

Lifting the Veil on the ‘Islamophobia’ Hoax

By Matthew Vadum

Summary: The purpose of this paper is not to indict Islam. It is to warn readers about a dangerous effort to discourage Americans from thinking freely and arriving at their own conclusions about Islam. The made-up word “Islamophobia” is wielded as a cudgel against those who dislike the Muslim religion and those who are merely skeptical of it. The idea is to eventually make it as difficult and uncomfortable as possible to criticize the faith founded by Muhammad in the seventh century after the birth of Christ. And a lot of well-heeled funders are part of a long-term campaign aimed at mainstreaming the tenets of Islam in American society.

Remember when hysteria broke out at National Public Radio (NPR) in October 2010? Panic ensued when liberal commentator Juan Williams dared to share a personal anecdote on “The O’Reilly Factor” on Fox News Channel.

NPR fired Williams not because he disparaged Muslims—he didn’t—but because he made the apparently impolitic admission that he becomes “nervous” and “worried” when he sees people in “Muslim garb” on airplanes. That’s it. He experienced an emotion and talked about it on television. And he’s not the only American who gets a little bit jittery in such situations in a country where Islamic



terrorists killed 3,000 Americans on Sept. 11, 2001 by flying commercial jetliners into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and a field in Pennsylvania. Williams and others experiencing the same anxieties aren’t bad people. They’re not bigots. They can’t control their emotional reactions to stimuli. They’re just normal, rational human beings.

But in the world of political correctness, that’s no excuse. Williams was cashiered because his comments were perceived by the cloistered mandarins of public radio as “Islamophobic.” NPR believed Williams

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CONTENTS

The ‘Islamophobia’ Hoax
Page 1

Philanthropy Notes
Page 12

FoundationWatch

thought bad thoughts; he should have felt ashamed of his authentic psychological reflexes, and he definitely should not have admitted these thought crimes on a top-rated TV show.

To the Left, whether the fear of which Williams spoke was well-founded or reasonable is irrelevant. The political correctness that has metastasized in American culture requires that no one speak ill of Islam or say anything that might stigmatize or *other-ize* a Muslim in any way. All Americans must think and say only nice things about Islam. To object to this kind of politically correct censorship is not to make the gross generalization that Muslims are bad people, but it is to say that people have the right to criticize such things as the subjugation of conquered peoples by the Caliphate in the eighth century. After all, people freely criticize Western countries for, say, their treatment of their eighteenth-century colonies; so surely the twenty-first-century bombers of Paris, and their religious ideology, shouldn't be above criticism.

But the politically correct do not accept this

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toleration of honest disagreements. They are determined to stamp out criticism, and they have an army of nonprofit organizations, foundations, academics, media outlets, and name-calling activists to help them.

And it is axiomatic that those who scream loudest about Islamophobia tend to have the most to hide.

This is not just some abstract academic discussion. Working through the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation (or OIC, which until 2011 was called the Organisation of the Islamic Conference), Islamic states have been trying for years to convince the United Nations to criminalize this thought crime they call *Islamophobia*. And the Obama administration hasn't exactly been burning up the long-distance telephone lines trying to change the minds of the OIC member-states.

During a visit to the White House last month by French President François Hollande, President Obama used the opportunity to scold Americans for not wanting to accept so-called refugees from the Syrian civil war, many of whom are suspected—despite fleeing Islamic State—of being sympathetic to Islamism. Obama didn't use the word Islamophobia but he lectured Americans to try to shame them into accepting migrants who don't embrace American values:

I say all this because another part of being vigilant, another part of defeating terrorists like [Islamic State], is upholding the rights and freedoms that define our two great republics. That includes freedom of religion. That includes equality before the law. There have been times in our history, in moments of fear, when we have failed to uphold our highest ideals, and it has been to our lasting regret. We must uphold our ideals now. Each of us, all of us, must show that America is strengthened by people of every faith and every background.

Related to this, I want to note that under President Hollande, France plans to welcome 30,000 additional Syrian refugees over the next two years. Here in the United States, refugees coming to America go through up to two years of intense security checks, including biometric screening. Nobody who sets foot in America goes through more screening than refugees. And we're prepared to share these tools with France and our European partners. As François has said, our humanitarian duty to help desperate refugees and our duty to our security -- those duties go hand in hand.

On the Statue of Liberty, a gift from the people of France, there are words we know so well: Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be [*sic*] free. That's the spirit that makes us American. That's the spirit that binds us to France. That's the spirit we need today.

So if the prospect of allowing the Syrian migrants into the United States makes you a little uneasy, you're an Islamophone, according to President Obama.

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, now the leading contender for the Democrats' presidential nomination, agrees with Obama. "Islam itself is not our adversary," Clinton, whose husband let Osama bin Laden escape assassination, said after the attacks in France. "Muslims are peaceful and tolerant people and have nothing whatsoever to do with terrorism."

Foundations on the anti-Islamophobia bandwagon

Abdur-Rahman Muhammad, a former member of the shadowy Herndon, Va.-based International Institute for Islamic Thought, now rejects the idea of Islamophobia. "This loathsome term is nothing more than a thought-terminating cliché conceived in the

bowels of Muslim think tanks for the purpose of beating down critics.”

Yet the left-wing philanthropic establishment maintains that Islamophobia is an evil related to discrimination and xenophobia. According to George Soros’s Open Society Foundations (OSF; formerly the Open Society Institute), *Islamophobia* is a term that should be righteously wielded “alongside structural discrimination affecting Muslims, in order to counter the discriminatory effects of an ideology of cultural superiority similar to racism in which attitudes, behaviors, and policies reject, exclude, vilify, or deny equal treatment to Muslims. Such discrimination is based on real or perceived Muslim background; or racial, ethnic and national origins which are associated with this background.”

