Republic. How is that a “brutal” campaign against the Prophet Muhammad? Have there been vast roundups of Muslims in France? Any re-education camps, like what the Uighurs in China now endure? Have Muslim neighborhoods been cordoned off? Are the French media full of vilification of Muslims? Where is this “brutal” campaign to which Qadhi refers? Hasn’t he noticed that Macron, again and again, talks only about “Islamists” as being responsible for these killings?

How has the French government “criminalized” Islam? The French have done nothing more than reaffirm freedom of expression as a value of the Republic that they will continue to defend. A handful of Muslims have been arrested for inciting terrorism, including several who were more closely connected to the

execution of Samuel Paty. There are five million Muslims in France. Fewer than 100 have been arrested so far in the wake of the Paty killing. This is not exactly a “brutal” campaign by the French government against Muslims or their prophet..

It's not the Muslims in France, but the non-Muslim French, who are alarmed. There are many hundreds of neighborhoods in France where non-Muslims fear to go; there is nowhere in France where Muslims are afraid to visit. The French know that there is an hysterical anti-French campaign being whipped up among Muslims around the world. Boycotts of French goods have been called for in Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Bangladesh. Hysterical crowds have been calling for attacks on the French, “wherever they can be found,” in Muslim lands from Bangladesh to Gaza to Morocco. The former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Mahathir Mohamed, has claimed that given their mistreatment, “Muslims have a right to kill millions of French people.” It is not Islam that is being “criminalized” by the French, but the entire French nation that is now under potentially murderous attack from Muslims world-wide.

When Yasir Qadhi says that the Paty murder was “one of very few acts of violence committed by Muslims in France,” one hardly knows where to begin to refute his preposterous claim. Has he forgotten the attack on the office of Charlie Hebdo, where 12 people, nine of them cartoonists, were murdered by the Kouachi brothers? Or the killing of four Jewish shoppers at the HyperCacher kosher market? Does he remember the vehicular jihad in which a Muslim drove a nine-ton truck into crowds on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice on Bastille Day, in 2016, killing 86 and wounding 486? Does he remember the Muslims massacring people at the Bataclan nightclub in November 2015, in which 90 people were killed at the Bataclan nightclub and 40 others murdered at cafes and restaurants nearby, while 416 people were injured? Does he remember the kidnapping, torture, and murder of Ilan Halimi, a young Jewish man, by a gang of Muslims in 2006? Does Qadhi not recall the

Muslim killer of Sara Halimi by a Muslim neighbor, who beat her to death and then threw her body out the window? Or the murder of 85-year-old Mireille Knoll, who was stabbed and then set on fire by a Muslim? Perhaps Qadhi has also forgotten the murder outside a Jewish school in Toulouse of Rabbi Jonathan Sandler and three little Jewish children, two of them his – Aryeh, aged six, and Gavriel, aged three – apparently killed in front of their father before he, too, was murdered? And then there was the beheading of 85-year-old Jacques Hamel, a priest who was at the altar saying Mass at a church in Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray when two Muslim attackers slit his throat. There are many other such incidents, and of course aside from terrorism, there is the ordinary criminality among Muslims, that involves violence – robberies, burglaries, rapes (many accompanied by savage beatings) and murders. Muslims make up 5% of the French population, but they are between 60% and 70% of the prison population. But for Yasir Qadhi, the Paty murder was “one of the very few acts of violence committed by Muslims in France.” Muhammad, the Perfect Man and Model of Conduct, famously said, “war is deceit.” Qadhi favors the Lie Direct.

