

**TESTIMONY OF
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Global Human Rights, and International Organizations**

“Anti-Semitism: A Growing Threat to All Faiths”

Thank you Chairman Christopher Smith and Ranking Member Karen Bass, and distinguished members of the committee, for seeking my testimony. I must first express my gratitude to the committee for taking the time to focus on the issue of anti-Semitism and its important role as a ‘canary in the coal mine’, if you will, for the threat against all people and all faiths.

My name is Dr. M. Zuhdi Jasser and I am the president and founder of the American Islamic Forum for Democracy. Our organization’s mission is the advancement of our Constitution’s principles of freedom and liberty through the separation of mosque and state. As a Muslim organization we are particularly focused upon the need to generate a consensus of reform against the ideas of political Islam and the Islamic state vis-à-vis the promotion of the ideas of liberty and pluralism.

On behalf of our organization I have written and testified repeatedly in these halls about the threat of Islamist extremism and the need for our society to identify, understand, dissect, counter and then defend against the ideology that threatens us. Different from many “politically correct” approaches to this issue I have not found the nebulous and generic concept of “violent extremism” particularly helpful in developing targeted solutions against this domestic and global threat. Programs that only counter violence address the *means* of those who threaten us while wholly ignoring the ideology or the *ends* which their movements seek. The common ideological thread which runs through the security threat that comes from Islamist extremism is the inherent supremacism of Islamism or political Islam. Thus, violent extremism is but one threatening symptom or manifestation that comes out of the Islamist ideology that threatens western democracies and citizenry under its sway.

The Link between Anti-Semitism and Islamism

Anti-Semitism should not be viewed as just another “radical” symptom that arises from the supremacist mentality of Islamism. It is far more than that. If we can develop the understanding and national conviction to directly confront the anti-Semitism of global Islamist movements, we will therein hold the key to unraveling the very fabric and platform through which Islamist leaders spread their ideas. The Helsinki Commission and the members of your committee have a rich history of being fearless in seeking to shed the anti-septic of the light of day upon anti-Semitism in Europe and the West wherever it exists in order to preserve the essence of our democracies and prevent us from abandoning the central premise of the equality of all under God, blind to faith or no faith. The need to do the same with anti-Semitism that arises and metastasizes from the propaganda of Islamist movements around the world has never been greater than it is today.

The link between Islamism and anti-Semitism is rather simple. It is self-evident that supremacists from within a particular faith community will create and exploit hatred towards another faith community in order to collectively rally their own followers against a common enemy. Islamists utilize anti-Semitic imagery, profiling and demonization of Jews as a tool for their own ascension into power among Muslim majority communities and nations, or in Arabic, the “*Ummah*”. Islamists often exploit both the Muslim *Ummah* and the Jewish minority in order to create a groupthink against the “other”. The demonization of Jews by

Islamists is a key signal to all of us not only because of its imminent threat to all Jews across the world from Islamists who may become violent or oppressive, but also because beneath that hatred lies a more global supremacism that treats all minorities from within the faith and outside the same as obstacles to their own ascension. These theo-fascists use the demonization of minorities as populist tools to rally populations to their fascism.

Understanding this inextricable link between the demonization of Jews or anti-Semitism and the advancement of Islamist movements is essential to how our nation approaches finding the keys that will unlock and unravel the threat of Islamism domestically and abroad.

While addressing “violent extremism” has given many a pass in dealing with the faith-based component of the societal and political threat of Islamism, the spread of anti-Semitism by Islamists does not. It is the Jewish faith group that is being attacked and demonized and I, as a devout American Muslim, have dedicated my life to countering the Islamist demagogues and their ideas from within our faith community that target Jews. Those ideas could never be targeted without acknowledging the role of political Islam and the Islamic state ascendancy in creating a fertile soil for anti-Semitism. It is in defense of our Constitution, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in my own enlightened self-interest as a Muslim that I sit before you and pray that you join us in understanding the need to develop a national strategy against Islamism in order to begin to eliminate anti-Semitism across the globe.

The Arab Awakening: Islamism rushes to fill the vacuum, anti-Semitism led the way

Europe and the West are being directly impacted by the events of the last two years during the Arab Awakening. With the tumult in Libya, Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen, Bahrain and Syria, the ascent of Islamist movements has not brought a real spring but rather the empowerment of new autocrats who wield Islamist thought. To many, the Islamist movements are simply dictators on theocratic steroids. With vast global connections in Arabic social and traditional media, Muslim populations in Europe and the United States are being impacted by a great deal of the propaganda coming out of these regions now with unleashed Islamist movements.