OSF gives grants aimed at countering Islamophobia and sponsors panel discussions such as “The Cultural War on Terror: Race, Policy, and Propaganda,” which took place last year in New York City and was moderated by left-wing journalist Peter Beinart.

Right after Sept. 11, 2001 the extreme-left, Soros-funded Tides Foundation created a “9/11 Fund” to advocate a “peaceful national response” to the Islamic terrorist attacks. Tides later received an OSF grant and renamed the fund the Democratic Justice Fund. Tides founder Drummond Pike, who played a major role in covering up a million-dollar embezzlement at the former Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), sat on the board of the Environmental Working Group alongside Fenton Communications founder David Fenton. Fenton’s leftist public relations firm created “an ad campaign for the liberal media group Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting that falsely depicted” broadcaster Bill O’Reilly “as a bigot, liar and ‘Islamophobe’” (“The Great Smear Machine,” by Rowan Scarborough, Human Events, April 10, 2009).

The 2008 PR campaign promoted by FAIR was called, “Smearcasting: How Islamophobes Spread Bigotry, Fear and Misinformation.” The list included what FAIR described as “some of the media’s leading teachers of anti-Muslim bigotry, serving various roles in the Islamophobic movement.” Apart from O’Reilly, those targeted were authors Michelle Malkin, Mark Steyn, David Horowitz, and Robert Spencer; broadcasters Glenn Beck, Sean Hannity, and Michael Savage; Investigative Project on Terrorism founder Steven Emerson; and Christian evangelist Pat Robertson.

The Chicago-based Joyce Foundation funds Muslim outreach campaigns. A 2012 program was called “Uniting Christianity, Islam, and Judaism Through Dance.” Barack Obama sat on the foundation’s board from 1994 to 2002. (For more on Joyce, see *Foundation Watch*, February 2014)

Foundation grants find their way to nonprofits that aim to silence critics of Islam by painting them as bigoted and ignorant, unaware of the “real” peaceful religion founded by Muhammad. Major foundation-funded nonprofit sources of anti-Islamophobia propaganda in the United States include:

Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law (BCJ) (profiled in *Organization Trends*, April 2014)

Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) (profiled in *Organization Trends*, August 2005)

Center for American Progress (CAP) (profiled in *Organization Trends*, February 2011)

Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) (profiled in *Foundation Watch*, February 2011)

Media Matters for America (MMfA) (profiled in *Organization Trends*, December 2014)

Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). (profiled in *Organization Trends*, October 2012)

Among the foundations funding those six groups are:

Annie E. Casey Foundation (funds BCJ, CAP, IPS, SPLC) (profiled in *Foundation Watch*, June 2012)

Arca Foundation (BCJ, IPS, MMfA) (profiled in *Foundation Watch*, October 2011)

Bauman Family Foundation (BCJ, MMfA) (profiled in *Foundation Watch*, December 2014)

Bohemian Foundation (BCJ, MMfA)

Carnegie Corp. of New York (CAP, MMfA) (profiled in *Foundation Watch*, April 2013)

Nathan Cummings Foundation (CAP, IPS) (profiled in *Foundation Watch*, December 2013)

Ford Foundation (CAP, IPS, MMfA) (profiled in *Foundation Watch*, July 2013)

George Soros’s **Foundation to Promote Open Society** (CAP, IPS, MMfA)

Gill Foundation (CAP, MMfA, SPLC)

Glaser Progress Foundation (CAP, MMfA) (profiled in *Foundation Watch*, March 2014)

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Joyce Foundation (BCJ, CAP, MMfA)
(profiled in *Foundation Watch*, February 2014)

John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (CAP, IPS)
(profiled in *Organization Trends*, May 2013)

Marisla Foundation (CAP, MMfA)

Charles Stewart Mott Foundation (BCJ, CAP, IPS)
(profiled in *Foundation Watch*, March 2012)

New York Community Trust (CAP, IPS, MMfA, SPLC)

Soros's **Open Society Institute** (CAP, IPS)

Public Welfare Foundation (BCJ, IPS, SPLC)

Rockefeller Family Fund Inc. (BCJ, CAP)

Rockefeller Foundation (CAP, IPS)
(profiled in *Foundation Watch*, December 2012)

Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors (CAIR, SPLC)
(profiled in *Foundation Watch*, December 2012)

Sandler Foundation (CAP, MMfA)

Schumann Center for Media and Democracy (BCJ, IPS, MMfA)

Stephen M. Silberstein Foundation (BCJ, CAP, MMfA) (profiled in *Foundation Watch*, July 2014)

Silicon Valley Community Foundation (CAIR, CAP, MMfA, SPLC)

Surdna Foundation (BCJ, IPS)
(profiled in *Foundation Watch*, January 2014)

Tides Foundation (BCJ, CAIR, IPS, MMfA, SPLC)
(profiled in *Foundation Watch*, July 2011)

Wallace Global Fund II (BCJ, CAP, IPS, MMfA)

The John Podesta-founded Center for American Progress (CAP) has devoted significant resources to combating the phantom it calls Islamophobia. CAP is working hard to convince Americans that this make-believe mental illness is a threat to American democracy and pluralism. CAP claims a \$57 million network “is fueling Islamophobia in the United States.”

Among other projects, CAP created a sophisticated, flashy website (Islamophobia-Network.com) that identifies leading alleged Islamophobes like activist and author Ayaan Hirsi Ali. Of Hirsi Ali, a Somali-born ex-Muslim, the website notes that she calls Islam “a destructive, nihilistic cult of death” and says we will lose the fight against terrorism “unless we realize that it’s not just with extremist elements within Islam, but the ideology of Islam itself.” (She has also said Islam “is not a religion of peace. It’s a political theory of conquest that seeks domination by any means it can.”)

