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Misdirected attacks on Muslims



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Editor

Although most New Zealanders will have felt horror and disgust at the actions of those responsible for the Paris terror attacks, being tucked away in our little corner of the world can often create a sense of detachment, which comes with such geographical and sociological distance.

The callous attacks undertaken by members of ISIS on innocent bystanders have been widely and righteously condemned by world

leaders and the public at large.

But, as we typically see following high profile terror attacks involving Islamic groups, one of the unfortunate byproducts of such incidents is the backlash against all followers of Islam.

Despite most heads of Muslim states, churches and organisations condemning such attacks, instances of physical and verbal abuse do tend to spike in the direct aftermath, which is an injustice

when you consider that the vast majority of the world's 1.6 billion Muslims are neither terrorists nor extremists.

We like to think this sort of behaviour simply would not happen in a place like New Zealand, where we consider ourselves to be largely tolerant of different religious, cultural or ideological viewpoints.

People in Palmerston North, a city that plays host to three

tertiary institutions as well as a growing multicultural population, would also be expected to have a heightened acceptance of how other people choose to live their lives.

For the most part this is true. Though we do sometimes hear of verbal abuse against Manawatu's Muslims, hate crimes of a more serious nature are thankfully rare

But despite this it was still alarming to hear Palmerston

unacceptable

North police have advised the city's Muslims to keep in close contact with them after an incident outside the Manawatu Muslim Association on Cook St this month. Though exact details of the incident are scant, it was considered serious enough to see police trespass the individual involved from the site, which is the religious epicentre for the city's Muslim population.

Federation of Islamic

Association of New Zealand president Hazim Arafah, who was among the Muslim leaders to criticise the attacks, has called New Zealand one of the best places in the world in terms of equality, which is something we should be proud of. But in order to retain such a reputation, we need to ensure any misdirected racial abuse or threats are denounced and treated with appropriate severity by the authorities.

Attacks on Muslims won't be tolerated, says New Zealand newspaper. See also [New Zealand jihadi brides](#). [Return to islamnz.com](#)