The new-found avenues of public discourse (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube) and attempts at media freedom are long overdue for the region which has been crushed by generations of unforgiving dictatorship. However, whether they are truly moving towards more transparent societies with actual checks and balances of a genuinely free media remains to be seen. The reality on the ground is that media and thought has been dominated for quite some time by extraordinarily wealthy Islamist media arms like, *Al Jazeera Media Group* (funded by the Emir and government of Qatar), the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (and its royal family) and the Iranian government (Khomeinists) to name just a few of the wealthy benefactors of Islamist movements. In fact, recent reports are that in Egypt, for example, while the revolution was driven by greater grass roots social media freedoms, the Muslim Brotherhood now in power is buckling down on free speech in ways that are even worse than they were under Mubarak. Arrests for blasphemy and criticism of the President are dwarfing what they were in the previous years. Heba Morayef of Human Rights Watch in Egypt stated, “*The repression used to be more limited and strategic, now, the scary thing is that it’s all over the place.*”¹

To many of us, the anti-Semitism of the Muslim Brotherhood’s Islamist ideology was long a harbinger of what to expect if Islamists ever came to power. Their anti-freedom, neo-theocratic methods are part and parcel of the same supremacist ideology. Interestingly, Islamist groups in the West, those created in the late 20th century as Muslim Brotherhood legacy groups have not demonstrably utilized the opportunity of the Arab Awakening to push forth reforms against neo-theocratic institutions and ideologies. Instead, they are

¹ Cambannis, Thannasis. [Egypt’s free-speech backlash](#): What can you say in an Islamist democracy? A new conflict that could reverberate across the Muslim world. The Boston Globe. February 10, 2013.

being told by European and American Islamist demagogues like Tariq Ramadan² to ‘learn from the Egyptians’ about how to fight back against their own governments. Ramadan, the grandson of Hassan Al-Banna founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, told thousands at the annual *Reviving the Islamic Spirit* conference in Toronto December 2012 that they should take a lesson from Egypt, “and be courageous enough to say “no” when there are injustices...done to the Muslims in the jails, innocent people suspected of being connected to so called terrorist organizations.”³ Thus, contrary to genuine anti-Islamist Muslim reformers in Muslim communities, Islamists and their sympathizers in the West obsessively focus upon blaming the West, or “the other”, for the “Muslim condition” and constantly pit Muslim communities in the West against “non-Muslim” governments. This is a natural sequel to the history of indoctrination with the divisive mantra of anti-Semitism and its conspiracy laden philosophies.

Yet, sadly virtually nothing is said to Muslim audiences in the West by Muslim leaders especially of Islamist legacy groups about the central need to combat the institutional ideas of anti-Semitism. Some have even featured anti-Semitic speakers at their national conventions.⁴

The challenge before the world could not be clearer — into the abyss left by ruthless dictators is a widening front in the battle for the soul of Islam: Will Muslim majority societies and Muslim leaders around the world heed the call of the Arab spring for the rights of the individual? Will they defend the rights of the minority over the collective, over the tribe, over the clerical oligarchs? Or will they just trade one autocracy for another? And will the U.S. and the West stand on the principles we were founded upon?

New ideas to the region like individual liberty and the separation of mosque and state are not turned on like a light switch. They are nurtured in a soil that has been tilled for critical thinking. Middle Eastern soil today is far from that. What we see today is more of the past battles between the evils of secular Arab fascism and theocratic fascism. In the information war between them, the liberals and secular democrats have been absent. Meanwhile, the fascists lie in wait for openings like a controversial film or cartoons that exploit the imagined threat or conspiracy of American imperialism in order to legitimize their own ascendancy. That is the demagogic role that anti-Semitism takes on too easily in the vacuum of the departure of secular Arab fascists. We have for too long left untended the war of ideas for liberty and individual rights within Muslim majority nations and communities, especially those now undergoing upheavals screaming for help of liberals. We have refused to take sides within the theo-political debates going on inside the Muslim communities at the expense of so many minority victims of Islamists, like the Jewish community, in the face of rampant and endemic anti-Semitism. This is to our own peril.

The importance of the role of anti-Semitism here cannot be overstated. Both in Tunisia and in Egypt the Islamist parties received only a plurality of the vote in the first balloting, but due to fractionalization and division, the secularists and non-Islamists were never able to rally around any unifying idea that could have marginalized the Islamists. In fact, anti-Semitism was long a tool utilized by Islamists in order to invoke common sympathy from secular nationalists, who also developed a hatred for Jews, in order to avoid national introspection.

