

# Islamophobia, the New Nativism

Featured Inside:

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Islamophobia Proliferates in  
Wake of Boston Bombings

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Sikh Temple Shooting Marks  
Increase in Organized Hate

**IMAGINE** 2050

RACE  
IDENTITY  
DEMOCRACY

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Dear Reader,

By the year 2050, one out of five Americans will be foreign born. Latino and Asian communities will increase significantly. There will be no clear racial or ethnic majority. Today's perceptions of foreignness will challenge how Americans identify themselves over the coming years.

In light of these shifts, fierce battles are being waged over who is American. Far-right movements are converging around a shared strategy to legitimize and politicize racism and xenophobia.

From the backlash to the Muslim cultural center, Cordoba House, to anti-Muslim advertisements, legislative attacks on Islam, Qur'an burnings and violent attacks on places of worship, it is clear that deep-seated Islamophobia is increasing and becoming more mainstream.

Today, religious intolerance is steeped in racial hatred and includes strains of anti-immigrant rhetoric. Attacks on Muslim, Arab and South Asian Americans, and anyone perceived as Muslim are another tactic of those who wish to stop the demographic shifts taking place in America.

This issue of *Imagine 2050* focuses on the Islamophobia movement, its leadership, and ties to a powerful anti-immigrant network that has perfected the art of mainstreaming nativism.

*Imagine 2050* believes in an equitable and inclusive democracy where people can live safely and freely across religious, racial, and ethnic identities. We are committed to providing readers with cutting-edge research and analysis every day on our online publication. Please visit [Imagine2050.org](http://Imagine2050.org) to learn more about nativism and organized Islamophobia.

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# Members of Congress Attend Anti-Muslim Retreat



Congressional Representatives Louie Gohmert and Michele Bachmann

Reps. Michelle Bachmann (R-MN) and Louie Gohmert (R-TX), along with members of the established anti-immigrant and the organized Islamophobia movements, attended the David Horowitz-hosted *West Coast Retreat* in Palos Verdes, California the weekend of February 22, 2013.

The retreat was one of many events put on annually by the far right, stridently anti-Muslim David Horowitz Freedom Center think-tank.

Bachmann and Gohmert are members of the House Immigration Reform Caucus (HIRC), the anti-immigrant coalition of U.S. House representatives. HIRC is supported by the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), which was founded by white nationalist John Tanton, one of the most influential organization in the anti-immigrant movement today.

Gohmert has been a member of Congress since 2005. He has attracted plenty of attention and scrutiny for his extremist views. In the past, he has warned of the fictional threat “terror babies” pose to U.S. security and equated assault rifles to carpentry tools.

Gohmert is rarely in step with his

Republican colleagues. This was made obvious when he voted for Allen West, the former Florida Congressman who lost his seat in November, to replace incumbent Speaker of the House John Boehner.

Last summer, Reps. Gohmert and Bachmann were part of a Congressional club that wrote letters seeking to investigate the imagined presence of Muslim Brotherhood adherents in the U.S. government. Bachmann and Gohmert were two of only five members of Congress to sign the letters of inquiry. The Bachmann Five did not gain much support from their peers. Sen. John McCain perhaps best summated how their efforts were viewed:

“When anyone, not least a member of Congress, launches specious and degrading attacks against fellow Americans on the basis of nothing more than fear of who they

are and ignorance of what they stand for, it defames the spirit of our nation.”

Like Bachmann and Gohmert, the David Horowitz Freedom Center is no stranger to anti-immigrant sentiment. Past events put on by the think tank have featured HIRC founder and former Congressman Tom Tancredo and Mark Krikorian, Executive Director of Center for Immigration Studies, a FAIR-affiliated group also founded by John Tanton.

Horowitz is a dedicated funder of the Islamophobia movement. Freedom Center employs Robert Spencer and finances *Jihad Watch*, one of the movement’s principal platforms. Spencer’s colleagues, Daniel Pipes and Frank Gaffney, have appeared at past Freedom Center events.

Events such as the Freedom Center’s retreat provide a valuable opportunity for nativist leaders and far-right legislators to strategize with one another. Look no further than the powerful and influential anti-immigrant movement to see just how effective hateful xenophobia becomes when it has willing messengers in American lawmakers.



# Nativists and Islamophobes Intensify Collaborations



Mark Krikorian (L) and Frank Gaffney (R)

During a March 2013 installment of his Internet TV/radio program, *TrentoVision*, host Tom Trento used the term “wet backs” to describe (ostensibly Latino) immigrants. Trento employed the racial slur to describe immigrants that “cut-in-line” and “game the system,” equating the United States’ immigration system to the checkout aisle at a grocery store.