*In addition, Dr. Qadhi said that this attack is “bait” and a “tactic,” and that the French government and other Western leaders are praying for more Islamic terrorist attacks to take place so they can have an excuse to clamp down on Islam and Muslims. Dr. Qadhi urged his audience not to “stoop to their level.” The sermon was streamed live on EPIC’s YouTube channel. Sheikh Yasir Qadhi is a Texas-based American scholar who has studied at the University of Houston, at the Islamic University of Madinah in Saudi Arabia, and at Yale University.*

Qadhi wants us to believe that the French – and other Infidels – actually want more such attacks by Muslims so that will “have an excuse to clamp down on Islam and Muslims.” Does any sane person think that the French would like another Bataclan, another Charlie Hebdo massacre, another vehicular jihad with

mass casualties, as happened in Nice? There have already been quite enough Muslim terror attacks, and French victims, to justify a clampdown on Muslims and Islam; the French government does not need any more such attacks to take, as all sensible French people hope it will, forceful action against the Jihadis in its midst.

*Yasir Qadhi: ...“We are seeing this campaign, this brutal xenophobic, Islamophobic campaign. Against our nebi [prophet] and our rasul [messenger]. All under the guise of the freedom of speech. All as a result of a reaction of one unfortunate incident. They are using that incident of the beheading of one teacher for doing something to cause this entire campaign against our nebi [prophet]... .*

“Under the guise of freedom of speech” – apparently Qadhi thinks this supposed concern with freedom of speech business is merely an excuse to bash the inoffensive Muslims. That little “unfortunate incident” involving “the beheading of [just] one teacher” – goodness, how easily the French get upset over such minor matters. Just one teacher. An “unfortunate incident.”

*When a president, when a country, when an army act like thugs, and they teach their own people to hate a minority, to have bad things about the minority, this is not freedom of speech... .*

Neither Macron, nor anyone else in authority in France, is teaching the French to “hate a minority.” In fact, they have for too long protected that minority, accepting the view that it is only a group of “Islamists” – a variant on the “tiny minority of extremists” claim – that the French have to worry about. If more French people are alarmed about the Muslims in their midst, and have grown to dislike and fear them, that is not the result of any propaganda campaign by the government, but rather, is based on the observable behavior of Muslims –

that is, their hostility to, and mistreatment of, the very people who allowed them, in a spirit of naive openness, to settle deep within their own countries, including France, insufficiently aware of what Islam teaches its adherents.

Muslims may be only 6% of the French population, but they have managed in many places to create nearly all-Muslim no-go neighborhoods where the French, including policemen, firemen, and sanitation men, are reluctant to enter without guards (even the police need “police protection”), given the palpable enmity of the residents. Any visitor to France will soon realize that it is the French who are made anxious, intimidated even, about Muslim anger, while Muslims do not fear this nonexistent “campaign” against them.

*But what is the response? The criminalization of the entire religion of Islam...*

Qadhi can keep repeating this idiotic and baseless charge about the “criminalization of the entire religion of Islam,” and we can keep asking him to give a single example of an attempt in France to “criminalize Islam.” There is none. By dint of repetition he hopes his Muslim audience, and many gullible non-Muslims, too, will accept his nonsensical claims: the Muslims as victims, as the “new Jews,” though it is they who have been doing all the killing.

*And we need to be brave enough to say this: the murder that happened was wrong, but it was not a murder that came from the books of fikh. This was a murder that came from the anger of how you are treating millions of your own citizens. This is not a justification; it is a contextualization. And what is the response? You want to make matters worse. This is not how a wise leader acts. You want to cause civil war between your own society. [sic]...*

The murder [of Paty] was “wrong” but Islam – that is, the

books of Islamic jurisprudence [Fiqh]" – had nothing to do with it. Really? Does Qadhi want us to believe that Paty's killer was merely acting on his own whims? Was he not scrupulously following Islam's rules for punishing those who blaspheme against the Prophet? Isn't it true that the cartoons of Muhammad were understood to be blasphemous; that the punishment for such blasphemy is death, and that Abdoulakh Anzorov was merely taking it upon himself to be the instrument of such punishment? Anzorov was not angry over the socioeconomic conditions for Muslims in France (what Qadhi calls "the anger of how you are treating millions of your own citizens"); he was enraged at what he saw as an act of blasphemy.

