

Shamima Begum, Who Joined the Islamic State, Has “No Regrets” But Wants to Come Home

by Hugh Fitzgerald



[told the BBC](#) that “she had no regrets but wanted to have her baby – she is pregnant – in the U.K. “No regrets” about being a supporter of the homicidal fanatics of ISIS for five years. Keep that uppermost in mind.

Shamima Begum had her baby, a boy, in Syria after all. So her main reason for wanting to return to the U.K., which she had earlier claimed was in order to assure the safe delivery of her baby, no longer applies. What is of note is that she named the baby Jerah, the same name she had given her first-born

son, in what historians have interpreted as a reference to Abu Ubaidah ibn al-Jarrah, a 7th century Islamic warlord, one of Muhammad's Companions, famous for killing Infidels. At the Battle of Badr in 624, Abu Ubaidah fought his own father, Abdullah ibn al-Jarrah, who had been fighting on the side of the army of the Quraysh. He later attacked and killed his father. The following verse of the Quran was written about this display of character by Abu Ubaidah:

"Thou wilt not find any people who believe in Allah and the Last Day, loving those who resist Allah and His Messenger, even though they were their fathers or their sons, or their brothers, or their kindred. For such He has written Faith in their hearts, and strengthened them with a spirit from Himself. And He will admit them to Gardens beneath which Rivers flow, to dwell therein (for ever). Allah will be well pleased with them, and they with Him. They are the Party of Allah. Truly it is the Party of Allah that will achieve Felicity. (Qur'an 58:22)

Perhaps the little boy will grow up and emulate the warrior he was named after. Something, though not by any means the only thing, for Shamima Begum to worry about.

The Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, says Shamima Begum could be prevented from returning to the UK.

"My message is clear," Sajid Javid told the Times: "If you have supported terrorist organisations abroad I will not hesitate to prevent your return."

He added that if Shamima Begum, 19, did come home she could be prosecuted.

"We must remember that those who left Britain to join Daesh were full of hate for our country," Mr Javid said.

"If you do manage to return you should be ready to be questioned, investigated and potentially prosecuted."

Mr Javid added that there were a range of measures available to “stop people who pose a serious threat from returning to the UK, including depriving them of their British citizenship or excluding them from the country.”

Bravo for Sajid Javid. That this commonsensical attitude by the Home Secretary should be questioned by some among the Great and Good of the United Kingdom – see below – is deplorable.

Security chiefs in London could also control Ms Begum’s possible return through a Temporary Exclusion Order.

The controversial legal tool bars a British citizen from returning home until they have agreed to investigation, monitoring and, if required, deradicalisation.

However Lord Carlile, a former independent reviewer of terrorism legislation, said Ms Begum would have to be accepted back into the UK if she had not become a national of any other country.

Under international law, it is not possible to render a person stateless.

When the needs of national security bump up against so-called “international law,” any leader in his right mind will simply refuse to recognize that “international law.” Who’s going to enforce it? A bunch of U.N. peacekeepers? And what U.N. Security Council Resolution (the only kind that is binding) that requires a country to allow back former nationals who have travelled abroad to join such groups as the Islamic State – will not be vetoed by the U.S, or the U.K., or France, or even – for they are just as wary of Islam as the West – China or Russia?

When someone leaves the U.K. to join a terrorist group that likes to kill non-Muslims (which includes most people in the

U.K.), that person has become a traitor. The U.K. should be able to strip such a person of citizenship, as Javid suggests, and keep him or her from returning to the country.

Shamima Begum was legally a child when she pinned her colours to the Islamic State mast.

And if she were still under 18 years old, the government would have a duty to take her and her unborn child's "best interests" into account in deciding what to do next.

But she's now an apparently unrepentant adult – and that means she would have to account for her decisions, even if her journey is a story of grooming and abuse.

She may have been "groomed" – that is, subject to propagandists, likely online, for the Islamic State, but she's had four years in Raqqa to rethink her initial enthusiasm, and apparently nothing she experienced in the Islamic State caused her to change her mind. Hers is not a story of "grooming and abuse."

Another British jihadi bride, Tareena Shakil, who got out of the war zone with her child, lied to the security services on her return and was jailed for membership of [sic] a terrorist group.

If Ms Begum got out of the country, that is the kind of charge she could face – along with encouraging or supporting terrorism.

But that's a long way off. Assuming she made it to an airport, the UK could temporarily ban her from returning until she agreed to be investigated, monitored and deradicalised.

And what about those who previously seemed to have been

successfully “deradicalized” in various programs, not only in the U.K. – that is, they supplied all the “right” answers that were expected of them – but later were found to continue to be supporters of, or even participants in, terrorism? There is not much hard evidence that “deradicalization” programs work, though extravagant claims have been made, nor is there even agreement on how to properly evaluate whether these programs work or not, as the report [here](#) and