Trento is the Founder and President of The United West (Tuw), a Florida-based group that “combines top-shelf academics with a military-grade activism to distinguish itself from every counter-jihad organization.” Tuw attempts to mobilize “military-grade activism” through listeners of the TrentoVision radio program.

During the March 6 program, Trento opened up the hour discussing the United States’ transformation from “the super power to a struggling democracy.” Trento discussed the government’s actions regarding gun control and other hot-button issues before moving to the topic of immigration.

“All of sudden,” Trento said,

“wetbacks, you know, illegals come over. Violating every federal law there is, violating the decency of human nature.”

When looking at the company Trento keeps, his statement is not shocking. In 2010, Trento co-authored a report titled, *Shariah: The Threat to America*, with many notable players in the Islamophobia movement.

Frank Gaffney is listed as a co-author and the report was published by his think tank, Center for Security Policy. Over the years, Gaffney and Trento have developed quite a bond, appearing together at speaking engagements and on each other’s radio programs.

These connections evidence even more collaboration between players in the Islamophobia movement and the established anti-immigrant movement, melding their views under the guise of patriotism.

“wetbacks, you know, illegals come over. Violating every federal law there is, violating the decency of human nature.”

In January 2013, Gaffney and Trento both spoke at the 2013 South Carolina Tea Party Coalition Convention. Michael Cutler, a former INS agent with ties to anti-immigrant groups such as the Center for Immigration Studies

and Californians for Population Stabilization (CAPS), also spoke at the conference. Later that month, Cutler spoke at a conference co-sponsored by a chapter of the Islamophobic group ACT! for America.

Cutler’s former boss at Center for Immigration Studies is none other than Mark Krikorian. Last December, Krikorian and Center for Immigration Studies hosted Gaffney for a talk entitled, “Is Immigration a Catalyst for Sharia in the West?” Both Krikorian and Gaffney indicated that their groups were actively seeking future avenues of collaboration.

Islamophobia leaders like Tom Trento primarily have their sights set on Muslims and the supposed threat they pose to the American way of life, but it’s no surprise that anti-immigrant sentiments—and bigotry—surface.

It’s important to recognize anti-immigrant and Islamophobic sentiments as interconnected and dependent on each other—as the individuals driving these movements have and are presently capitalizing on their shared worldviews.

Both perspectives aim to protect the United States from perceived threats of “outsiders.” Whether it is fear of Latinos or Muslims, it’s all nativism—and it’s all bigotry.

# Tragic Sikh Temple Shooting Marks Increase in Organized Hate



The August 5, 2012 shooting at a Sikh temple outside Milwaukee is a tragic sign that the violent rhetoric of a growing anti-Muslim movement has deadly consequences.

Reports indicate that six individuals were murdered inside the temple and the shooter, Wade Michael Page, was killed by a police officer in an exchange of gunfire. Several others were critically injured, including an officer who was among the first to respond.

Wade Page was not a random killer. He had targets, guns, and an ideology.

Starting with a tattoo on his arm, we see the signs of neo-Nazi indoctrination: a Celtic cross emblazoned with a '14,' referring to the fourteen-word slogan "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for White children," commonly attributed to David Lane,

founder of the white supremacist organization, The Order. As the singer-songwriter for the neo-Nazi skinhead band 'End Apathy' based in Nashville, NC, Page played to white supremacist crowds and hinted at his horrific suicide mission. From the End Apathy song 'Self-Destruct' on the "Violent Victory" vinyl release:

"Running out of  
Patience/Waiting for  
'That Day'/Just when  
things are going  
good/I'll f— it up some  
way/If I can't move  
forward/I know I can  
move back/Blow the  
band money at the  
bar/I'm on the Attack"

That Page was a neo-Nazi is not a surprise to anyone; the surprise and shame, frankly, is how willing we have been to ignore the culture that nurtures it. Are Sikhs suddenly more at risk than they were on August 5, 2012? No—the risk of violence against any subaltern group has always been present, just ignored.

Since September 11, 2001 prejudice, violence, and racial profiling against South Asians has soared to new heights, much of it manifesting as Islamophobia. Some of the public conversation has (to the dismay of many of us) been diverted toward understanding the difference between Muslims and Sikhs, as if the religion of the

victims ought to make any difference at all. Either way, paranoia about the "Other" has driven some to support undemocratic laws against minorities and others to violence.