Follow the numbers: first anti-Semitism then Islamism’s fascism

Even though in Egypt, the Islamists carried only 25 percent support among the population and the more extreme salafists carried 15-20 percent, Pew revealed that “Anti-Jewish sentiment” is endemic in the Muslim world. “*In Lebanon, for example, all Muslims and 99% of Christians say they have a very unfavorable view of Jews. Similarly, 99% of Jordanians have a very unfavorable view of Jews. Large majorities of Moroccans,*

² Fourest, Caroline. *Brother Tariq: The Doublespeak of Tariq Ramadan*. Encounter Books. London. 2008

³ Ramadan, Tariq. [In the absence of the Caliph: Muslims in Pluralistic Societies](#). Video of speech on Halaltube. (accessed February 25, 2013).

⁴ [Mainstream Islamist convention features hate speech and Hizballah defense](#). Investigative Project on Terrorism. July 8, 2009

*Indonesians, Pakistanis and six-in-ten Turks also view Jews unfavorably.*⁵ As many of these nations now find themselves sliding from secular fascism to Islamist fascism or theo-political fascism, one has to plainly see how the anti-Semitism long fueled for generations by Arab dictators like Hosni Mubarak, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, Saddam Hussein, Bashar Assad or King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz was a harbinger of the type of violent and hate filled societies they were sowing.

These secular fascists effectively used national media to propagate anti-Semitism in an “us versus them” mentality. They also effectively demonized Zionism in order to lift up pan-Arabism as a tool to keep the masses from questioning their authority. Their media propaganda machines made this happen. Under Mubarak, Egypt annually played the virulently anti-Semitic and czarist Russian forgery, *Protocols of the Elder of Zion*. State Media regularly denied the Holocaust while at the same time irrationally labeling Zionism as a new Nazism. Conversely, in April 2001, the government sponsored newspaper *Al-Akhbar* published a paragraph extolling praise on Hitler for the Holocaust and complaining that it did not go far enough.

*"Thanks to Hitler, of blessed memory, who on behalf of the Palestinians, revenged in advance, against the most vile criminals on the face of the earth. Although we do have a complaint against him for his revenge on them was not enough."*⁶

That propaganda and threat continues today in state run media throughout the Middle East including the Al Jazeera media group which has recently purchased the potential access to over 40 million American homes through the its acquisition of *Current TV* for \$500 million. Recent reports are that many journalists have been leaving Al Jazeera due to a deep seated, pro-Islamist bias from the Qatari ownership.

The hate created by the secular fascists has also tellingly fueled a mass exodus of the Jewish people that began in 1948 at Israel’s founding when there were over 800,000 Jews living in Arab lands. Today, it is believed that there are less than 20,000 remaining. That exodus has carried over to the Christian community where it is believed over two million Christians have fled the Middle Eastern Arab community in the last 20 years.⁷ This vacuum of religious diversity only feeds the Islamists supremacist mentality.

Defeat anti-Semitism and we can break the nexus between the secularists of all faiths and the Islamists which will then weaken the Islamists considerably while more importantly advancing the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and those who support it.

It is no secret that the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) which consists of the 56 Muslim majority nations has instead signed the Cairo Declaration of Human Rights of 1991 which enshrines legal provisions against blasphemy and apostasy among other Islamist ideas incompatible with the UDHR. In fact, in the December 2010 Pew Global Attitudes Project Report, 84 percent of Egyptians polled felt that the death penalty was appropriate for apostates who leave Islam.⁸ Again, in a society where half that number support Islamist movements, this points to how endemic the ideas are which sow hate against those of other faiths like Judaism. Anti-Semitism is the obvious “gateway drug” or bridge that we must expose between the various elements of societies that move away from democracy and toward more authoritarian societies and that are doomed to oppress all minorities from within and outside various faiths.

⁵ Support for Terror Wanes Among Muslim Publics: ISLAMIC EXTREMISM: COMMON CONCERN FOR MUSLIM AND WESTERN PUBLICS. *17-Nation Pew Global Attitudes Survey*. Pew Global Attitudes Project Report. July 14, 2005. Page 4.

⁶ Ragab , Ahmad. "Half a Word", *Al-Akhbar*. April 18, 2001.

⁷ Adelman, Jon and Kuperman, Agota. [The Christian Exodus from the Middle East](#). The Jewish Virtual Library. 2013.

