

**Islamophobia and Its Impact
in the United States**

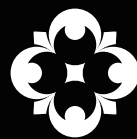
January 2009-December 2010

Same

**Hate,
New Target**



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1. Become a CAIR member or renew your membership. Membership is just \$30 per year and is open to individuals and organizations.
2. Help us serve you. Monthly automatic donations, even \$5 a month, help the most. Call 202-646-6045 for an authorization form or visit: www.cair.com/support
3. Take action. Use these tools and your own common sense to challenge Islamophobia. Your activism strengthens our community. Respond to CAIR's action alerts, volunteer at your local CAIR office or help establish a local chapter of CAIR.

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This report is co-sponsored by the University of California, Berkeley's Center for Race and Gender and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). The Center for Race and Gender is responsible for the special sections on Park 51 and the 2010 election. CAIR is responsible for all other material in the report. This report was finalized on Dec. 1, 2010. All information is accurate to the best of our knowledge through that date.

CAIR is America's largest Muslim civil liberties and advocacy organization. Its mission is to enhance the understanding of Islam, encourage dialogue, protect civil liberties, empower American Muslims, and build coalitions that promote justice and mutual understanding.

The Center for Race and Gender (CRG) is an interdisciplinary research center at the University of California Berkeley that fosters explorations of race and gender, and their intersections. CRG cultivates critical and engaged research and exchange among faculty and students throughout the university, between the university and nearby communities of color, and among scholars in the Bay Area, in the US, and around the globe.

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To obtain copies of this report or to offer comments or feedback, please write to info@cair.com and include the subject "Islamophobia Report 2009-2010."

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A Message from Dr. Evelyn Nakano Glenn



In 2008, the UC Berkeley Center for Race and Gender (CRG) organized the groundbreaking international conference, "Deconstructing Islamophobia: Immigration, Globalization, & Constructing the Other." Scholars, researchers, policy makers, and organizers gathered to examine the pervasive and persistent problem of Islamophobia in the United States and Western Europe. Recognizing that, while scholars have sustained rigorous study of Islamophobia in Europe, similar long-term research on Islamophobia, its causes, and its consequences in the U.S. has only recently begun.

Set in motion by the leadership of Dr. Hatem Bazian, UC Berkeley, our community partners at the Council on American-Islamic Relations, Asian Law Caucus, Arab Resource and Organizing Center, and many active student groups, CRG established the Islamophobia Research and Documentation Project (IRDP). IRDP has since worked with our partners to organize several widely attended and timely forums, including the December 2009 symposium, "Why? Questioning America's Response to Fort Hood: Islamophobia, Media, & Civil Rights" and the October 2010 symposium, "'Ground Zero Mosque' or Zero Mosques in America? Islamophobia & Critical Race Theory." Scholars and activists at these forums have provided sharp and historicized analyses revealing how Islamophobia deeply shapes media narratives, public discourse, and policy. IRDP has also launched an innovative course on Islamophobia that uses global media networks to broadcast the course to concerned people around the world. This allows us to extend our reach beyond the classroom and to develop intentional pedagogical relationships with local and international community organizations.

IRDP has created a platform for more expansive and critical examinations of Islamophobia in the U.S. CRG is excited to announce the next step in this important work: the release of the research report, "Islamophobia and its Manifestations in the United States, January 2009 – December 2010." This investigative report is a key step in exposing and examining the powerful force of Islamophobia in the U.S., including IRDP's rigorous review of the role of Islamophobia in the public debate about an Islamic cultural center in New York City and in the 2010 midterm elections. It is our hope that this report will not only illuminate the ways that Islamophobia shapes media representations and encourages political pandering, but also highlight recommendations for transforming political and media culture.

For more information about CRG's Islamophobia Research and Documentation Project, please visit: <http://crg.berkeley.edu/content/islamophobia>



Prof. Evelyn Nakano Glenn
Director, Center for Race & Gender

A Message from CAIR's National Executive Director



Prejudice is a specter that has haunted humanity since the beginning of civilization. I believe followers of all faiths will give thanks to God in their own way on that future day when we all truly judge individuals based on personal merit, without concern for race, ethnicity, religion or any of the other factors commonly used to cause division among us.

