



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on February 22, 2011

French Journalist Convicted For “Racist” Speech

Eric Zemmour, a conservative French journalist and outspoken foe of the Islamic ascendancy in France, was convicted this week of inciting racism. Like Dutch politician Geert Wilders and former screen siren Brigitte Bardot, Zemmour speaks his mind on subjects that the leftist elites who rule Europe consider verboten.

Zemmour’s “controversial” remarks included his observation that most drug dealers in France were black or Arab, and that employers “have the right” to deny employment to those two groups of people.

Zemmour’s criminal speech occurred on a popular talk show during a discussion of why French police seem to stop minorities more than whites. [Said Zemmour](#): “But why are they stopped 17 times? Why? Because most dealers are blacks and Arabs. That’s a fact.”

So Zemmour wound up in the French dock, and [must now pay](#) \$14,000 to five groups that sued him for racism.

According to the *New York Times*, [the French court said](#) Zemmour had “gone beyond the permitted bounds of the right to freedom of speech,” and that “... Zemmour had a particular responsibility to respect those limits as a ‘professional of the media and of expression.’ “

Zemmour, obviously, does not agree. Aside from making these remarks, he said he agrees with late French President Charles de Gaulle’s assertion that mixing Muslims and Christians [is akin](#) to “blending oil and vinegar,” and that France [should reinstate](#) its law, repealed in 1993, requiring citizens to give their children Christian names. He also objects to Muslims blocking French streets during their daily calls to prayer.

Zemmour’s Views

Although his [parents were](#) Jewish Berbers from Algeria who landed in France in the 1950s, the *Guardian* reported, Zemmour is a French traditionalist.

“Mr. Zemmour often exercises his right to free speech to endorse stricter limits on similar freedoms,” the [New York Times reported](#) in a profile a few days before his trial:

“He advocates a return to authorizing only Christian first names for children born in France, a





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restriction lifted in 1993; his ancestors in Algeria had adopted French names, he noted. And he hailed the ban on the public wearing of the full facial veil as a way ‘to oblige people to become authentically French.’

“The state needs to do its job, which it’s always done, of imposing constraints,” he said. “For me, France is the ban on the veil.”

He says that his views are those of a silent majority, French people who seek the return of the resplendent France of de Gaulle, a proud, imagined France unencumbered by the guilt of the post-colonial era. Efforts to integrate the country’s immigrant populations have plainly failed, he said, and the country ought to revert to the “assimilationist” approach he says it abandoned decades ago.

“We believe that we have the best way of life in the world, the best culture, and that one must thus make an effort to acquire this culture,” he said. By contrast, he said, the notion of a country made great by the diversity of its people and values “is an American logic.”

Asked why he believes in the superiority of the French model, he said only that “there is a singular art of living” in France.

“For me, France is civilization with a capital ‘C,’ ” he added.

In other words, Zemmour is a French patriot.

Like Wilders and Bardot

Zemmour’s troubles are akin to those of Dutch parliamentarian [Geert Wilders](#), who [is fighting](#) racism and hate speech charges filed because of [his comments](#) on Islam and his film *Fitna*, which connected the dots between modern Muslim terrorism and Koran injunctions. Wilders [recently won](#) the right to a new trial after a review board found that the judges in his previous trial were biased. He has been fighting two years for the right to speak freely and to tell the truth about Islam.

French authorities [have prosecuted](#) Brigitte Bardot, the former actress and animal rights advocate, five times for her politically incorrect remarks about Muslims.

Photo: Eric Zemmour



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