بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Children Killing Children: A Damning Indictment of Liberal Culture

News:

Another day, yet another murder of a youth by a teenager on the streets of London. On the 27th of September, 15-year-old Elianne Andam, was stabbed to death at a bus stop in broad daylight outside a busy shopping centre in Croydon, London while on her way to school. A 17-year-old boy, who is thought to be known to her, has been charged with her murder. This is just one of the torrent of youth homicides perpetrated by youngsters which is plaguing Britain. Just 2 days later, a 16-year-old boy was fatally stabbed in Luton. Three teenage boys have been arrested for his murder. It was followed by the fatal stabbing of a 17-year-old in Brighton on the 5th October. A 16-year-old boy has been arrested on suspicion of murder. It seems like not a week goes by without the picture of a murdered youth covering the pages of newspapers in the UK. In June this year, a 17-year-old boy, Victor Lee, was found stabbed in a canal in West London. Three teenage boys aged 14, 15 and 17 appeared in court charged with his murder. Khaled Saleh, a 17-year-old boy was also stabbed and killed in Central London in June, allegedly by a 16-year-old boy. In April this year, Renell Charles, a 16-year-old was fatally stabbed in his chest near his school. A 16-year-old was charged with the killing. And last year, a 15-year-old boy was sentenced to 13 years in prison for the murder of 12-year-old Ava White in Liverpool City Centre in November 2021. He was just 14 at the time.

Comment:

There is a pandemic of youth-on-youth homicides afflicting Britain. From 2016-2018, there was a 77% increase in homicides committed with knives by under 18s, and from 2012-2019, a 93% increase in the number of under 16s admitted to hospital due to knife attacks. The government, police and authorities are clueless about how to put an end to this never-ending list of tragedies. Some have called for better policing and greater stop and search powers to identify those carrying knives. Others have suggested harsher sentences for those found guilty of carrying knives or knife-related crimes, as well as greater investment in youth clubs, schools and community projects to try and prevent youngsters from being drawn into crime. However, all of this fails to identify and address the root causes of children engaging in this senseless, casual taking of life, or to answer the question - what has led so many at such a young age to place such little value on the sanctity of human life that they are willing to take it over the most trivial of matters, without a second's thought and any regard for the consequences upon the victim's family and friends, or even their own life?

The root cause of this horrendous problem is a combination of issues. *Firstly*, when a child is not built with an understanding of accountability for their actions to a Creator, or a clear guide of right and wrong, or consequences in the Hereafter for their deeds – then their actions will be driven by self-benefit, their whims and the here and now – even if that means taking a life. Furthermore, if they do not believe that every life has sanctity for it is a creation of God, it has an impact on the value they give to human life. The secular liberal way of life has marginalized religion within societies and promoted the belief in God as something backward and irrational, leading to many youth shunning religion and belief in a Creator.

Secondly, liberalism has nurtured a selfish, individualistic mentality amongst many of 'Me, myself, and I', resulting in many youth focusing only on their own interests, wants and desires, disregarding the impact of their actions upon others.

Thirdly, many children involved in knife-crime have grown up in toxic environments of violence and abuse – whether in their neighborhoods or their own homes. Some are victims of abuse themselves. Inevitably, this will desensitize them to violence, or lead them into committing acts of violence themselves. There is an epidemic of domestic abuse and crime within liberal societies, caused by individuals acting on their whims and desires, without any consideration of the consequences of their actions on others.

Fourthly, the liberal value of freedom of expression has allowed violence to be glamourized and glorified in movies, social media and music – whether drill or otherwise– which many have blamed for contributing to youth violence.

Fifthly, sexual freedoms have resulted in a tsunami of broken families where many children grow up without a father in the home and an environment of instability and absence of protection and support. Furthermore, in many families there is a lack of parental time spent with children due to single mothers struggling to provide for their families alone or both parents working long hours. Consequently, there is an absence of a nurturing environment and parent-child relationships are often strained or non-existent. The result of all of this is that many children feel neglected or abandoned and join gangs for a sense of belonging, brotherhood or some form of family-type connection, looking for respect, protection, support and status. Youth on youth homicides are often gang-related. Furthermore, the absence of a nurturing and loving home environment often leads to some youth feeling that their life has no value or purpose, and therefore spending time in prison does not serve as a significant deterrent to murder.

And *finally*, within capitalist liberal societies, social deprivation, huge inequalities in wealth distribution and poor access to good quality education has led to many youngsters losing hope of any good future or standard of living that can be achieved without engaging in criminality, while others feel that society is unfair and therefore engage in criminal acts including murder to enjoy a rich lifestyle, or to just get ahead in life. This is especially the case within societies where materialism is dominant, and status is defined by wealth and possessions. One academic expert on youth crime stated, *"If people feel society is unfair, they are less inclined to play by the rules and more likely to lash out violently."*

Ultimately liberalism – its beliefs and system - is to blame for creating this pandemic of youth-on-youth homicide and needs to be in the dock alongside the perpetrators of this crime. Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger (saw) said: **«وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَيَأْتِيَنَّ عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ لاَ يَدْرِي الْقَاتِلُ فِي أَيِّ شَيْءٍ قَتَلَ وَلاَ يَدْرِي الْمَقْتُولُ عَلَى أَيِّ شَيْءٍ قُتِلَ»** *"By Him in Whose Hand is my life, a time would come when the murderer would not know why he has committed the murder, and the victim would not know why he has been killed."* It feels as if we live in such times, in societies where human desire has become the standard of right and wrong rather than the rules and laws of the One who created humankind.

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