⁸ Most Embrace a Role for Islam in Politics Muslim Publics Divided on Hamas and Hezbollah. Pew Global Attitudes Project Report. [December 2, 2010](#). Page 15.

Running side-by-side with anti-Semitism are multiple conspiracy theories along with hate of the West. After the global furor over an anti-Islam film posted by an American citizen, the grand sheik of Al-Azhar, Ahmed al-Tayyeb, condemned the West last September 2012, summarily telling Egyptians in reference to the film that “the West throughout history has not treated Islam with respect, but showed hostility [against it], and chosen the path of conflict, rather than understanding.”⁹ The Islamist narrative is that the defense of liberty is a license to denigrate Muslims and Islam. Along with this narrative comes the anti-Semitic narrative of conspiracies into which the influence of the United States is interwoven and maligned.

Moral relativism and “the bigotry of low expectations”

Our motherlands face a number of hurdles before they even begin to enter modernity. But to patronize their societies with a different set of human standards than those embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a moral relativism that insults every Muslim and citizen otherwise in those nations. It also expects less of Muslims living in the West who remain silent against the obvious intimations of anti-Semitism that beset so much of the Arabic and Muslim dominated media. Tough love is the highest form of respect. Demanding the minimum standard of nonviolence is just not enough. Moral relativism is exactly what the newly elected theocrats of the Muslim Brotherhood and their mentors at Al-Azhar want in order to widen rather than close the divide between the ideas of liberty and Islamism.

We still have no strategy to engage real allies of liberty within many of these emerging societies: the silent majority of liberals on the ground in the Middle East. We must signal clearly to them that when it comes to democracy, there is no compromise on the defense of freedom of speech and that defense is inextricably wedded to the first freedom — freedom of religion. When the liberals and reformers of Egypt and Tunisia see us silent against the Muslim Brotherhood’s anti-Semitism, is it any wonder that opinion polls of the U.S. remain so low regardless of who’s in the White House?

As the old guards rush to fill the power vacuum, the voices of the Arab spring standing up to the tyrants need to know the free world is on their side. The defense of free speech and religious liberty is not a war against faith, but a war against the oligarchs, the despots and the theocrats who would usurp their freedom. Any assumption otherwise is a bigotry our nation fought against, not for. There is one ideological litmus test shared by the secular autocrats and the Islamists, and it is anti-Semitism.

Origins of Islamist anti-Semitism

The intellectual origins or underpinnings of Islamist anti-Semitism is certainly multi-factorial and will not be solved in this testimony. However while our Islamic tradition certainly has as Martin Kramer has described “*some sources on which Islamic anti-Semitism now feeds*” it is not the only source. In fact, if Islamist anti-Semitism is wholly confronted by modern anti-Islamist Islamic reformers, I believe it can be marginalized and ultimately defeated ending a force which can ultimately have sway upon a quarter of the world’s population.¹⁰ The current reality, however, is sadly, that the imams, scholars, or activists with the courage to publicly take on the anti-Semitism of Islamist leaders are too few. And when they arise have neither the platforms, attention, nor the backing which petro-funded Islamist linked movements do around the world.

Often the militant element of the Islamists will attack them joined by a collective silence from most fellow Islamists putting all other Muslim liberals on notice that a similar fate may await them. In fact it is no secret that last January on an Arabic Al Qaeda jihadi forum, our pro-American, pro-Muslim, pro-liberty anti-

⁹ [Grand Mufti and Al-Azhar Grand Sheikh respond to anti-Islam film, cartoon](#). The Egypt Independent. September 19, 2012.

¹⁰ The Saliency of Islamic Antisemitism: It’s not just about Israel, but neither is it the nature of Islam. Institute of Jewish Affairs Reports. No 2. October 1995.

Islamist work was attacked.¹¹ The post by the Al-Fida forum against me cited Qur'anic references that “*Allah take revenge on the enemies of Islam*” and then linked that to an admonition that the Syrian opposition “*not allow brother devils to remain amongst them even if they have excellent personal contacts and a deep knowledge of the intr[ic]acies of American politics—and all the more so if this devil is known for his Zionism.*” I can tell you from personal experience in a life dedicated to reform against Islamism that common among Islamist thought of all stripes is the utilization of hatred of Jews to marginalize their antagonists from within and thus avoid substantive debate about their own theological authenticity within Islam.