Although CAP is critical of Hirsi Ali, others have seen her as heroic and courageous, in the face of death threats for her criticisms of female genital mutilation and other barbaric practices. Named one of the 100 most influential persons by *Time* in 2005, Hirsi Ali has been a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C., and at Harvard’s Kennedy School.

The fake, Soros-funded media watchdog Media Matters for America, relentlessly attacks anyone who questions the nature or

impact of Islam. Along with many left-wing journalists, the group exploited the brief detention in September of Sudanese-American Ahmed Mohamed, a 14-year-old Muslim schoolboy in Irving, Texas, who brought a homemade clock that looked suspiciously like a bomb to his high school. Mohamed, whose family has close ties to CAIR, used his newly found celebrity to bash America, saying “If I was a Caucasian male, I’m pretty sure I wouldn’t have gotten arrested.” In a Sept. 18 post, Media Matters complained that “right-wing media” are “accusing President Obama and others of capitalizing on the student’s story to push false concerns about Islamophobia.”

In addition to churning out propaganda aimed at convincing Americans that voter fraud is a figment of Republicans’ imagination, the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University is trying to convince Americans to embrace Islam and not worry about terrorism. On Oct. 30, at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., the Brennan Center co-sponsored a conference on “Countering Violent Extremism” with the libertarian group Campaign for Liberty. There I heard scholars and activists express dismay at the Obama administration’s mild efforts to combat what it calls “violent extremism.”

Dr. Arun Kundnani, a London-born Open Society fellow who teaches at NYU, complained about the strictures that government research grants place on academic freedom. The virulently anti-American leftist and apologist for Islamic terrorism also said all government efforts to combat terrorism constitute attacks on Muslims. “The bulk of the funding has been to fund people who are saying things that the government wants to hear, saying things that will be serviceable to a pre-existing law enforcement agenda which is about essentially criminalizing a community.”

In a particularly dishonest op-ed at the website of Al Jazeera, an Islamist propaganda

outlet controlled by Qatar, Kundnani smeared American conservatives, claiming that they “view an imminent Islamic takeover as a real danger.” He wrote “Islamophobic ideology needs a conspiracy theory that says the US is, despite appearances, secretly run by Muslims. Muslims can then be portrayed as a hidden force preventing American renewal. The message is a convenient one for the US ruling elite: don’t blame the people who actually run the US, just smell the sharia.”

Americans are largely skeptical of Islam and Muslims, and for good reason, but the belief that the United States is “secretly run by Muslims” is not widely accepted among Americans, even those suspicious of Islam. No one is scapegoating Muslims for “preventing American renewal.”

Kundnani invents his own Marxist-sounding conspiracy theory to explain American Islamophobia. Today’s “widespread anti-Muslim fears among the public provide a justifying pretext for a global US empire that did not exist in the 1920s. Islamophobia is not just an irrational fear, but a belief system that is useful to sections of power. Opposing anti-Muslim conspiracy theories and all of their accompanying rhetoric are [*sic*] not just about defending the civil rights of Muslims in the US. It is also about removing one of the ideological supports of US imperialism.” (“The belief system of the Islamophobes,” by Arun Kundnani, Al Jazeera website, Oct. 9, 2015)

On his personal website, Kundnani bashes Americans for their views on Islam. “Since the 1970s, Muslims have repeatedly been stereotyped in the US as dangerous terrorists. But, over the last six years, a new fear of Muslims has gradually entered the conservative mainstream: that Muslims are taking over the United States and imposing ‘sharia law.’” These fears “are paranoid and lack any basis in reality,” he adds.

Kundnani also thinks Americans need to lighten up and stop worrying about whether Muslims really mean what they say. “I think we need to abandon the language of radicalization and extremism and focus much more narrowly on the question of acts of violence specifically,” he said at the panel discussion. “In this country we nowadays have a situation where what would be called dissent, when expressed by a Muslim, gets called extremism.”

Shannon Erwin, a 2010 Harvard Law School graduate and co-founder of the Muslim Justice League, complained that Muslims have no free speech rights in America:

There is, apparently, a Muslim exception to the First Amendment. And I think that many parents have felt terrified to let their teenagers go on social media not because they believe that their teenagers are necessarily going to do anything wrong but because of the scrutiny they may be subjected [to]. There’s a belief that the Constitution, yes, in theory, applies to us, but in practice we see that it’s not offering our youth protection.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations, Islamophobia, and terrorism

Meanwhile, the terrorist-linked Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) regularly updates its list of “Islamophobic Organizations.” (CAIR was profiled by Daniel Pipes in *Organization Trends*, August 2005). By Islamophobic, CAIR apparently means, “willing to take an honest look at Islam.” Here are some of the organizations—mostly well-established, mainstream conservative organizations—that CAIR was smearing by placing them on the list (at press time): Allegheny Foundation; American Center for Law and Justice; American Freedom Defense Initiative; Center for Security Policy; Concerned Women for America; David Horowitz Freedom Center; Donors Capital Fund; Eagle Forum; F.M. Kirby Foundation; Fox News Channel; Investigative Project

on Terrorism; Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation; Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI); National Review; and the Sarah Scaife Foundation. (Some of the funders in this list have supported the Capital Research Center.)

“Contending that American Muslims are the victims of wholesale repression, CAIR has provided sensitivity training to police departments across the United States, instructing law officers in the art of dealing with Muslims respectfully,” according to DiscoverTheNetworks. The estate of September 11 victim John O’Neill Sr., a high-ranking FBI counter-terrorism agent, filed a lawsuit which asserted that CAIR’s goal “is to create as much self-doubt, hesitation, fear of name-calling, and litigation within police department and intelligence agencies as possible so as to render such authorities ineffective in pursuing international and domestic terrorist entities.”