Apparently addressing President Macron, Qadri says the French President wants "to make matters worse" for Muslims. Is this why, for the past two years, Macron has been trying to figure out ways to integrate Muslims into French society, and inveighs against "Muslim separatism"? Why he relies on a Muslim friend, Hakim El Karoui, to serve as his adviser on the Islamic community? Why he continues to make the distinction between Islam and Islamism, Muslims and "Islamists"? Macron can hardly be described as "wanting to make matters worse." Why would he do that? He constantly reiterates he's no enemy of Islam. And why would he, as Qadhi further charges, "want to cause civil war in France"? Hasn't Macron given evidence of trying to avoid such an outcome? In an interview he gave to Al Jazeera on October 31, he said that "I understand the feelings that this [the showing of the cartoons] arouses, I respect them. But I want you to understand the role that I have. My role is to calm things down, as I am doing here, but at the same time it is to protect these rights," Macron said. "I will always defend in my country the freedom to speak, to write, to think, to draw." That doesn't sound like a campaign *against* Islam or Muslims, but a campaign *for* the freedom of speech. .

Qadhi again:

*We have to be very careful. This is a bait. They want more incidents to happen. Realize, dear Muslims, it is a tactic. And I speak of France, but this is the reality across the world, across the western world. They are waiting. Some of these people, they are praying for yet another terrorist attack. They want it to happen. Why? Because it will give them the authority to clamp down even more. It will give them the authority to demonize the entire Muslim population. So we cannot stoop to their level.*

According to Qadhi, all “across the Western world” the enemies of Islam “are waiting.” They are praying, these evildoers, for “yet another terrorist attack.” These Infidels want such attacks to happen so that they can “demonize the entire Muslim population.” How strange, then, that all over that same world of Infidels, billions of dollars are spent annually on security to prevent the attacks that Qadhi says the Infidels in charge would welcome, so that they may then “demonize” all Muslims. Far from demonizing Muslims, the Western world has been making great efforts to avoid looking into the Qur’an and hadith to find the textual basis for the anti-Infidel attitudes and violence of many Muslims. The Western media echoes the Muslims who, after every terror attack by Muslims, ignore the actual victims but express their fears over what this will mean for them. They feel sorry for themselves, for they are the ones who will yet again, they claim, be made a target of the “Islamophobia that is sweeping over Europe.”

From Qadhi’s sermon, one would not know about the great efforts being made in Europe to integrate Muslims into the political system. Muslim candidates are put up as parliamentary candidates; Muslims are appointed to cabinet-level positions. European governments have been reluctant to publish reports that harm the image of Muslims – think only of the unwillingness, lasting many years, of the British



government to let the public know about the Muslim grooming gangs in Rotherham and Rochdale; had it done so in a timely fashion, many young girls might have been forewarned who instead became victims of those gangs. Think of all the European leaders, including Macron, who have been bending over backward to placate Muslims, by describing the terror threat as coming from “Islamists,” and not from the “vast majority of peaceful Muslims” who supposedly believe in an “authentic Islam” which, as Pope Francis insists, “has nothing to with violence.” There is a campaign, all right, but it is a campaign to minimize the disturbing aspects of what Islam inculcates, including the many Qur’anic commands to Muslims to fight, to kill, to smite at the necks of, to strike at the hearts of, Infidels. It is a campaign to make sure the Western public never finds out that Muslims are told in the Qur’an that they are the “best of peoples” (3:110) and non-Muslims “the most vile of created beings.” (98:6)

The French government has done its part in the past to promote the claim that only “Islamists” were responsible for terror attacks. Now it seems that Macron, and others in his government, including the Minister of the Interior Gerard Darmanin, may be having a change of heart. Perhaps Islam is not quite so inoffensive as they once appeared to believe. They are still not engaged in a “campaign” against Islam, but are, at least, in the light of the recent killings and the hysterical reaction among many Muslims worldwide against the French for defending their values, giving signs of rethinking their view of the faith. And that is what so alarms Yasir Qadhi.

First published in