Some Muslim scholars and activists deserving greater attention who have had the courage to expose anti-Semitism within our faith community include a number of quite faithful and devout Muslim leaders. Former President of Indonesia, A.H.E. Kyai Haji Abdurrahman Wahid along with the U.S. based organization LibforAll hosted a conference in Bali, Indonesia “denouncing Holocaust Denial” in cooperation with the Simon Wiesenthal Center for Tolerance in 2007.¹² Wahid also edited the important, *The Illusion of the Islamic State: How an Alliance of Moderates Launched a Successful Jihad Against Radicalization and Terrorism in the World’s largest Muslim-Majority Country.*¹³ Canadian Tarek Fatah, founder of the Muslim Canadian Congress recently authored a must read on this issue: *The Jew is not My Enemy: Unveiling the Myths that Fuel Muslim anti-Semitism.*¹⁴ Abdullahi Na’im of Emory University gives a robust defense of how Muslims should prefer a secular state from the Islamist one in *Islam and the Secular State.*¹⁵ Many of us have since recently formed a broad and diverse coalition of non-Islamist Muslim reformers in North America called the American Islamic Leadership Coalition (AILC), which is beginning to provide one platform for diverse Muslims speaking out against Islamist anti-Semitism.¹⁶

The exploitation of Israel among Islamists is also virtually a litmus test for anti-Semitism. Kramer continues,

*“Islamists see Israel as a symptom of a larger conspiracy against them either western or Jewish or a sinister combination of the two. Many Islamists today do not look at Israel or its policies as their irritant. They look beyond, either to America, symbol today of the power of the West or to the Jews, dispersed throughout the West where they exercise a malignant influence. These are deemed to be the real forces driving history”*¹⁷

Kramer highlights in 1994 that Rashid al-Ghannushi, who now happens to be the Tunisian Islamist leader of the ruling Al-Nahda party stated then that, “*a Jewish-American plan encompassing the entire-region, which would cleanse it of all resistance and open it to Jewish hegemony from Marrakesh to Kazakhstan.*” Apparent is the use of conspiracy theories by Islamist demagogues to portray a false narrative and fiction against Israel and thus by association all Jews. These conspiracy theories then spread like wildfire and are exploited by fellow global Islamist movements of all stripes in order to broaden the conspiracy against all Muslims and provide more excuses for the failures of Muslim majority nations.

When the OIC met in Malaysia, Prime Minister Mahatir told the crowd, “*The Europeans killed 6 million Jews out of 12 million, but today the Jews rule the world by proxy. They get others to fight and die for them.*”¹⁸ Reports were that the crowd responded with a “resounding ovation”. This fits in line with the opinion polls from Pew for those nations.

¹¹ [On Jihadi Forum: Incitement against American Islamic Forum for Democracy Director](#). The Jihad and Terrorism Threat Monitor. January 25, 2012

¹² Willundari, Fitri. [Indonesia Conference Denounces Holocaust Denial](#). Reuters. June 17, 2007.

¹³ Wahid, A.H.E. Kyai Haji Abdurrahman . *The Illusion of the Islamic State: How an Alliance of Moderates launched a Successful Jihad against Radicalization and Terrorism in the World’s Largest Muslim-Majority Country*. LibforAll Foundation. 2011.

¹⁴ Fatah, Tarek. *The Jew is not My Enemy: Unveiling the Myths that fuel Muslim anti-Semitism*. McClelland & Stewart, Ltd. 2010.

¹⁵ Na’im, Abdullahi, *Islam and the Secular State*.

¹⁶ <http://www.americanislamicleadership.org> [Website of the American Islamic Leadership Coalition]

¹⁷ The Saliency of Islamic Antisemitism: It’s not just about Israel, but neither is it the nature of Islam. Institute of Jewish Affairs Reports. No. 2. October 1995.

¹⁸ Schrag, Carl. *Malaysia’s Casual Anti-Semitism*. Slate.com. October 20, 2003.

Kramer concludes,

“If these themes seem distressingly familiar it is quite likely because they are borrowings from the canon of Western religious and racial anti-Semitism. The anti-Semitism we see today in the Islamic world owes a crucial debt to the anti-Semitism of the West.”

We forget that many Islamist leaders received their education in the West only to return and piggy-back it upon their own theo-political anti-Semitism of Islamism. The philosophical father of the Muslim Brotherhood, Sayyid Qutb spent two years (1948-50) in the United States before going back to lead the founding of the Islamist movement in Egypt with his book *Milestones*, a short treatise which described the West as the land of *Jahilliyah* (ignorance) and evil. This treatise established the Milestones for establishment of the Islamic state in order to prevent descent of society into the evil of “secularism” he saw in the West. Certainly anti-Semitism found in Europe reinforced many of the Islamist constructs he developed for political Islam. Islamism depends upon conspiracy in order to explain the weakness of the Muslim condition and the need for Muslim collectivism and Islamic statehood and ultimately neo-caliphism.