CAIR and its allies have spent years lobbying the FBI to give Muslims special leeway in investigations. As of March 2012, FBI agents weren’t allowed to treat individuals associated with terrorist groups as potential threats to the nation, according to an FBI directive titled, “Guiding Principles: Touchstone Document on Training.” The fact that a terrorism suspect is associated with a terrorist group means nothing, according to the document. It’s a “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy that benefits terrorists (FrontPageMag, Sept. 24, 2012).

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FBI agents are instructed that “mere association with organizations that demonstrate both legitimate (advocacy) and illicit (violent extremism) objectives should not automatically result in a determination that the associated individual is acting in furtherance of the organization’s illicit objective(s),” the document states. This is a bizarre kind of procedural fairness viewed in a funhouse mirror; it applies something akin to a “beyond a reasonable doubt” standard to an FBI investigation. Such an evidentiary threshold is appropriate for a criminal trial, but it sets the bar far too high for mere investigations.

CAIR was founded in 1994 by Nihad Awad, Omar Ahmad, and Rafeeq Jaber. The three men, reports DiscoverTheNetworks, “had close ties to the Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP), which was established by senior Hamas operative Mousa Abu Marzook and founded as Hamas’ public relations and recruitment arm in the United States.” CAIR opened an office in the nation’s capital with a \$5,000 grant from the Marzook-founded Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development (HLF), a charity that the Bush administration shuttered in 2001 for collecting money “to support the Hamas terror organization.” CAIR called the action “unjust” and “disturbing.” In 2004 Marzook was indicted on racketeering charges related to his pro-Hamas activities. Ahmad was named as an unindicted co-conspirator in the Holy Land Foundation trial.

CAIR’s ties to terrorists have not gone unnoticed. Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) said in 2003 that Awad and Ahmad have “intimate links with Hamas,” adding later that “we know [CAIR] has ties to terrorism.” Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) said “CAIR is unusual in its extreme rhetoric and its associations with groups that are suspect.” Before leaving Congress in 2013, Rep. Sue Myrick (R-N.C.) said, “Groups like CAIR have a proven record of senior officials being indicted and either imprisoned or deported from the United States.” In fact CAIR has been named as

an unindicted co-conspirator in at least one terrorism case.

DiscoverTheNetworks reports that Ghassan Elashi, a co-founder of the Texas branch of CAIR, was convicted in 2005 of terrorism-related offenses and sentenced to 80 months in prison. CAIR civil rights director Randall Todd Royer was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment on federal weapons and explosives charges in 2004. Bassem Khafagi, a community affairs director at CAIR, was convicted in 2003 on bank and visa fraud charges and agreed to be deported to Egypt. Rabih Haddad, a fundraiser for CAIR’s chapter in Ann Arbor, Mich., was detained in 2001 after overstaying his tourist visa. Authorities found a firearm and boxes of ammunition in his home. He served 19 months in prison and was deported to Lebanon in 2003. CAIR board member Abdurahman Alamoudi was sentenced to 23 years imprisonment for funneling at least \$1 million to al-Qaeda.

In the aftermath to 9/11, CAIR refused to blame Osama bin Laden for those terrorist attacks. In 1998 CAIR denied bin Laden was responsible for two al-Qaeda bombings of U.S. embassies in Africa. The group claimed the bombings resulted from “misunderstandings of both sides.” The same year CAIR objected to a Los Angeles billboard that called bin Laden “the sworn enemy,” claiming it was “offensive to Muslims.”

CAIR would ban the word *Islamist* if it could. CAIR flak Ibrahim Hooper protested the Associated Press’s decision to add the word to its influential *Stylebook* three years ago. Hooper said that the term “has become shorthand for ‘Muslims we don’t like,’” and that it is “currently used in an almost exclusively pejorative context and is often coupled with the term ‘extremist,’ giving it an even more negative slant” (CAIR website, Jan. 4, 2013).

The problem with Hooper’s reasoning is that “Islamism,” also called “Political Islam,”

refers to the beliefs of those Muslims who want to impose brutal Sharia law on society. It does not refer to the beliefs of ordinary, observant Muslims, who wish to practice their religion and be left alone. The term “Islamist” is used precisely to avoid the kind of stereotyping of all Muslims about which Hooper seems to be complaining.

But what exactly is ‘Islamophobia’?

Americans’ civil rights protections and political correctness are used by our Islamofascist enemies as weapons of infiltration. Just like our Soviet Communist enemies during the Cold War, Islamists are using Americans’ goodness and their sense of fair play, including an aversion to being accused of racial stereotyping, against American interests.

Of course anyone who follows the American scene knows that Muslims in this country are far from persecuted. They are involved in just about every field of human endeavor in the United States, including both major political parties. Criticism of Muslims for virtually any reason is often met with hysterical shrieks and verbal abuse from left-wingers perpetually on hair-trigger outrage alert. President Obama, in particular, seems to think Muslims can do no wrong, as liberal TV commentator Bob Beckel has observed. And despite the fevered predictions of leftists 14 years ago, Americans did not scapegoat and violently lash out at Muslims in this country in the immediate aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks—nor have they ever done so.

Accusing people of *Islamophobia* is a P.C. stratagem aimed at discrediting and silencing those critics. Supporters of Islamism in the U.S. frequently hurl the epithet “Islamophobe” the same way American left-wingers use the word *racist* to shut down debate, about, well, anything. The Islamophobia smear is used against both critics of Islam and those who merely question whether it is the religion of peace that the dangerously nonjudgmental Left assures Americans it is.