While followers of Sikhism are not Muslim, they often are on the receiving end of anti-Muslim hate, however. The U.S. Sikh community has been the target of numerous racially-motivated attacks in recent years, as have other communities in the aftermath of 9/11.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, the government has investigated "over 800 incidents since 9/11 involving violence, threats, vandalism and arson against Arab-Americans, Muslims, Sikhs, South-Asian Americans and other individuals perceived to be of Middle Eastern origin. The incidents have consisted of...assaults with dangerous weapons and assaults resulting in serious injury and death; and vandalism, shootings, arson and bombings directed at homes, businesses, and places of worship."

From the backlash to the planned Muslim cultural center, Park51, anti-Muslim advertisements, legislative attacks on Islam, Qur'an burnings, to a sharp rise in attacks on Mosques, it is clear that deep-seated Islamophobia is increasing. These incidents of religious intolerance are steeped in racial hatred and permeated with strains of anti-immigrant rhetoric.

The Sikh Temple shooting was eerily reminiscent of the Oslo, Norway massacre that occurred just one year ago. A man heavily



influenced by anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim organizations active in the U.S perpetrated that attack.

Anti-Muslim arguments have gained mainstream recognition through a number of organizations and their leaders, but the most intense activity has come from the network leading the anti-Sharia movement. Coordinating the “grassroots” component of this effort is ACT! for America and its founder Brigitte Gabriel. ACT! for America established chapters all over the U.S. This has provided Gabriel a solid base of support to organize speaking events and conferences for supporters who are responding to the tyranny of radical Islam.”

While it specializes in these grassroots activities, ACT! for America also includes a lobbying component. In 2010 it spent \$45,000 coaxing voters to pass Oklahoma’s anti-Sharia referendum SQ 755, and another \$30,000 while encouraging federal legislators to oppose “Shariah Compliant Finance transactions.”

The other critical element to organized Islamophobia is its legal

wing, spearheaded by one of its most prolific advocates, David Yerushalmi.

Loosely affiliated with ACT! for America, Yerushalmi is a lawyer hailed as “an expert on Islamic Law.” He wrote the model legislation that eventually became Tennessee’s HB 3768/SB 3470 and Louisiana’s HB 785—the heavily imitated anti-Sharia bills that have been signed into law. Yerushalmi also represented Stop the Islamization of America’s controversial bus advertisement campaign opposing a proposed mosque “near” the site of the World Trade Center terrorist attacks, resulting in a lawsuit against the City of New York.

The Sikh Temple shooting was eerily reminiscent of the Oslo, Norway massacre that occurred just one year earlier.

Prejudice can be named any number of ways—racism, nativism, xenophobia, or Islamophobia—the underlying current is the same: a racialized idea of who is ‘American,’ who holds dominion over that identity, and what ought to be done about it.

If immigrants can be recast as ‘invaders,’ racist murderers can be recast as heroes. The more that any group of people—immigrants, Muslims, or anyone else—is spoken of as an existential threat, the more Wade Pages, JT Readys, Anders Breiviks, or Shawna Fordes there will be to act against it. Wade Page was not the first—not even the first in a while—and without serious thought to how we perceive our country and ourselves, he’s likely not the last.



# Anti-Immigrant & Islamophobia Leaders Strengthen Ties



Pamela Gellar and Robert Spencer

Robert Spencer, Pamela Gellar and Frank Gaffney have long argued that the Obama administration and the “liberal media” have sold out to the Muslim Brotherhood. The trio appeared on an unofficial CPAC 2013 panel that Salon.com called “so fringy that they were not technically invited to the conference.” The panel was part of a broader program, “The Uninvited: A Session of Controversial Speakers and Topics,” organized and hosted by the Breitbart News Network.

This year, Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) organizers went to great lengths to minimize controversy from some of the more extreme players, but the “Uninvited” panel managed to subvert those precautions. Gellar embraced her reputation as a provocateur and said that CPAC board member Suhail Khan is more of a threat than an accused terrorist killed by an American drone strike

in Yemen.

“Am I saying that Suhail Khan is as bad as al-Awlaki? He’s worse,” she said. “Listen to me. He’s worse because look what he’s done to this conference.”

Defying moderator Steve Bannon’s request to refrain from personal attacks, Robert Spencer blamed the influence of Khan and leading conservative Grover Norquist as the reason he, Gellar and the other panelists were not invited to participate in CPAC 2013. Speaking of Norquist and Khan he said, “What I do know is that they’re completely in bed with the same people Barack Obama is listening to to craft the Muslim Brotherhood-positive policy of the United States and domestic policy as well.”