The Power of the Pulpit: Qaradawi and the Islamist Imams

Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi is arguably the most influential cleric in the world of Sunni Islam. He had escaped Gemal Abdel Nasser’s Egypt to Qatar in 1961 from where he has since authored over 120 books, influenced a number of highly trafficked Islamist websites, and most notably hosts a weekly program on *Al Jazeera Arabic* titled “Shariah and Life” viewed by an estimated 60 million people globally. His sermons and public statements are a treasure trove of conspiracy theories and anti-Semitic diatribes. On his program on January 28, 2009, he stated *“the last punishment was carried out by Hitler...this was divine punishment for them. Allah willing, the next time will be at the hands of the believers.”*¹⁹ After that aired, *Al Jazeera* actually refused to apologize to John Whittingdale, chairman of the House of Commons Media Select Committee in Britain claiming free speech. Imam Qaradawi has similarly justified suicide bombing against Israelis including women and children and also against Americans.

The importance of Qaradawi with regards to Islamist anti-Semitism cannot be overstated. Despite being prohibited from travel to France, the United Kingdom and the United States, Qaradawi who lives in Qatar has long been President of the European Council for Fatwa and Research (ECFR). ECFR is notoriously known for being a Muslim Brotherhood legal arm in the West, giving hundreds of anti-Western separatist fatwas (legal opinions) targeted at western Muslims. At one meeting, a *Wall Street Journal* reporter noted that *“the Protocols of the Elders of Zion a notorious anti-Semitic forgery from Czarist Russia was used to evidence the threat of a Jewish plot against European Muslims.”*²⁰ Qaradawi’s ubiquitous global tentacles and ideology underscores the nexus here between so many leading Islamist thinkers and European anti-Semitism. While in Qatar from his perch as the spiritual guide of global Islamism, he ran the ECFR.

Qaradawi recently returned to Egypt after more than a 30 year absence to lead a crowd of over two hundred thousand. Barry Rubin declared in the *Jerusalem Post* that “Egypt gets its Khomeini”.²¹ Yet, surprisingly the case against Qaradawi’s hate-filled anti-Semitic speech is not so clear for many. Shadi Hamid of the Brookings Institute who attended Qaradawi’s return to Tahrir Square stated at the time,

“Qaradawi is very much in the mainstream of Egyptian society, he’s in the religious mainstream, he’s not offering something that’s particularly distinctive or radical in the context of Egypt...He’s an

¹⁹ [“British Lawmakers slam Al Jazeera.”](#) Jewish Telegraphic Agency. February 8, 2009. (accessed February 24, 2013)

²⁰ Johnson, Ian. [Islamic Justice Finds a Foothold In Heart of Europe Religious Opinions From Afar Make Integration Tougher For Big Muslim Population.](#) Wall Street Journal. August 4, 2005 (accessed February 24, 2013).

²¹ Rubin, Barry. [Egypt gets its Khomeini.](#) Jerusalem Post. February 20, 2011 (accessed February 24, 2013).

Islamist and he's part of the Brotherhood school of thought, but his appeal goes beyond the Islamist spectrum, and in that sense he's not just an Islamist figure, he's an Egyptian figure with a national profile.”²²

The threat that Qaradawi and his Islamist sympathizers pose to humanity is manifold. Making the case against the threat of his Islamism is clearest when one confronts his flagrant anti-Semitism and demonization of Jews. While the arguments against his political Islamist ideas may be nuanced in the setting of a so called “Islamic democracy”, he advocates those when it suits him as an Islamist and populist. But to ignore his anti-Semitism as so many around the world do for so-called reformers who are neo-Islamists is to do so at the peril of world Jewry and the security of all minorities and our liberal democracies. One of the most revealing tests is to note the silence of many western Muslim leaders confronted with the anti-Semitism of the likes of Qaradawi or Prime Minister Mahatir.

Looking purely through a lens filtered for anti-Semitism, one cannot help but connect the dots from Qaradawi's anti-Semitism to an inevitable neo-theocratic fascism that is now ascending in the Middle East under the rise of Islamism. Eventually, Egyptians will have to come to terms with how cleric's with toxic positions on Jews and Americans swim in the same pool with those who have similarly hateful positions against the Shia community (described as deviants), the Ahmediyya (described as apostates), or the Baha'i (described as infidels) and so many other vulnerable minorities who will undoubtedly suffer, and are suffering, at the hands of Islamists when they are in power.