Great Moments in 'Islamophobia' Hoaxes

The Left knows there is no better way to spread the word about a cause than to have a good story. If there is no story, the Left makes one up.

Saadiq Long: the American-born Muslim convert promoted by the Left as a victim of Islamophobia has been arrested in Turkey near the Syrian border, accused of being part of an Islamic State terror cell. Long became a media darling after he was placed on the U.S. government's no-fly list, which prevented him from flying from his current home in Qatar to his native Oklahoma to see his ailing mother two years ago. Marxist muckraker Glenn Greenwald howled that Long was "effectively exiled from his own country," and Kevin Drum of *Mother Jones* lamented that Long was trapped in the "Kafkaesque World of the No-Fly List." Eventually the government caved and allowed Long to fly to the U.S. While stateside police returned him to the list, preventing his return to Qatar. He hopped on a bus and flew out of Mexico and was later picked up by Turkish authorities along with other accused terrorists.

Ahmed Mohamed: the 14-year-old student who was briefly detained and suspended from MacArthur High School in Irving, Texas, in September for bringing a disassembled clock that resembled a bomb to class, is threatening to sue the school district and city for \$15 million in damages. The international poster child for so-called Islamophobia has since moved to the Islamic-supremacist state of Qatar. WND has reported on various school disciplinary actions, including "weeks of suspensions" handed out to the unruly student. Ralph Kubiak, a former history teacher of Ahmed's, described him as a "weird little kid" who built a remote control to interfere with a classroom projector. He said Ahmed was the kind of child who "could either be CEO of a company or head of a gang." Ahmed was feted at the White House by President Barack Obama. Before meeting the president, he said, "I'm going to talk to [Obama] about, like, how hard it is growing up in America. It was pretty hard living in America and going to school being Muslim." Obama previously tweeted in support of Ahmed, praising his so-called clock, and inviting him for a visit: "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."

Tahera Ahmad: the Muslim chaplain at Northwestern University, was denied an unopened Diet Coke on a United Airlines flight this past summer. The flight attendant insisted on opening the soda first, which was unacceptable to Ahmad who promptly complained about Islamophobia and received an ocean of media coverage. As Daniel Greenfield of the David Horowitz Freedom Center quipped, "On a scale of hate crimes this is somewhere between 0 and -0.02. About the only person who could possibly complain about it is a celebrity whose color allotment of M&Ms is specified in a rider to their contract or a professional Islamic grievance-monger looking for any excuse to play victim." Some activists actually likened Ahmad to Rosa Parks. "The TSA isn't too fond of passengers having closed cans of soda on them," adds Greenfield. "It may have something to do with when a Muslim woman attempted to bring down a China Southern Airlines flight to Beijing using soda cans that she had injected with flammable liquid and dropped in the bathroom trash can."

Ibrahim Abu Mohammed: the Grand Mufti of Australia blamed Islamophobia for the mass-casualty terrorist attacks in Paris, France last month. "It is therefore imperative that all causative factors such as racism, Islamophobia.... duplicitous foreign policies and military intervention must be comprehensively addressed," he said. "In addition any discourse which attempts to apportion blame by association or sensationalizes violence to stigmatize a certain segment of society only serves to undermine community harmony and safety." A previous Grand Mufti "Down Under" claimed that when Muslims rape women in Australia it is the fault of the women.

These hoaxes happen all the time. This is not an exhaustive list.

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But in the real world, if one fears that Islamist ideology is an imperialist, totalitarian force, one is rational. "Phobia" implies that one who harbors such fears or is skeptical of the intentions of any Muslims is mentally unbalanced.

Differing accounts have been given of the etymology of *Islamophobia*. French author Pascal Bruckner wrote that "Iranian fundamentalists" invented the word in the late 1970s "in analogy to 'xenophobia.'" The

purpose "of this word was to declare Islam inviolate. Whoever crosses this border is deemed a racist. This term, which is worthy of totalitarian propaganda, is deliberately un-specific about whether it refers to a religion, a belief system or its faithful adherents around the world" ("*L'invention de l'Islamophobie*," *Liberation*, Nov. 23, 2010).

The anti-Islamophobia movement is built on "foundations created by progressives and, as a result, is already well advanced in

the West," explain the conservative authors David Horowitz and Robert Spencer:

In 1996 the Runnymede Trust, a leftist group in England, established a "Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia." Its elaborate definition of Islamophobia has since become a model for Muslim Brotherhood fronts like CAIR and the Muslim Students Association in their drive to impose anti-Islamophobia strictures on every-

one and suppress critics of the Islamic jihad. Under the Runnymede definition, Islamophobia includes any one of these eight components:

1. Islam seen as a single monolithic bloc, static and unresponsive to new realities.
2. Islam seen as separate and other – (a) not having any aims or values in common with other cultures (b) not affected by them (c) not influencing them.
3. Islam seen as inferior to the West – barbaric, irrational, primitive, sexist.
4. Islam seen as violent, aggressive, threatening, supportive of terrorism, engaged in ‘a clash of civilizations’.
5. Islam seen as a political ideology, used for political or military advantage.
6. Criticisms made by Islam of ‘the West’ rejected out of hand.
7. Hostility towards Islam used to justify discriminatory practices towards Muslims and exclusion of Muslims from mainstream society.
8. Anti-Muslim hostility accepted as natural and ‘normal’.

According to Claire Berlinski, the term surfaced in the 1990s. “The neologism ‘Islamophobia,’ did not simply emerge *ex nihilo*. It was invented, deliberately, by a Muslim Brotherhood front organization, the International Institute for Islamic Thought, which is based in Northern Virginia” (Ricochet, Nov. 24, 2010).