Islamophobia—close-minded prejudice against or hatred of Islam and Muslims—is only one manifestation of this specter. However, its prevalence in our nation can be seen daily in the media and in polls that are trending toward ever more troubling levels of antipathy toward Islam.

This report seeks to identify where we are in terms of Islamophobia in the United States today. It also offers a vision of a time when being Muslim carries a positive connotation and Islam has an equal place among many faiths in America's pluralistic society. Most importantly, the report offers ways to achieve that vision.

I would like to extend my thanks to the following people who contributed to the production of this report: Khadija Athman and Dr. Hatem Bazian. Special thanks to Imam Zaid Shakir for his comments on the draft report. I also greatly appreciate the time and insights of the people who were interviewed for the report.

The research assistance of Jamal Aladdin, Kristen Hayford, and Ann Shinn was vital to this report. Corey Saylor is the report's primary author.

I pray that in the future, this report will be seen as one element in the movement to push back against individuals and institutions who promote hatred and fear of Islam as an American value.

In peace,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nihad Awad". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nihad Awad

Executive Summary

American Muslim reflections on Islamophobia in the United States occur in full recognition that virtually every minority in our nation has faced and in most cases continues to face discrimination.

Islamophobia is close-minded prejudice against or hatred of Islam and Muslims. An Islamophobe is an individual who holds a closed-minded view of Islam and promotes prejudice against or hatred of Muslims. It is not appropriate to label all, or even the majority of those, who question Islam and Muslims as Islamophobes.

Some individuals, institutions and groups deserve recognition for their outstanding contributions to pushing back against Is-

lamophobic trends during the period covered by this report: New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg; Loonwatch.com; Congressional Tri-Caucus; Rep. Keith Ellison (D-MN); Jon Stewart, Aasif Mandvi and The Daily Show; Keith Olbermann and Countdown with Keith Olbermann; Stephen Colbert and The Colbert Report; Media Matters for America; interfaith leaders; and Rachel Maddow and The Rachel Maddow Show.

Some individuals, institutions and groups were at the center of pushing Islamophobia in America during the period covered by this report: Pamela Geller and Stop the Islamization of America (SIOA); Robert Spencer and Jihad Watch; Brigitte Gabriel and Act! for America; Frank Gaff-

ney and the Center for Security Policy (CSP); Steven Emerson and the Investigative Project on Terrorism (IPT); Newt Gingrich; the four members of Congress who called for an investigation of Muslim Capitol Hill interns; Osama bin Laden, Al-Qaeda and other violent extremists; and Daniel Pipes.

According to those interviewed for this report, on a scale from 1 (best situation for Muslims) to 10 (worst possible situation for Muslims) Islamophobia in America stands at a 6.4. Interviews were conducted in September and October of 2010.

America is not an Islamophobic nation, but it has Islamophobic elements:

- The public's favorable rating of Islam sank from 40 percent in November 2001 to 30 percent in August 2010 according to the Pew Research Center.
- In late November 2010, the Public Research Institute found that 45 percent of Americans agree that Islam is at odds with American values.
- A Time magazine poll released in August 2010 found, "Twenty-eight percent of voters do not believe Muslims should be eligible to sit on the U.S. Supreme Court. Nearly one-third of the country thinks adherents of Islam should be barred from running for President...."

Interviewees for this report often cited their observation that there is a general societal acceptance





of derogatory commentary about Islam.

CAIR's vision regarding Islamophobia in America looks toward the time when being Muslim carries a positive connotation and Islam has an equal place among many faiths in America's pluralistic society.

Among the indicators that this vision is a reality would be the following points:

- Islam has a 75 percent or higher favorability rating among the general public.
- A person's Muslim faith is considered an asset in private employment and public service.
- Politicians welcome and seek public support from Americans of the Islamic faith.
- Association with anti-Muslim movements or rhetoric discredits those who put themselves for-

ward seeking to earn the privilege of public service.

