



GEERT WILDERS

Speech in the U.S. Senate, February 26, 2009

Thank you very much for inviting me. And - to the immigration authorities - thank you for letting me into this great country. It is always a pleasure to cross a border without being sent back on the first plane.

I feel very honored to have the privilege to speak and to show my short documentary Fitna here in this heart of your democracy, here in the US Senate.

Today, the dearest of our many freedoms is under attack all throughout Europe. Free speech is no longer a given. What we once considered a natural element of our existence, our birth right, is now something we once again have to battle for.

As you might know, I will be prosecuted in my own country, because of my film Fitna, my remarks regarding Islam, and my view concerning what some call a 'religion of peace.' A few years from now, I might be a criminal. And on top of that The Kingdom of Jordan also threatens to prosecute me for insulting Islam and ask for my extradition.

Whether or not I end up in jail is not the most pressing issue; I gave up my freedom four and a half years ago. I am under full-time police protection ever since because of death threats from Muslims and terrorist groups linked to Al Qaeda. In the last few years I lived in different safe houses, army-barracks and yes: even prison cells in order to be safe. But it's not about me. The real question is: will free speech be put behind bars? And the larger question for the West is: will we leave Europe's children the values of Rome, Athens and Jerusalem, or the values of Mecca, Teheran and Gaza?

This is what video blogger Pat Condell said in one of his latest you tube appearances. He says: "If I talked about Muslims the way their holy book talks about me, I'd be arrested for hate speech." Now, Mr. Condell is a stand-up comedian, but in the video he is dead serious and the joke is on us. Hate speech will always be used against the people defending the West - in order to please and appease Muslims. They can say whatever they want: throw gays from apartment buildings, kill the Jews, slaughter the infidel, destroy Israel, jihad against the West. Whatever their book tells them.

Ladies and gentlemen, make no mistake, my prosecution is a full-fledged attack by the left on freedom of speech in order to please Muslims. In fact it was started by a member of the Dutch Labour party. If you read what the court of Amsterdam has written about me, you read the same texts that cultural relativists produce. In fact, cultural relativism is the worst disease in Europe today. Most of our politicians believe that all cultures are equal. Well let me tell you they are not.

Our Western culture based on Christianity, Judaism and humanism is in every aspect better than the Islamic culture. Like the brave apostate Wafa Sultan said: it's a comparison between a culture of reason and a culture of barbarism.

Back to my country. How low can we go in the Netherlands? About my prosecution, The Wall Street Journal noted: "this is no small victory for Islamic regimes seeking to export their censorship laws to wherever Muslims reside." The Journal concluded that by The Netherlands accepting the free speech standards of, "Saudi-Arabia," I stand correct in my observation that - I quote - "Muslim immigration is eroding traditional Dutch liberties."

Now, if the Wall Street Journal has the moral clarity to see that my prosecution is the logical outcome of our disastrous, self-hating, cultural relativists immigration policies, then why can't the European liberal establishment see the same thing? Why aren't they getting at least a little bit scared by the latest news out of, for example, the UK. News that tells that the Muslim population in Britain is growing ten times as fast as the rest of society. Why don't they care?

The answer is: they don't care because they are blinded by their cultural relativism. Their disdain of the West is so much greater than the appreciation of our many liberties. And therefore, they are willing to sacrifice everything. The left once stood for women rights, gay rights, equality, democracy. Now, they favor immigration policies that will end all this. Many even lost their decency. Elite politicians in Europe have no problem to participate in or finance demonstrations where Muslims shout "Death to the Jews." Seventy years after Auschwitz they know of no shame.

Two weeks ago, I tried to get into Britain, a fellow EU country. I was invited to give a speech in Parliament. However, upon arrival at London airport, I was refused entry into the UK, detained for three hours and sent back on the first plane to The Netherlands. The reason: I would threaten community harmony and therefore public security. And all this because of my film, Fitna. An absolute disgrace. The British Home Secretary even publicly admitted on BBC TV that she never watched my film Fitna but decided to ban from the UK anyway.

If I would have been admitted to the UK would have loved to have reminded the audience of a great man who once spoke in the House of Commons. In 1982 President Reagan gave a speech there very few people liked. Reagan called upon the West to reject communism and defend freedom. He introduced a phrase: 'evil empire.' Reagan's speech stands out as a clarion call to preserve our liberties. I quote: If history teaches anything, it teaches self-delusion in the face of unpleasant facts is folly. What Reagan meant is that you cannot run away from history, you cannot escape the dangers of ideologies that are out to destroy you. Denial is no option.

Ladies and gentlemen, I suggest to defend freedom in general and freedom of speech in particular. I propose the withdrawal of all hate speech legislation in Europe. I propose a European First Amendment. In Europe we should defend freedom of speech like you Americans do. In Europe freedom of speech should be extended, instead of restricted. Of course, calling for violence or unjustly yelling "fire" in a

crowded theatre have to be punished, but the right to criticize ideologies or religions are necessary conditions for a vital democracy. As George Orwell once said: "If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear."

Let us defend freedom of speech and let us gain strength and work hard to become even stronger. Millions think just like you and me. Millions think liberty is precious. That democracy is better than Shariah. And after all, why should we be afraid? Our many freedoms and our prosperity are the result of centuries of endeavor. Centuries of hard work and sacrifice. We do not stand alone.

Ladies and gentlemen, our enemies should know: we will never apologize for being free men, we will never give in. We will never surrender. There is no stronger power than the force of free men fighting for the great cause of liberty. Because freedom is the birthright of all man.

Freedom must prevail, and freedom will prevail. Thank you very much.

GEERT WILDERS *Chairman, Party for Freedom (PVV)*