Regardless of who thought it up first, the way the term is used today resembles the way the term *thought crime* was used in George Orwell’s great dystopian novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

As Horowitz and Spencer explain: “In that novel written at the height of the Cold War, citizens are watched by a secret police for ‘thought crimes’ committed against the totalitarian state. These thought crimes are simply attitudes and ideas the authorities regard as politically incorrect.”

Islamophobia refers “to a modern-day thought crime,” Horowitz and Spencer write. The purpose of the *-phobia* suffix “is to suggest that any fear associated with Islam is irrational—whether that fear stems from the fact that its prophet and current-day imams call on believers to kill infidels, or because the attacks of 9/11 were carried out to implement those calls. Worse than that, it is to suggest that such a response to those attacks reflects a bigotry that itself should be feared” (“Islamophobia: Thought Crime of the Totalitarian Future,” by David Horowitz and Robert Spencer, 2011, David Horowitz Freedom Center, available at <http://www.discoverthenetworks.org/Articles/Islamophobia.pdf>).

After Muslim riots worldwide in 2005 led to many deaths following the publication in Denmark of cartoons of the Muslim prophet Muhammad, a group of famous writers issued a manifesto they titled, “Together Facing the New Totalitarianism.” One of the signers was Salman Rushdie, who supposedly insulted Muhammad in his 1988 novel *The Satanic Verses*. Iran’s spiritual leader at the time, the Ayatollah Khomeini, issued a fatwa calling on all Muslims to kill Rushdie, which forced him to go into hiding for years in Britain and led the U.K. to break diplomatic relations with Iran.

The manifesto stated:

After having overcome fascism, Nazism, and Stalinism, the world now faces a new global totalitarian threat: Islamism. . . . We, writers, journalists, intellectuals, call for resistance to religious totalitarianism and for the promotion of

freedom, equal opportunity and secular values for all. We refuse to renounce our critical spirit out of fear of being accused of ‘Islamophobia,’ a wretched concept that confuses criticism of Islam as a religion and stigmatization of those who believe in it. We defend the universality of the freedom of expression, so that a critical spirit can exist in every continent, towards each and every maltreatment and dogma.

Hard data do not support claims that Islamophobia exists in the United States. If anything, Americans tend to go out of their way not to offend Muslims or treat them differently. As Jonathan S. Tobin wrote in *Commentary* (Nov. 20, 2011): “the notion of a rising wave of hatred against Muslims is unsupported by any statistical research.”

When you consider that Muslims claim to have about the same number of adherents in this country as Jews and that anti-Jewish crimes have always far outnumbered those committed against Muslims, the media hysteria about Islamophobia is exposed as a big lie. But even if there are fewer Muslims here than their groups claim, the conclusion is unchanged.

The FBI’s hate crime statistics from 2014 bear this out. According to the Bureau’s Uniform Crime Reports, “hate crimes motivated by religious bias accounted for 1,092 offenses reported by law enforcement.” Of those reported offenses, 58.2 percent were anti-Jewish, 16.3 percent were anti-Muslim, 6.1 percent were anti-Catholic, 4.7 percent were anti-multiple religions, 2.6 percent were anti-Protestant, 1.2 percent were anti-Atheism/Agnosticism, and 11.0 percent were “anti-other (unspecified) religion.”

“Islamophobia” weaponized by leftists
America is a seething hotbed of “Islamophobia,” filled with ignorant racist rubes who irrationally fear the benign Muslim religion,



Radical academic Arun Kundnani

former Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering said in more polished, diplomatic language during a panel discussion three years ago at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. The official topic for the evening was “what role the faith community can play in fighting Islamophobia,” a make-believe mental illness that Islamic militants would love to have listed in the psychiatrist’s *vade mecum*, the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* or DSM.

Pickering’s pontifications came not long after then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton named him to head a U.S. Department of State “Accountability Review Board” tasked with examining the circumstances surrounding the deaths on Sept. 11, 2012, of Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens, information management officer Sean Smith, and security personnel Glen Doherty, and Tyrone Woods at the U.S. compound in a terrorist-infested part of Libya.

During his talk, Pickering piously—but incorrectly—invoked the Holocaust to argue that American Muslims were somehow in danger. “I’m not great at quotations,” he said, foreshadowing the misattribution to come. “Perhaps it was [German theologian

and dissident] Dietrich Bonhoeffer who said of the Nazis, when they came for the Jews, I didn’t speak up. I was not a Jew. When they came for the Catholics, I didn’t speak up, I was not a Catholic. When they came for us, no one spoke up. There was no one left to do so,” Pickering said, paraphrasing famous, poignant lines actually spoken by Third Reich-era German pastor Martin Niemöller.

Pickering said that Americans’ lack of familiarity with Islam—and not Islamist terrorist attacks on Americans—fuels hostility toward Muslims. “Data shows that those Americans who do not know Muslims, who do not know much about Islam, are the ones who harbor the greatest feelings of prejudice,” he said. There is a “strong, continuing, and perhaps, in an unfortunate way in some areas, growing, prejudice against Muslims and Islam,” he added (FrontPageMag, Nov. 1, 2012).

Pickering urged what might amount to a zero-tolerance policy against so-called Islamophobes in American society. “There are strong efforts as well that we must make to deal with opinion leaders who harbor these prejudices, who espouse them and spread them,” he said.

Although the former envoy did not elaborate on what those “strong efforts” might consist of, his statement is worrisome, given that the Obama administration is openly hostile to the First Amendment. After the Benghazi debacle, for example, President Obama went before the United Nations General Assembly and apologized for America’s free speech protections.

Pushing the false cover story that the Benghazi attacks were prompted by an anti-Islam video that virtually no one saw, the president said, “the future does not belong to those who slander the prophet of Islam.”

