

School Safety Equals Islamophobia?

By Arnold Ahlert · Sep. 21, 2015

WHICH ONE OF THESE THINGS IS NOT LIKE THE OTHER?



Above is a digital clock, analog clock and Ahmed's clock. If you're a fan of media distortion, faux-Islamophobia, so-called "zero tolerance" policies and inconvenient reality, the self-constructed "clock" 14-year-old Ahmed Mohamed recently brought to MacArthur High School in Irving, Texas, to show to an engineering teacher is right up your alley.

The reason clock is in quotations is because the device Mohamed constructed bore no resemblance to anything most people would construe as a clock. As the above photo reveals, it was a compendium of wires and other electrical components built into a briefcase. When compared with a normal clock, one might be forgiven for having a certain level of apprehension regarding Mohamed's invention. School officials certainly did. His English teacher confiscated it, and a few hours later the principal and school resource officer removed him from class and began questioning him. Shortly thereafter, he was taken to police headquarters in handcuffs and fingerprinted. He was subsequently released to his parents, and police said no charges would be filed.

An overreaction? Compared to what? We live in an age when many schools have embraced a leftist-promulgated zero tolerance policy that often results in nonsensical punishment. Thus a six-year-old is suspended for bringing a toy gun to show-and-tell. Two five-year-olds are also suspended, one for making a Lego gun and another accused of making a "terroristic threat" — for *talking* about shooting a Hello Kitty *bubble* gun. There was also a seven-year-old suspended for chewing a Pop Tart into the *shape* of a gun, and a 16-year-old arrested and suspended for *writing a story* about killing a dinosaur with a gun. There are numerous other examples of equally inane overreactions that completely undermine the leftist meme that Mohamed was the victim of Islamophobia and/or bigotry.

Those invested in that mindset will undoubtedly dismiss the assertion by police that Mohamed was "passive aggressive" during questioning, refusing to offer investigators "reasonable" answers about his intent. "We attempted to question the juvenile about what it was and he would simply only say it was a clock," said Irving Police spokesman James McLellan. "He didn't offer any explanation as to what it was for, why he created this device, why he brought it to school." The persistently aggrieved will probably feel the same way about school officials who defended their reaction. "The information that has been made public to this point has been very unbalanced," said Independent School District spokeswoman Lesley Weaver. "We always ask our students and staff to immediately report if they observe any suspicious items or if they observe any suspicious behavior. We will always take necessary precautions to protect our students and keep our school community as safe as possible. That is our priority."

Those who think such priorities are misplaced might be surprised to know these priorities are in complete alignment with those of the Obama administration. “If you see something, say something” is a [trademarked slogan](#) of the Department of Homeland Security. DHS also urges Americans to report [suspicious activity](#) that includes the observation of “unusual items.” Furthermore, the leftist-promoted notion that school officials overreacted is also belied by the simplest of questions: What if it *had* been a bomb? In an age of worldwide terror and atrocities such as the Newtown massacre, is there anyone in America championing a *less* vigilant stance by school officials tasked with keeping children safe?

Even Mohamed’s age is irrelevant. A 15-year-old blonde Danish girl has just been sentenced to nine years in prison for [slaughtering](#) her own mother after she watched Islamic State beheading videos. That would be the very same Islamic State militants who, as the Daily Mail [puts it](#), “are turning children into an army of hundreds of murderous monsters willing to blow themselves up, die in battle and execute hostages for their twisted cause.”

Unsurprisingly, the same Barack Obama who not only ignores the wanton slaughter perpetrated by the Islamic State, but completely denies its Islamic roots, has injected himself into this story, offering the teen an [invitation](#) to the White House via his @POTUS twitter account: “Cool clock, Ahmed. Want to bring it to the White House? We should inspire more kids like you to like science. It’s what makes America great.” Giving the real agenda away, Obama spokesman Josh Earnest told reporters his boss sees the case as a “teachable moment.” Earnest insisted, “This episode is a good illustration of how pernicious stereotypes can prevent even good-hearted people from doing good work.”

You know what’s even more pernicious? A president who never misses an opportunity to lecture Americans about their supposed shortcomings. A president with a highly selective sense of indignity, who can make a statement about Cambridge police “acting stupidly,” having a son who would “look like Trayvon,” or [writing](#) personal letters to 46 felons whose sentences he commuted — even as he has conspicuously ignored the family of Kate Steinle, who was [murdered by an illegal alien](#) in the sanctuary city of San Francisco. In short, unless a perceived outrage accrues to Obama’s “transformational” agenda, it doesn’t exist.

As for “teachable moments,” what we have here is the ultimate “damned if you do, damned if you don’t” scenario. The same American leftists who insist this incident is all about Americans’ Islamic paranoia are the same people who excoriated the Bush administration for failing to “connect the dots” prior to the worst domestic attack in the nation’s history. And if the clock had been an actual bomb and exploded, and school officials subsequently admitted they had seen the device but did nothing about it — because they were afraid of being accused of *precisely the same things they are being accused of right now* — is there any doubt what the reaction would be?

The American Left’s obsession with “social justice above all” is already undermining school safety, as the Obama administration has [introduced](#) a race-based “restorative justice” program in schools aimed at reducing suspensions for “students of color,” irrespective of the infractions they commit. The uptick in violence and other crimes in several school districts across the nation is as predictable as it is infuriating. It was best described by an unintentionally ironic Education Secretary Arne Duncan, who boasted that “young people are now taking control of the [school] environment” during a 2014 speech at Howard University.

There is a sensible middle ground to be had between the twin inanities of social justice and zero tolerance. But it requires a level of common sense. Common sense that errs to the side of caution. In other words, it is far better to endure (and ultimately ignore) the slings and arrows of the perpetually offended than it is to bury murdered children. Those who wish to exploit this incident to satisfy their political agenda are free to do so. Yet reasonable Americans should be clear: Whatever that political agenda is, the safety of children in schools isn’t part of it.