The Simon Wiesenthal Center recently listed the Muslim Brotherhood and the Iranian regime as the worst offenders of anti-Semitic rhetoric across the planet.²³ We ignore the telltale signs of hate against Jews and what that portends for other minorities at the peril of all genuine democracies. One need look no further than Iran to see that an Islamist revolution while using the democratic engine of electoral politics will never herald real democracy until minorities have equal rights and anti-Semitism is defeated at its core from within the Islamic consciousness and against the ideology of political Islam.

The impact of Wahhabism and its educational and religious materials

According to former CIA director R. James Woolsey, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has spent nearly \$90 billion spreading their ideology around the globe since the 1970s. He describes the Saudi-sponsoring of the dissemination of the extremist Wahhabi strain of Islam as “the soil in which Al Qaeda and its sister terror organizations are flourishing.”²⁴ According to scholars such as Gilles Kepel, Wahhabism gained considerable influence in the Islamic world following a tripling in the price of oil in the mid-1970s. The Saudi government began to spend tens of billions of dollars throughout the Islamic world to promote Wahhabism, which was sometimes referred to as “petro-Islam”. This version of Islam was a particular virulent and militant version of supremacist Islamism or Wahhabism.

For example, Lashkar e-Taiba (LeT), which means Army of God, a militant Pakistani Islamist group is responsible for a number of terror attacks in Southeast Asia. Their leadership is tightly affiliated with the organizations which have a strictly Wahhabi orientation and at times have been close to Saudi Arabia but became distant after 9-11 due to their closeness to Osama bin Laden and their criticism that the Kingdom was “*not an ideal Islamic society with Western troops stationed therein.*” They describe Hindus and Jews as the main “*enemies of Islam, and Israel and India as enemies of Pakistan.*” LeT's Amir, Professor Saeed opposes Western democracy and stated:

²² Lynch, Sarah. [Egypt revolution unfinished, Qaradawi tells Tahrir masses](#). Christian Science Monitor. February 18, 2011.

²³ Muslim Brotherhood tops anti-semitic rhetoric list. Jewish Telegraphic Agency. The Forward. December 20, 2012.

²⁴ [Fueling Terror](#). Institute for the Analysis of Global Security. 2004.

“Democracy is among the menaces we inherited from an alien government. It is part of the system we are fighting against. Many of our brothers feel that they can establish an Islamic society by working within the system. They are mistaken. It is not possible to work within a democracy and establish an Islamic system. You just dirty your hands by dealing with it. If God gives us a chance, we will try to bring in the pure concept of an Islamic Caliphate.”²⁵

The hate-filled Wahhabi ideology too often leads also to violence and terror against target communities like the Jewish community targeted by their anti-Semitism. For example, the series of deadly 2008 Mumbai attacks killing 164 and wounding 308 over the Thanksgiving weekend included the Nariman Jewish Community Center known as the Mumbai Chabad House, were determined to be committed by members of Lashkar E-Toiba.²⁶ Other examples of Islamist inspired anti-Semitism leading to terror against Jews are sadly too numerous to list here.

The translations and interpretation of Qur’an and Hadith (sayings of the Prophet Mohammed), for example distributed officially by the Saudi government are rife with anti-Semitic narratives which often are not even part of the original Arabic text. This is also often revealed in their educational materials on the Islamic religion. For example even within the most recited opening prayer of the Qur’an repeated over 17 times a day by most Muslims around the world, the Saudi government sanctioned and distributed only one printed English version around the world translated with an insertion that intentionally sowed anti-Semitism. Darussalam Publishers in Riyadh printed a part of that scripture as, *“Not the way of those who have earned your anger (such as the Jews), nor those who went astray (such as the Christians).”²⁷* These parenthetical additions are editorial additions, which with only eight words distributed among millions upon millions of Muslims, have an immeasurable impact in fostering anti-Semitism and anti-Christian sentiments across the globe.