Pickering wasn’t the only panelist to describe ordinary Americans as a threat to Muslim inhabitants of the United States. In a particularly revealing soliloquy, Arab American Institute president James J. Zogby, whose younger brother is renowned pollster John Zogby, passionately inveighed against his fellow Americans, and particularly Tea Party supporters, labeling them dangerous racist Islamophobes:

I think that there’s a direct correlation between the president of the United States and Islamophobia. As we do our polling, we find that it is not the universal phenomenon. This hatred toward Muslims is largely concentrated with middle class, middle age, white people, and then it overlaps almost identically with the Tea Party. It is not a Republican thing. It’s a generational thing.

And it is a phenomenon born of a simple set of conditions, collapse of home mortgages, foreclosures increasing, pensions in collapse when the stock market went down, unemployment doubling, the decline of the American dream. In our polling we always used, when we’d say, are your children go-

ing to be better off than you, that's the American dream question, we'd get two thirds saying yes. We now get two thirds saying no. [Editor's note: James Zogby is managing director of Zogby Research Services.]

And in the midst of all of that this group of white middle aged, middle class men looked around and saw a young African-American, educated at Harvard with a middle name Hussein, and didn't like the president of the United States of America. It fueled this phenomenon and it opened the door for the wedge issue to operate and it's operating simply among that demographic. It's not a universal phenomenon. It's not found among African-Americans or Asians or Latinos. It's not found among young white kids. It's not found among college educated professional women. It's found in that one narrow demographic. That's where the bad numbers come from.

He continued: "And I think that, if, we had, I have a lot of gripes with George Bush, but if he were president, he would be doing what he did, which is put his foot down and say stop. I think we would not be seeing the phenomenon growing as we see it growing. But the problem is that if Barack Obama says stop, they say you're just the damn problem to begin with, you're not one of us anyway," Zogby said, affecting an accent that might be characterized as "redneck" or "country."

There is "an overlay between the racism and the Islamophobia" that is "being used as a wedge issue" against President Obama, he said. Zogby, whom Obama appointed to the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, also described controversial U.S. Rep. Keith Ellison (D-Minn.), a Muslim and an extreme left-winger who co-chairs the Congressional Progressive Caucus, as "a gift

to America and Congress, an extraordinary person who could not be better than he is."

Zogby's views are unremarkable in leftist circles. They are within the mainstream of the Democratic Party. In fact he is a Democratic National Committee official, and back in 1984 Zogby was a senior advisor to the Rev. Jesse Jackson's presidential campaign.

Pickering said he agreed with Zogby's critique. "Let me just go further," he said. "Jim, I agree with what you say about both domestic politics and the wedge issue and the effect on the attitude towards the president. I'm deeply concerned."

The fact that the U.S. has "fought two long, difficult, and fruitless, in my view, wars against countries which are Islamic and in which that particular set of issues contribute to stereotyping, to phobia, to basically loose talk, jokes, and all the things that go to tend to make up bigotry and in a sense authorize it because we were at war, is, in my view, part and parcel of the phenomenon that we see now," he said.

The plot to silence a prominent international critic of Islam

Dutch Member of Parliament Geert Wilders spoke to a group of supporters on Capitol Hill on April 29, 2015. But if two left-wing, Muslim, Democrat lawmakers had their way, he wouldn't have made it past the U.S. Customs desk at the airport because they claim he is an Islamophobe.

U.S. Reps. Keith Ellison and Andre Carson (D-Ind.) wrote to Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson and Secretary of State John Kerry on April 23, urging that Wilders be denied entry to the United States. "We should not be importing hate speech," they wrote. The government should "deny Mr. Wilders entry due to his participation in incit-

ing anti-Muslim aggression and violence." In the past the U.S. has denied entry "to a foreign leader who is responsible for severe violations of religious freedom," so there is a precedent for blocking Wilders, they argued. (The letter is available at <http://www.scribd.com/doc/263389175/Ellison-Carson-Letter-Re-Geert-Wilders-4-23>.)

Ellison and Carson are both in-your-face practicing Muslims who rarely stop talking about how rotten, unfair, and bigoted the United States is. Both men have been accused of having extensive ties to the world of Islamic terrorism. When Ellison won his first congressional election in 2006, several of his supporters shouted the traditional battle cry of jihadists—"Allahu Akbar!"—at his victory party, according to DiscoverTheNetworks.

Wilders may have strong views that he forcefully expresses, but he's not a lynch mob leader. And he agrees that Islamophobia, a concept concocted by Islamists to discredit and intimidate Islam's critics, is a half-baked idea. "I don't know what Islamophobia is," Wilders said during his Capitol Hill visit. "I read the letter from the two congressmen and it was full of, it raised a lot of nonsense. They said that I was guilty of incitement of violence and things like that. It was full of really crazy stuff."

"I am very critical about Islam, yes, but [I am] not against Muslims as such," Wilders said. "I traveled before I got into trouble with fatwas and death threats and hit lists, I traveled all around the Arab and Islamic world. I went to Iran, Iraq, and Syria, Afghanistan many times, and I met very friendly people, but I also met" those who support Islamic totalitarianism, he said.

"I don't have a problem with Muslims, but I have a problem with Islam and I will say so until my last breath and no U.S. congress-

GOLDMAN SACHS WATCH

(continued from following page)

Goldman received billions of dollars in federal bailout money in 2008 and 2009, thanks to its political connections in Washington. The bank has a revolving-door approach to hiring that allows government officials to work there when their party is out of power. According to the Center for Responsive Politics (OpenSecrets.org), 38 of its 40 federal lobbyists used to work in government. Goldman’s political giving leans Democratic (CEO Lloyd Blankfein is a self-identified Democrat), but it also keeps a foot in the door with Republicans. For its impressive profitability to continue, it cannot afford to be on the losing side in elections or to alienate either major political party.