Recommendations to American Muslim Individuals

1. Be an example of the Islamic traditions of patience and reason
2. Be an open neighbor
3. Be active in community life
4. Be active in political life
5. Document and report acts of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim discrimination
6. Confront Islamophobia in the news and entertainment media
7. Write a letter to the editor
8. Address Islamophobia on the Internet
9. Confront Islamophobia from public figures
10. Support local, regional and national Muslim organizations

Recommendations to American Muslim Institutions

1. Provide positive alternatives to Islamophobic events
2. Invest in community development
3. Re-introduce Islam
4. Begin to host Muslim achievers banquets
5. Expose the Islamophobes
6. Promote volunteerism
7. Hold open houses
8. Sponsor a CAIR "Know Your Rights and Responsibilities" workshop in your area
9. Empower your community through civic engagement
10. Continue and strengthen outreach to law enforcement
11. Ensure the safety and security of your institution



Background and Acknowledgements



CAIR's Status of Muslim Civil Rights in the United States Reports 1995-2009

This publication is an evolution of CAIR's annual Status of Muslim Civil Rights in the United States report. The former report was a summation of incidents and experiences of anti-Muslim violence, discrimination and harassment reported to CAIR during a particular year.

CAIR published the civil rights report annually, beginning in the wake of the 1995 terrorist bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, after which unsubstantiated linkage of "Middle Easterners" to the terror act prompted stereotyping, harassment and actual attacks on Muslims and Arab-Americans across the country.

CAIR and Islamophobia

An action alert issued by CAIR in August 1996 appears to be the organization's first use of the term "Islamophobic." In 2005, CAIR held a two-day conference on the twin problems of Islamophobia and anti-Americanism. CAIR's research director later documented that event's proceedings in *Islamophobia and Anti-Americanism: Causes and*

Remedies, a book published in 2007.

The Preparation of the New Islamophobia Report

CAIR staff and research assistants reviewed the organization's near daily news briefs and media releases for the period covered by this report. Additionally, we reviewed a number of external reports, news articles and publications.

CAIR staff and research assistants also interviewed a number of experts, activists and religious leaders in an effort to identify their sense of where the United States is in relation to Islamophobia, what vision we should be working toward and how to achieve that vision.

The anti-Muslim discrimination cases come primarily from CAIR's civil rights database.

The Future of the Islamophobia Report

This report establishes a baseline for analyzing Islamophobia in the United States.

In 2010, CAIR initiated a review and update of its civil rights database. This included adding Islamophobia classifications and reviewing the current civil rights case classification definitions.

CAIR intends to introduce the numbers of complaints received by the organization, reorganized under these new definitions, into future versions of this report.

In these future reports, CAIR intends to review past recommendations, observe their impact and expand or re-formulate them, continually offering readers a set of pragmatic, effective tools for challenging Islamophobia.

Acknowledgements

CAIR is extremely grateful to the following people who contributed their time and expertise in granting interviews for this report:

- Imam Benjamin Abdul-Haqq, affiliated with Masjid Muhammad in Washington, D.C.
- Imam Johari Abdul-Malik, director of outreach for the Dar Al Hijrah Islamic Center in Northern Virginia
- Imam Talib Abdur Rashid, religious and spiritual leader of The Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood in Harlem, New York City; deputy amir, Muslim Alliance in North America (MANA)
- Aisha Al-Adawiya, founder, Women in Islam, Inc.
- Asad Ba-Yunus, lawyer; member-at-large, board of directors, Islamic Society of North America (ISNA)
- Dr. Saud Anwar, pulmonologist and president of the Pakistani American Public Affairs Committee, co-chair of the American Muslim Peace Initiative
- Ihsan Bagby, associate professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Kentucky
- Rabbi Haim Beliak, co-found-

er of Jews on First, member of the board of the Progressive Jewish Alliance

- Shahid Buttar, executive director, Bill of Rights Defense Committee (BORDC)
- Aziz Huq, associate law professor, University of Chicago
- Imam Sayed Moustafa al-Qazwini, founder and director of the Islamic Cultural Center of San Diego, California; co-founder of the Council of Shia Muslim Scholars of North America

- Muqtedar Khan, associate professor of political science at the University of Delaware

- Amardeep Singh, executive director, Sikh Coalition

- Haris Tarin, DC office director, Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC)

Interviewees also included a law enforcement professional, a professor of contemporary Islamic studies, a Muslim who has held elected office, a private sector

civil litigator, an administrator in the Maryland governor's office, a D.C.-based activist, a Christian interfaith leader, a conservative political activist and a Department of Defense employee.

The interviewees' opinions are their own. They do not necessarily reflect CAIR's positions. CAIR is responsible for all conclusions presented in this report.

