

# Europe Questions Multiculturalism

## Politicians and Media Become Aware

by Brenda Walker

It wasn't long ago that Europe was knee deep in diversity and loving it. But events in recent years have not been kind to the advocates of multiculturalism. The 9/11 terrorist attacks in America frightened many, but that was only the beginning. Europeans were further rocked by the Madrid bombings and the murder of Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam. This latter crime had a particularly strong effect among Europeans – it was deeply shocking that a Dutch artist could be assassinated for engaging in free speech and defending the rights of women.

However, the extremists for whom multiculturalism is the prime directive, are ensconced at the top of the European Union and are moving forward with the acceptance of Muslim Turkey into Europe against the better judgment and expressed wishes of the majority of the public. Some members of the pro-EU-Turkey lobby have even said that they want to prove that multiculturalism can work, thereby turning all of Europe into a dangerous sociological experiment. British Prime Minister Tony Blair said,

*Turkey beginning negotiations to join the EU shows that those who believe there is some fundamental clash of civilizations between Christians and Muslims are wrong. Muslim, Christian and other religious faiths can work together in democratic tolerance and multicultural societies.*

But at least there is now some public debate about the wisdom of welcoming the sons of Mohammed who have been traditional enemies before the crusades. A few years ago, the European press was excoriating multiculturalism critic Pim Fortuyn as a racist and Nazi for his ideas, for example saying “Multicultural society

doesn't work. We're not living closer, we're living apart.” Now those critical views are openly discussed. Following are recent remarks from Europe's political leaders and mainstream media showing how far multiculturalism has fallen as an ideology. Too bad the American elites are not paying attention.

### From the Politicians:

- *The notion of multiculturalism has fallen apart. Anyone coming here must respect our constitution and tolerate our Western and Christian roots.*  
– German conservative leader Angela Merkel
- *Multicultural societies have only ... functioned peacefully in authoritarian states. To that extent it was a mistake for us to bring guest workers from foreign cultures into the country at the beginning of the 1960s.*  
– former German chancellor Helmut Schmidt
- *I believe we have been far too tolerant for too long, especially being too tolerant of intolerance, and we only got intolerance back.*  
– Member of Dutch Parliament Geert Wilders, living in safe-houses because of Islamist death threats.
- *If you say, “I reject the Western lifestyle and I don't want to fit in your way,” then I say, “Keep away.”*  
– Barry Madlener, town councilor, Rotterdam
- *Well, then we have plenty to talk about.*  
– Dutch Immigration Minister Rita Verdonk's reply to an imam who refused to shake hands with her because she was a woman.
- *So fathers forbid their daughters to go to school, they forbid them to have friends. They forbid them to mix with the native Dutch*

people. After a certain age they are forced into marriage or they are persuaded into a marriage and when society discusses this then the left would always say, "It is their culture, we are supposed to respect it." But what you see, these are human rights abuses.

– Member of Dutch Parliament Ayaan Hirsi Ali, living under police protection in safe houses because of death threats.

#### Print Media:

- *Escaping the stress of clogged roads, street violence and loss of faith in Holland's once celebrated way of life, the Dutch middle classes are leaving the country in droves for the first time in living memory. The new wave of educated migrants are quietly voting with their feet against a multicultural experiment long touted as a model for the world, but increasingly a warning of how good intentions can go wrong. Australia, Canada and New Zealand are the pin-up countries for those craving the great outdoors and old-fashioned civility.*

– the *Telegraph* (UK), "Exodus as Dutch middle class seek new life."

- *This was our 9/11. It was the moment the Netherlands lost its naivety. We always thought that we were the country of multicultural tolerance that could do no wrong,*

– Professor Han Entzinger of Rotterdam University, quoted in the *Telegraph*.

- *The veil of multiculturalism has been lifted, revealing parallel societies where the law of the state does not apply.*

– *Der Spiegel*

- *If multiculturalism means that it's OK for 30,000 Turks to live in a certain quarter of Berlin, and never leave, and live like they're still in deepest Turkey, then the term is now discredited.*

– Nikolaus Blome, *Die Welt*

- *In the Netherlands, following the murder of the film-maker Theo van Gogh by Islamic terrorists, disillusionment with multiculturalism*

*has reached crisis levels. More people are now leaving than entering the country. The incomers are Turkish and Moroccan Muslims; the emigrants white Dutch Christians.*

*Rotterdam will soon become the first European city with a Muslim majority.*

– Kevin Myers, the *Telegraph*, "Do we want the Turkish peasantry here?"

- *Theo van Gogh's murder has dramatically changed attitudes in the Netherlands, once Europe's most tolerant liberal polity, but now no longer prepared to remain inactive in the face of the threat that liberal societies always, by their very nature, invite: the tolerated rise of the intolerant, who then attack the very freedom that has allowed them to reach their point of strength.*

– A.C. Grayling of Birkbeck College, University of London, writing in the *Independent* (UK), "You can be too tolerant." •