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) on which I serve, has long been at the forefront of following the hatred disseminated in educational textbooks that originate in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. A ninth grade textbook, for example, published by the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia states that, “the Jews and Christians are enemies of the believers and they cannot approve of Muslims.” An eighth grade text states, “the apes are the people of the Sabbath, the Jews; and the swine are infidels of the communion of Jesus and Christians.”²⁸ As Nina Shea, a former USCIRF commissioner notes,

The kingdom is not just any country with problematic textbooks. As the controlling authority of the two holiest shrines of Islam, Saudi Arabia is able to disseminate its religious materials among the millions making the hajj to Mecca each year. Such teachings can, in this context, make a great impression. In addition, Saudi textbooks are also posted on the Saudi Education Ministry’s website and are shipped and distributed by a vast Sunni infrastructure established with Saudi oil wealth to Muslim communities throughout the world. In his book The Looming Tower, Lawrence Wright asserts that while Saudis constitute only 1 percent of the world’s Muslims, they pay “90 per cent of the expenses of the entire faith, overriding other traditions of Islam.”²⁹

Shea adds that despite four years of pressure from the U.S. while the Saudis promulgated an advertising campaign on American soil that they had cleaned up their textbooks; the reality was that they had not.

²⁵ Lashkar E-Toiba. Spreading the Jihad. The Hindu Business Line. January 5, 2001

²⁶ New York Times, 17 December 2010 "Top US Spy Leaves Pakistan After His Name Is Revealed,"

²⁷ Mohammed, Khaleel. Produce your proof: Muslim exegesis, the Hadith, and the Jews. *Judaism*. Winter/Spring 2004. 53:1/2. Pg.3-11.

²⁸ Saudi Textbooks incite Hate say leaders of American Publishing. The Daily Beast. October 17, 2012.

²⁹ Shea, Nina and Alldredge, Bonnie. [Saudi Textbooks: Still Teaching Hatred](#). National Review Online. June 29, 2010.

American publishing leaders have also, to their credit, recently joined together to shed light on this important issue stating that *“hate speech is the precursor to genocide, first you get to hate, and then you kill.”*³⁰

Ultimately, the Saudi’s may actually remove various obviously anti-Semitic and anti-Western commentaries in their texts but the supremacism of Islamism is an ideology that can only be cleansed of anti-Semitism through deep reform for liberty and pluralism rather than through the use of “white-out” and deletion.

Solutions

As we better understand the link between anti-Semitism and Islamist movements and its supporters, the next step is to implement long lasting solutions. These solutions will not only provide Europe and the West a bulwark against the infiltration of anti-Semitic ideas from Islamist movements in the Middle East, North Africa and Southeast Asia but it will also serve to better secure us against the threat of militant Islamism. For where anti-Semitism thrives so too does the eventual threat against other faith minorities and the very foundations of democracy.

- We must engage in the battle of ideas by reviving our public diplomacy in support of the principles that founded this country.
- We need to systematically expose (name and shame) with the anti-septic of the light of day anti-Semitic behaviors and ideas promulgated across the Middle East and North Africa by Islamist movements.
- That exposure needs to address anti-Semitic speech and ideas not as isolated incidents that should be simply condemned, but rather to insist upon an open analysis of the root causes and reforms necessary to prevent it from recurring. This requires an abandonment of the denial that anti-Semitism is so endemic in Muslim majority nations which Pew has demonstrated in its Global Attitudes Project.
- We must work with and directly engage civil society organizations which are courageous enough to take on reform work against the anti-Semitism of Islamist groups, and we must actively and unapologetically disengage from Islamist groups who advocate anti-Semitic ideologies.
- We need to provide platforms to Muslim leaders in MENA and the West willing to take on and counter Islamist demagogues like Qaradawi and so many others who spew anti-Semitic vitriol.
- We need to continue the public pressure upon governments like Saudi Arabia and Pakistan which have facilitated and funded the distribution of textbooks about Muslims, Jews, Christians, and all people of faith which indoctrinates hate at a young age due to the virulent strain of Islam being promulgated.
- We can no longer tolerate a climate of political correctness which gives Muslims a pass on accountability for ideas, religious or political, which are obviously anti-Semitic. To do so, is to allow our government to promote a subtle bigotry of low expectations for both Western Muslims and emerging citizens of nations in the Arab Awakening. The grass roots in populations of nations across the Middle East and North Africa must not see us as advocating for liberty only at home in the U.S. while working with their oppressors and turning a blind eye to anti-Semitism from our “allies” in MENA.
- We must confront Islamist groups and leaders in Europe with what Prime Minister David Cameron referred to as “muscular liberalism”. As hyper-secularists in Europe attack the faithful of all faiths including Judaism and Christianity, Islamists are thriving amidst the climate of growing anti-Semitism and anti-religious fervor.
- We must address anti-Semitism at all its levels from the demonization of Jews all the way to the subtle references to Jews in the collective and amongst western conspiracy theories.

³⁰ Saudi Textbooks incite Hate say leaders of American Publishing. The Daily Beast. October 17, 2012.