[^]CAIR gave interviewees the option of remaining anonymous.





Evolving Toward Ever-Greater Cultural Pluralism

American Muslim reflections on Islamophobia in the United States occur in full recognition that virtually every minority in our nation has faced and in most cases continues to face discrimination.

In his Pulitzer Prize-winning book *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*,¹ James McPherson reports on English Protestant Americans' suspicion of German and Irish Catholic immigrants to the U.S. in the nineteenth century:

“More dangerous was the specter of ethnic conflict. Except for a sprinkling of German farmers in Pennsylvania and in the valleys of the Appalachian piedmont, the American white population before 1830 was overwhelmingly British and Protestant in heritage. Cheap, abundant land and the need for labor in a growing economy, coupled with the pressure of population against limited resources in northern Europe impelled first a trickle and then a flood of German and Irish immigrants to the United States in the generation after 1830. Most of these new Americans worshipped in Roman Catholic churches. Their growing presence filled some Protestant Americans with alarm. Numerous nativist organizations sprang up as the first line of resistance in what became a long and painful retreat toward acceptance of cultural pluralism.”

Striving to “civilize” Native Americans, the federal government instituted a practice of taking children away from their parents and placing them in off-reservation boarding schools to learn a culture not their own.² These

schools still existed in the 1960s.

It took until 1920, 144 years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, to pass a constitutional amendment granting women the right to vote. The Lilly Ledbetter Act, signed into law in 2009, reminds us that women in America must still struggle for pay equal to that of men for equal work.

Our nation placed Japanese-Americans in internment camps following the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. The deeply troubling story of the African-American struggle for full equality is well known.

Sadly, it is commonplace for minority groups and their leaders to be painted as a threat and vilified, even by the government. Martin Luther King—a non-violent, shining example of the civil rights movement who now has a federal holiday named after him and who won a Nobel Peace Prize—was branded “the most dangerous and effective Negro leader in the country” in an FBI memo. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover labeled King a “degenerate.”³

While these facts are disconcerting, it is important to recognize that our nation has historically evolved for the better.

The shame of the three-fifths compromise, by which southern and northern states agreed to

count slaves as partial human beings for the purposes of the distribution of taxes and representation in Congress, was removed from the Constitution. We can look to Republican President Abraham Lincoln freeing the slaves as a sign that people of conscience work to push our nation to live up to its ideals. Equally, the Fifteenth Amendment and the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 are inspiring reminders that our nation evolves.

Icons like Lucy Stone and Susan B. Anthony fought for and won universal suffrage for women.

America was founded on a set of ideals such as individual liberty, freedom of speech and worship and equal justice under the law. America was not founded as a place for any single religion, race or ethnic group.

That said, people of conscience must continually remind themselves that the specters of bigotry, discrimination and second-class citizenship are omnipresent.

Muslims have the great fortune to receive guidance, support and wisdom from the many groups who have fought bigotry before us. We also know that, by standing firm on Islamic and constitutional principles, we will contribute to evolving America toward ever greater cultural pluralism.

Defining Islamophobia



Islamophobia is close-minded prejudice against or hatred of Islam and Muslims.^B

Islamophobic acts are directed at Islam or Muslims in general. Anti-Muslim discrimination is directed at a specific individual,

institution or group of individuals.

An Islamophobe is an individual who holds a closed-minded view of Islam and promotes prejudice against or hatred of Muslims.

^B This definition derives from listings in the Oxford Dictionary and Princeton University's Wordnet. Merriam-Webster does not yet have a definition for Islamophobia. CAIR's definition of the term has evolved since we issued our Islamophobia pocket guide in mid-2010.

Questioning Islam or Muslims is not Islamophobia

It is not appropriate to label all, or even the majority of those, who question Islam and Muslims as Islamophobes. Equally, it is not Islamophobic to denounce crimes committed by individual Muslims or those claiming Islam as a motivation for their actions.

"A critical study of Islam or Muslims is not Islamophobic," former CAIR Research Director Mohamed Nimer wrote in 2007. "Likewise, a disapproving analysis of American history and government is not anti-American... One can disagree with Islam or with what some Muslims do without having to be hateful."⁴

"I would be careful to remind my Muslim friends not to characterize anyone who is opposed to the Ground Zero center as a racist or bigot," said a conservative political activist during an interview for this report. "My argument is there [are a few Islamophobes]...but the vast majority of Americans are people who've been misinformed, who don't know the truth and don't know the real facts."