Goldman’s philanthropy leans left. The Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund gives to a multitude of institutions of higher education, and in the U.S. those institutions are almost exclusively left-wing. The Fund gives to a handful of causes that do not appear to have a political ideology, but the recipients of its largest grants are firmly on the political Left.

Some of the more notable left-wing grant recipients from the Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund are Detroit-based Focus: HOPE (\$3.3 million since 2003); Planned Parenthood (\$2.7 million since 2003); U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (\$1.5 million since 2009); and the Bill, Hillary and Chelsea Clinton Foundation (\$74,000 since 2009).

In the 2014 election cycle, Goldman Sachs, its employees, and its political action committee gave \$4.8 million in campaign contributions (to candidates, parties, leadership PACs, 527 committees, and outside spending groups) and spent \$7 million on lobbying, according to CRP. Top recipients included National Republican Senatorial Committee (\$479,000; \$449,000 of it from individual employees); League of Conservation Voters (\$285,000; zero from individual employees); Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (\$185,000; \$155,000 from individual employees); NextGen Climate Action (\$100,000; zero from individual employees); and Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) (\$97,000; \$87,000 from individual employees).

men, with all respect, will be able to change that,” he said.

Islam isn’t even a real religion, Wilders contended. “Islam looks like a religion, but in reality it is a dangerous totalitarian ideology which wants to bring the whole world under Shariah law,” he said. “Islam means submission.... It’s either submit or die, and I suggest that we will do neither of them.”

People don’t accept what their leaders tell them about Islam, Wilders continued. They know that Islam is “an ideology of supremacy and conquest,” he said. “It’s not here to integrate. It’s not here to assimilate but to dominate and to subjugate and that’s the truth.”

Those are harsh words, but a free society should be able to accept sharp debate on

all sides of this issue, especially in an age when so much blood is being shed around the world by persons who believe they are carrying out their religious mission.

Matthew Vadum is a senior editor at Capital Research Center. He is also author of Subversion Inc.: How Obama’s ACORN Red Shirts Are Still Terrorizing and Ripping Off American Taxpayers (WND Books, 2011).

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PhilanthropyNotes

GOP presidential candidate **Ben Carson** is proposing eliminating all tax deductions, including those for charitable contributions and mortgage interest payments, as part of his flat income tax plan. He is the only Republican in the race to propose dropping the charitable deduction. Carson said charities have no reason to worry, because under his plan Americans will have more money to spend and will be more inclined to give. “The fact of the matter is people had homes before 1913 when we introduced the federal income tax,” he said. “We had churches before that, and charitable organizations before that.” The **Alliance for Charitable Reform** and other nonprofit trade associations oppose abolishing the charitable deduction.

So much for **Google’s** “Don’t Be Evil” motto: The company’s philanthropic arm is giving \$2.35 million to race-baiting community organizers, including \$500,000 to help the **Black Lives Matter** movement. Presumably, the money is intended as community outreach: critics say only 2 percent of Google’s workforce is black. The extreme-left **Ella Baker Center for Human Rights** of Oakland, Calif., co-founded by self-described “communist” and former Obama administration official **Van Jones**, is to receive \$1 million from **Google.org**, half of which will go to co-founder **Patrisse Cullors**, to help develop software to report police violence. Cullors is known for her rants about so-called white supremacy and her conspiracy theories in which the U.S. is carrying out genocide against African-Americans.

The U.S. Department of Justice has been secretly shaking down **CitiGroup** and **Bank of America**, extracting \$150 million for left-wing “housing counseling agencies.” In June the House passed a measure offered by House Judiciary Committee Rep. **Bob Goodlatte** (R-Va.) to block the bogus unfair lending settlement that will direct funding to community organizers at groups like **La Raza** and **NeighborWorks**, according to **Dustin Howard** of **Americans for Limited Government**.

President **Obama’s IRS** is still holding hostage applications for nonprofit status from conservative and Tea Party groups, even though the IRS targeting scandal first made national headlines years ago. Two of the groups discriminated against unjustly are the **Albuquerque Tea Party**, which started seeking tax-exempt status six years ago, and Ohio-based **Unite in Action**, whose quest for that status began three years ago. Both groups are part of a 38-group class-action lawsuit against the government. Congressional investigators determined that under disgraced executive **Lois Lerner**, IRS officials illegally subjected right-leaning 501(c)(4) nonprofit advocacy organizations to intrusive scrutiny and wildly inappropriate processing times during the 2010 and 2012 election cycles. These misdeeds helped Obama secure a second term, because groups opposing him weren’t able to organize while their tax-exempt status hung in limbo, according to **Robert Knight** of the **American Civil Rights Union**. “What Lois Lerner did moves us that much closer to being an authoritarian third world-type country, where might makes right,” Knight said after Assistant Attorney General **Peter J. Kadzik** recently shrugged off the Lerner-led conspiracy as mere bureaucratic incompetence.

Goldman Sachs WATCH

As presidential primary season is upon us, now is a good time to review the political campaign contributions of Goldman Sachs, the most powerful investment bank in the world.

Criticism of the bank from conservatives tends to focus on its outsized influence in the lawmaking and regulatory processes and on its “crony capitalist” approach to business that maximizes its profits while curtailing free markets and expanding government. And yet the Left paints an almost-cartoonish picture of Goldman Sachs, as if it epitomizes free markets in action.

One left-wing journalist in 2010 called it “a great vampire squid wrapped around the face of humanity, relentlessly jamming its blood funnel into anything that smells like money” and as a “great American bubble machine” that “has engineered every major market manipulation since the Great Depression.” Although this critique may be rhetorically excessive, it contains at least a grain of truth. *(continued on previous page)*