Former U.S. attorney general Michael Mukasey, who served under George W. Bush, said the Bush administration was just as

guilty as the current White House of being soft on violent extremists and drew laughs when he reminded audience members that Bush referred to Islam as a “religion of peace.”

The panel also featured Rosemary Jenks of anti-immigrant group NumbersUSA.

Jenks’ appearance alongside anti-Muslim activists such as Gaffney, Spencer and Geller is notable in that it further illustrates an alignment of the anti-immigrant and Islamophobia movements.

Last December, Center for Immigration Studies (CIS) provided a venue for Frank Gaffney to give a conspiracy theory-laden talk on the Muslim Brotherhood’s so-called influence within the US government. CIS, NumbersUSA’s sister organization, was founded by white nationalist John Tanton. Tanton is credited with forging an extensive alliance of nativist groups described as the Tanton Network. Tanton has a history of collaborating with white nationalists and promoting racial eugenics.

Furthermore, CPAC 2013 wasn’t even the first time Jenks had been hosted by the Islamophobia elite. Gaffney invited her to appear on his Secure Freedom Radio program.

Jenks was, of course, brought on the show to discuss the evils of “comprehensive immigration reform.” Jenks is Director of Government Relations for Roy Beck’s NumbersUSA, one of the Tanton Network-affiliated groups.



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Roy Beck is a close friend of Tanton, with their relationship dating back to the 1970s. Then working as a journalist, Beck exhibited promise for Tanton's burgeoning movement. Tanton hired Beck as the Washington Editor for his white nationalist journal, The Social Contract, a position he held from 1991 until at least 2000.

Tanton has long collaborated with white nationalists and the far-right in disseminating his message.

In 1997, Beck addressed the national conference of the white nationalist Council of Conservative Citizens (CofCC), which has referred to African Americans as a "retrograde species of humanity."

It was while working under Tanton that Beck decided to found NumbersUSA in 1996 under the Tanton Network's financial umbrella, U.S., Inc. During this time, Beck and Tanton's relationship developed enough for Tanton to name Beck his "heir apparent" in 1998. Beck decided, however, to take a different route, making NumbersUSA a legally separate entity from U.S., Inc. in 2001/2002. NumbersUSA has grown to become the largest grassroots organizing network for the anti-immigrant movement in this country.

Jenks was featured on Gaffney's radio program because the issue of immigration had previously "been on the back burner," according to Gaffney, but is "on the front burner now."

Gaffney regularly uses Secure Freedom Radio as a welcoming platform for power-players within the anti-immigrant movement. He has hosted Center for Immigration Studies' Mark Krikorian on more than one occasion; Arizona SB 1070 architect Kris Kobach; House Immigration Reform Caucus members such as Michele Bachmann (R-MN) and Louie Gohmert (R-TX), and a clutch of others.

Gaffney and Jenks's on-air exchange is more evidence of a trend among the anti-immigrant and organized Islamophobia movements to openly collaborate and to share ideas.

Involvement between the two movements does not appear to be slowing down anytime soon.

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# Islamophobia Proliferates in Wake of Boston Bombings

The Boston Marathon attacks have afforded nativists an incredible opportunity to engender prejudice against not only Muslim immigrants or those perceived as Muslim, but against all immigrants.

Instead of joining the American people in mourning the victims and supporting law enforcement, leaders of the anti-immigrant and Islamophobia movements used the tragedy to undermine immigration reform and to attack Muslim, Arab-American and South Asian communities.

Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA), ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, derailed discussions during the Committee's April 19 hearing on immigration reform.

"Given the events of this week, it's important to understand the gaps and loopholes," Grassley said in his opening remarks. Rep. Marco Diaz-Balart (R-FL) took time to refute Grassley's remarks later that day. "[E]very crime that is committed right now is under the current immigration system," the Florida representative said. "We need to fix the current immigration system, if in fact there is any connection between immigration at all."

Sen. Grassley was not the only Republican lawmaker ready to conflate the immigration debate with the Boston attacks. After working with colleagues in the House

Immigration Reform Caucus to sabotage reform efforts, Rep. Louie Gohmert (R-TX) used the bombing suspects' immigrant status and purported Muslim faith to suggest an unsubstantiated link between the suspects and Al-Qaeda. On C-SPAN he asserted, "[w]e know Al-Qaeda has camps on the Mexican border...We have people that are trained to act Hispanic when they are radical Islamists."