Sources, Promoters, Receivers and Enablers of Islamophobia

Sources of Islamophobia are those individuals and institutions that produce and package materials, ideas or rhetoric about Islam in order to promote a skewed view of the faith and to induce fear, hate or prejudice in those who receive the materials.

Promoters of Islamophobia

are those individuals and institutions who opportunistically use Islamophobic materials to advance their own agenda. This agenda is sometimes anti-Muslim in nature but can have other objectives. This category frequently includes individuals seeking public office. It can include media outlets that provide a legitimizing platform for people whose anti-Muslim fear-mongering would be shunned if it was directed at other minorities. It also includes a number of bloggers who cut and paste materials produced by others.

Receivers of Islamophobia are the end users, those who pick up and adopt Islamophobic views. Some of them are open-minded people who have genuine questions about Islam and Muslims and are seeking answers. Some of them are closed-minded people who use Islamophobic materials to validate views they already hold.

Enablers of Islamophobia are those individuals and institutions who are in a position to push back against the phenomenon and decide not to act. These can include political figures who fear the electoral consequences of being seen as too close to Muslims.

The Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia's Open and Closed Views of Islam

Established in 1996, the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia published its first report in 1997. In 2004, the commission published *Islamophobia: Issues, Challenges and Action*.

In the 2004 publication, the commission wrote the following explanation of open-minded and closed-minded views of Islam: ⁵

“How can you tell the difference between legitimate disagreement on the one hand and phobic dread and hatred on the other? In answer to such questions, the commission suggested that an essential distinction needs to be made between what it called closed views of Islam on the one hand and open views on the other. ‘Phobic’ hostility towards Islam is the recurring characteristic of closed views. Legitimate disagreement and criticism, as also appreciation and respect, are aspects of open views.

“In summary form, the distinctions between closed and open views are to do with:

- “whether Islam is seen as monolithic, static and authoritarian, or as diverse and dynamic with substantial internal debates
- “whether Islam is seen as totally ‘other’, separate from the so-called West, or as both similar and interdependent, sharing a common humanity and a common space
- “whether Islam is seen as inferior, backward and primitive compared with the so-called West, or as different but equal
- “whether Islam is seen as an aggressive enemy to be feared, opposed and defeated, or as a cooperative partner with whom to work on shared problems, locally, nationally and internationally
- “whether Muslims are seen as manipulative, devious and

self-righteous in their religious beliefs, or as sincere and genuine

- “whether Muslim criticisms of the so-called West are rejected out of hand or whether they are considered and debated
- “whether double standards are applied in descriptions and criticisms of Islam and the so-called West, or whether criticisms are evenhanded
- “whether no account is taken of the fact that Muslims have far less access to the media than non-Muslims, and are therefore at a competitive disadvantage on an uneven playing-field, or whether unequal freedom of expression is recognized
- “whether anti-Muslim comments, stereotypes and discourse are seen as natural and ‘common sense’, or as problematic and to be challenged.

“The words ‘open’ and ‘closed’ were derived from the title of a classic work on the psychology of dogmatism, *The Open and Closed Mind* by Milton Rokeach, first published in 1960. Rokeach was interested not primarily in the content of bigoted people’s minds but in how their minds worked. Open-minded people are ready to change their views both of others and of themselves in the light of new facts and evidence, and are fair-minded in the sense that they do not caricature or over-generalize, and do not claim greater certainty than is warranted. Open-mindedness and fair-mindedness are components of what is sometimes termed civility, or moderation, or the middle way.”

The Best

Some individuals, institutions and groups deserve recognition for their outstanding contributions to pushing back against Islamophobic trends during the period covered by this report. This list is neither comprehensive nor offered in any specific order. However, those listed below do deserve particular credit for their contributions to American pluralism.

New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg



Bloomberg made strong, positive statements early on in the 2010 national conversation

over the Park 51 Islamic cultural center in lower Manhattan.

