

Robert Kilroy-Silk writes...on The British Way of Life (Banning Santa Claus)

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Can someone tell me what is going on in this country? I thought I lived in a civilised and tolerant society.

I was wrong, obviously. Very wrong. It is not at all tolerant. Or rather tolerance is only directed in one way. The indigenous population – of all colours and ethnic origin – is expected to be tolerant of all comers but our customs and traditions will not be tolerated.

So Santa Claus has been abolished from Birmingham City Centre because he might offend ethnic minorities. The fact that members of the ethnic minorities are British, see Santa Claus as part of their British heritage, would not be offended by his presence, and that banning him contributes to racial prejudice and tension does not seem to have occurred to these ignorant political commissars.

What if the Christian educated majority said that they were offended by Muslim, Sikh and Hindu religious festivals? What if they said their sensitivities were upset by the presence of a mosque? Why do we turn a virtual blind eye to forced marriages, but ban the advertising of Christmas carols? Why do we ignore the widespread repression of women in many communities, but allow the flag of St George to be banned on certain occasions?

Whose country is this? Who does it belong to? Can someone tell me? Is it the country I was born and brought up in and for which my father and his younger brother gave their lives in the last war – a country of free speech and toleration, of the majority as well as of the minorities? Or does it belong to the minorities, who ever they are?

And who decides this? Someone has stolen my country. But I'll tell you one thing, we're going to get it back.