**"If you know a certain threat is coming from a certain community, that's where you have to look," - Rep. Peter King (R-NY)**

Rep. Gohmert is adept at bridging anti-immigrant and Islamophobic rhetoric. In the past, he has used the imaginary threat of "creeping Sharia" to speak out against gun control measures. Additionally, Gohmert is known for persistently warning of "terror babies." The notion is nearly identical to the anti-immigrant movement's long-standing obsession with so-called "anchor babies" that are frequently cited during attempts to dismantle birthright citizenship — a right guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

One of Gohmert's most ardent anti-Muslim colleagues in the House, Rep. Peter King (R-NY), used the bombings to target the American

Muslim community and defend the New York Police Department's controversial Muslim surveillance program.

"If you know a certain threat is coming from a certain community, that's where you have to look," Rep. King said on Fox News Sunday after the bombings.

Rep. King is predictably spreading misinformation to persecute and subjugate an entire community of Americans under the guise of security.

Fox News Latino ran a story on April 19 quoting Mark Krikorian from the Center for Immigration Studies as saying, "What it shows is that immigration security is not divisible, that is, you can't pick and choose what countries or group you're going to pay lots of attention to. You can't say, 'We going [sic] to worry about people from Saudi Arabia, but not Russia.'" The question Krikorian purposefully fails to answer is why his immigration status matters at all; avoiding it, however, helps him say that we should be wary of all immigrants.

Robert Spencer, Steven Emerson and Pamela Geller, three of the Islamophobia movement's most notable mouthpieces, have also done their best to churn up suspicion and misinformation. Seizing on a hasty *New York Post* article that claimed there was a Saudi suspect in police custody, Pamela Geller and Steven

Emerson led the charge to summon the mob.

They succeeded. Steve King (R-IA) urged Congress to halt their immigration reform efforts, citing Saudi Arabia as a threat. “We need to take a look at the visa-waiver program and wonder what we’re doing,” he said to the *National Review*. “If we can’t background-check people that are coming from Saudi Arabia, how do we think we are going to background check the 11 to 20 million people that are here from who knows where?”

After Boston police denied that a Saudi national was a suspect and indicated that the individual in question was in fact one of the victims, Emerson took to Fox News to falsely claim that the young man was being deported.

The lie had to be addressed by DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano, who, after being challenged by South Carolina Representative Jeff Duncan with false information, said: “Like I said, again I don’t even think he was technically a person of interest or a suspect, that was a wash. And I am unaware of any proceeding there, I will clarify that for you, but I think this is an example of why it is so important to let law enforcement to do its job.”

Both Spencer and Geller quickly labeled the attacks as “Jihad in Boston,” citing one of the *New York Post*’s error-ridden articles.

Tom Trento, founder and director of The United West, posted a photo on his website of two marathon spectators whom he believed were involved in the bombing. In the announcement for his April 18 broadcast, Trento writes “Hey Mohammad & Mohammad ... call the FBI or be at the mercy of angry Americans.” Then he tells his followers, “Let’s find these guys!” and warns that they may be armed and dangerous.

The bigotry didn’t stop there.

Bryan Fischer, Director of Issue Analysis for the American Family Association (AFA), took to his *Focal Point* radio program on April 19 to attack Muslims and call for a complete moratorium on immigration by Muslims into America. Fischer proposed a new immigration policy that screens potential immigrants by asking, “Do you believe that the Quran is the holy book of God?” If the prospective immigrant answers “yes,” then, according to Fischer, they should be denied entry because the Quran “teaches you to kill Americans.”

Such extreme rhetoric should not be surprising coming from Fischer who called a speech by extremist Dutch politician Geert Wilders, “the most important speech of the 21<sup>st</sup> century thus far.” During the speech, Wilders espoused incredibly bigoted remarks such as, “[t]he truth is that Islam is evil, and the reality is that Islam is a threat to us.”

Fischer is not alone in calling for extreme restrictions on Muslim immigration in response to last week’s bombings. Conservative figures such as radio show host Laura Ingraham and Eagle Forum founder Phyllis Schlafly have issued similar remarks recently on far-right media outlets.

The Boston bombing does not represent a failure of our immigration system. The only immigration system that would have prevented this attack is one that believes that all Muslims are potential terrorists and that security is worth the cost of civil liberties.

If the anti-immigrant movement succeeds in using the Boston marathon bombing to erode immigration reform, it will harm much more than immigrant rights. It will harm rights for all.





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