“Let us not forget that Muslims were among those murdered on 9/11,” Bloomberg reminded the nation at an August 2010 press conference with interfaith leaders that featured the Statue of Liberty as a backdrop. “We would betray our values and play into our enemies’ hands if we were to treat Muslims differently than anyone else. In fact, to cave to popular sentiment would be to hand a victory to the terrorists, and we should not stand for that.”

Loonwatch (www.loonwatch.com)

The bloggers at Loonwatch expose the deeply disturbing attitudes of many of the nation’s premiere Islamophobes, providing highly readable, well-reasoned and documented responses to Islamophobic arguments.

Loonwatch is a blog “...run by a motley group of hate-allergic bloggers to monitor and expose the web’s plethora of anti-Muslim loons, wackos, and conspiracy theorists.” The site’s volunteers produce well-sourced rebuttals of many of the anti-Muslim narratives put forth by those interested

in sowing fear of Muslims. Loonwatch also does an outstanding job of calling attention to the frequent anti-Muslim statements made by many of those who attempt to portray themselves as “experts” on Islam.

Congressional Tri-Caucus

After four members of Congress attempted to smear Muslim interns on Capitol Hill, the Congressional Tri-Caucus came out strongly in favor of pluralism and in opposition to fear tactics.

The Congressional Tri-Caucus is an 87-member coalition made up of the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus. In October 2009, the tri-caucus spoke out after four right-wing members of Congress sought to stoke fear by accusing Muslim interns on Capitol Hill of “spying.” Labeling Dave Gaubatz, originator of the accusation, “an anti-Islamic activist,” the tri-caucus wrote:

“The idea that we should investigate Muslim interns as spies is a blow to the very principle of religious freedom that our founding fathers cherished so dearly. If anything, we should be encouraging all Americans to engage in the U.S. political process; to take part in, and to contribute to, the great democratic experiment that is America. We all have experienced the sting of discrimination and we know that there will be challenges ahead. But our message should be firm that the America we believe in welcomes

people of all backgrounds to the U.S. Congress.”

Rep. Keith Ellison (D-MN)



Ellison represents the people of Minnesota’s fifth congressional district. In 2006

Ellison proved to skeptics that a Muslim can get elected to federal office in the United States. His charisma, integrity and nuanced political positions also make him a symbol of what Muslims can contribute to the American political dialogue.

In a special issue of National Journal published in 2009, Democratic Party congressional insiders ranked Ellison fourth on a “Which House member do you most admire?” list. Ellison deftly handled attacks on his decision to use a Quran during his unofficial swearing in ceremony in 2007 by using a copy of the Muslim holy book that had been owned by Thomas Jefferson. Ellison crosses the country speaking to Muslims and urging them to be more active and assertive.



Jon Stewart, Aasif Mandvi and The Daily Show

Using comedy

to expose the absurd nature of much of the anti-Muslim sentiment in America, Stewart makes people laugh while delivering insightful comedy and mocking stereotypes.

Host and executive producer of *The Daily Show*, Jon Stewart has consistently mocked all forms of anti-Muslim sentiment. Stewart highlights just how widespread Muslim bashing in this country has become. Since 2006, *The Daily Show* has employed Aasif Mandvi as a regular correspondent. Mandvi is an American Muslim. The show often plays on both Mandvi's ethnicity and religion.

Stewart was particularly vocal about the Park 51 controversy.

On August 19, 2010, *The Daily Show* featured a segment on growing opposition to the project. Stewart reminded viewers that there were Muslim victims of the 2001 terrorist attacks. Stewart also addressed unfounded concerns aimed at one of the project's key figures, referring to the "dangerous game of guilt by association." Stewart went on to use the same guilt by association tactic to tie Fox News to terrorism.⁶

On the show's September 13, 2010 episode, Stewart noted that mosque opposition was by no means limited to the area around Ground Zero, refuting the claim that, were the mosque moved, it would not generate similar controversy. "Why does everyone think America is divided?" Stewart asked. "It appears distrust of Muslims is the only thing that goes from sea to shining sea."⁷

Stewart also remarked on those who claim Islam is a violent religion, basing their argument on misinterpreted verses of the Quran. Stewart satirically called Christianity a violent religion, supporting his argument with passages from the Bible.⁸

Keith Olbermann and *Countdown with Keith Olbermann*

Olbermann uses his platform



on MSNBC to challenge nativist and bigoted sentiment.

