

Walk on the Wilders Side?

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The Dutch were among the first to witness Islamic extremist violence against free speech. The November 2004 murder of Theo van Gogh by a Dutch citizen of Moroccan descent — a man whose first name, Mohammed, almost no one thinks is merely coincidental — stirred the nation.

And the world.

Van Gogh made a short film, with Somalian émigré Ayaan Hirsi Ali, about the unjust treatment of women in Islamic countries. The film criticizes Islam as well as the Muslim majority countries, and was considered an affront by many Muslims.

After van Gogh's death, Ms. Ali fled to the United States.

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This event is only the most famous of many similar conflicts between free-speech Dutch values and regulated-speech Islamist ones. The fact that the country has anti-blasphemy and anti-insult laws on the books, and these have been directed against a popular politician, has exacerbated the growing antagonism.

That very politician is today's big news. According to



The Atlantic, the “center-right People’s Party (VVD) for Freedom and Democracy is projected to win 24 seats in [today’s] election, slightly ahead of Geert Wilders’s far-right Dutch Freedom Party (PVV), which is expected to gain 22.”**

The Dutch center-left, like similar ruling groups in Britain, Germany, France and Sweden, often seems weak and timid before the rising illiberalism of Islamist terrorism and Sharia law.* Many suspect that the recent decision to block Turkish ministers from speaking at rallies in Holland, before Turkey’s referendum next month, is designed to counter this narrative.

Meanwhile, though Wilders is generally liberal (not “far right”) on most cultural issues, his “de-Islamization” program seeks to close mosques and outlaw the Quran***.

One extreme to another.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.

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** *The projection is within the margin of error, and with mass immigrant Turkish protests taking place over the weekend, the chance of a Trump-like upset is more than possible.*

*** *Geert Wilders compares the Quran to Adolf Hitler’s Mein Kampf.*