Olbermann is the host of MSNBC's political commentary show, *Countdown with Keith Olbermann*. The program is consistent in its efforts to confront anti-Muslim bigotry.

On August 16, 2010, Olbermann presented a "special comment" entitled, "There is no 'Ground Zero Mosque.'" Remarking on the rise of anti-Islam and anti-Muslim bigotry surrounding the Park 51 debate, Olbermann reminded his audience of the history of intolerance in this country, and how ridiculous those past intolerances sound today.

"In Manhattan today," Olbermann said, "we are being told to sell our birth-right, to feed the maw of xenophobia and vengeance and mob rule."⁹



Stephen Colbert and *The Colbert Report*

Colbert has made significant contributions to highlighting and satirizing Islamophobic incidents.

Stephen Colbert is the host of Comedy Central's *The Colbert Report*.

Colbert exposes the ridiculous tactics employed by those preaching anti-Muslim hate.

For instance, Colbert railed against halal products, declaring halal cereals and soups a serious threat to America.¹⁰ Colbert also mocked *The New York Post* for its outrage over the violent, bias motivated attack on a New York

City cab driver, citing numerous past examples of *The Post*'s anti-Muslim fear mongering.¹¹

On the August 12, 2010 episode of *The Colbert Report*, Colbert responded to a suggestion that America ban mosques, arguing barns should also be banned as Timothy McVeigh used a barn to plan his 1995 attack on the Alfred P. Murrah building in Oklahoma City.¹²

And on former Alaska governor Sarah Palin's argument that there is a logical analogy between the decision to build an Islamic cultural center in Lower Manhattan and the plan to burn the Quran, Colbert quipped, "Destroying a religious symbol and building a religious center are really the same thing if you don't think about it."¹³

Media Matters for America

Media Matters monitors and reports on misinformation in the print, broadcast, cable, radio and internet-based media. Its reporting takes the form of both short rapid response pieces, and longer research findings. Media Matters has been instrumental in exposing false media claims about Muslims and Islam.

Media Matters for America is a media watchdog group founded by journalist David Brock. Media Matters consistently corrects errors in reporting of interest to the Muslim community.

On July 14, 2010, the group issued a report on Stop the Islamization of America co-founder Pamela Geller's frequent media exposure. The report, entitled, "Memo to the Media: Pamela Geller does not belong on national television," concludes that Geller is not a credible expert on Islam as she claims, and allowing her a platform on national

television is irresponsible.¹⁴

“Geller’s history of outrageous, inflammatory and false claims, particularly when it comes to issues related to Islam, demonstrate that she cannot be expected to make accurate statements,” Media Matters said in its article.

In the latter part of 2010, Media Matters dedicated significant attention to Bill O’Reilly’s persistent claim that terrorism is “a Muslim problem.” Notably, the group refuted O’Reilly’s frequent claim that mainstream Muslims have not stood up to extremists and terrorists. In fact, Media Matters found, Muslim-American leaders have consistently condemned terrorism and advocated for peace.¹⁵

Interfaith Leaders

CAIR acknowledges that we cannot collect the names of and give due credit to all those interfaith leaders who are shining examples of promoting American pluralism. So many names were recommended for this section that it became inappropriate to highlight any particular one above the others. CAIR elected to simply collect them all in one category and express our thanks on behalf of Muslims across the nation.

During an interview for this report, a Christian leader noted, “If there is a silver lining I think it’s that, once again, many people are asking to learn more, so that’s an opportunity. Not only for Muslim organizations but particularly for non-Muslim organizations, be they interfaith organizations, or non-Muslim houses of worship, congregations, schools, etc.”

This leader is correct. Almost every interviewee remarked on the very positive actions taken by the interfaith community in

regards to the vilification of Islam and Muslims.

In 2010, Shabbat Shuvah—the Sabbath between the New Year and Yom Kippur—fell on September 11. A group of rabbis used the occasion to preach about Islam, tolerance, and interfaith unity.¹⁶ Similarly, a group of rabbis signed a letter in support of and then rallied at the site of the Park 51 Islamic cultural center in lower Manhattan.

A number of key interfaith leaders participated in an interfaith summit hosted by the Islamic Society of North America in Washington, D.C. to discuss the need for members of all faiths to protect the civil rights of Muslims.¹⁷

An Atlanta interfaith group decided to support the building of the Islamic center in New York. The Faith Alliance of Metro Atlanta, formed after 9/11, is a coalition of some 200 Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Hindu, and Buddhist congregations. The president of the group, Reverend Jill Ulrici, said: “Everybody on the board is committed to building bridges between the faiths. We’re also committed to religious expression of every faith. And that’s really what, politically, our country was founded on that – on people wanting to have religious freedom.” The group’s response was also fueled by an arson at the site of a future mosque in Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Sixty interfaith leaders in Los Angeles, Calif. met in response to the Park 51 controversy. They rallied in support of the center arguing that all Americans, whether Muslim, Hindu, Christian or Jew, were all attacked on 9/11.¹⁸

Interfaith leaders in Gainesville, Fla. united to discredit the extremist pastor in their community

who planned to burn a Quran on the 2010 9/11 anniversary. A Bible society in Massachusetts planned to give away two copies of the Quran for every one that Rev. Terry Jones and his congregation burned on September 11.¹⁹ Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Christian, Sikh, Zoroastrian and Muslim clergy spoke at an interfaith symposium in Houston, Texas, to discuss the sanctity of scriptures and the ill-treatment of religious books.²⁰



Rachel Maddow and *The Rachel Maddow Show*

Maddow has opened up the conversation to

expose the sources of Islamophobia.

The Rachel Maddow Show covers a full range of current issues in America, frequently highlighting the absurdity of anti-Muslim bigotry in America.

Maddow efficiently highlights how the political right is profiting financially and politically from anti-Muslim rhetoric.

For example, on her September 9, 2010, program, Maddow demonstrated how public figures such as Glenn Beck and Sarah Palin were planning a for-profit event to exploit the 9/11 anniversary. Similarly, she called attention to a video being promoted by Newt Gingrich that seeks to drive fear associated with 9/11.²¹

In that same broadcast, she noted how tremendous media focus was drawn to a planned Quran burning in Florida because such acts are “...being carried into the mainstream by a current of extreme anti-Muslim ‘we are at war with Islam’ rhetoric...” such as the film Gingrich was supporting.

The Worst

Some individuals, institutions and groups were at the center of pushing Islamophobia in America during the period covered by this report. This list is neither comprehensive nor offered in any specific order. However, those listed below do deserve particular note for their intentional efforts to spread fear and prejudice.

Pamela Geller and Stop the Islamization of America (SIOA)

Gellar's pure, unabashed hatred of Muslims rings loud and clear through her blog. Geller is a leader in using the internet as a tool for intolerance.

Geller, an "anti-Islam activist"²² who self-identifies as a "racist-Islamophobic-anti-Muslim-bigot,"²³ runs the blog "Atlas Shrugs."

Along with Robert Spencer, she is co-founder of the group "Stop the Islamization of America." SIOA has been labeled a "rabidly anti-Muslim group" by the Southern Poverty Law Center. The United States Patent and Trademark Office refused to grant SIOA a trademark because: "The applied-for mark refers to Muslims in a disparaging manner because by definition it implies that conversion or conformity to Islam is something that needs to be stopped or caused to cease."

Geller's SIOA has run bus ads offering Muslims a "safe" way to leave Islam. In September, 2010, *Time* magazine writer Bobby Ghosh noted that this was, "the sort of exhortation directed at Jews and Roman Catholics in generations past."²⁵

Geller's blog "Atlas Shrugs" has posted a video suggesting Muslims have sex with goats, a doctored picture of President Obama urinating on an American flag, and a fake image of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Elena

Kagan dressed as a Nazi.

Geller has also accused President Obama of anti-Semitism and claimed the president does the bidding of "Islamic overlords."²⁶

Geller posted images on her blog purporting to depict Islam's Prophet Muhammad. Several of those images show the prophet as a pig. Another image, headlined "Piss Be Upon Him," shows one of the controversial Danish cartoons of the prophet covered in urine. ("Piss Be Upon Him" is designed to mock the traditional phrase "Peace Be Upon Him" that Muslims use when mentioning any prophet of God.)

Geller is tied to the British hate group the English Defense League (EDL). The EDL is known for their "street intimidation" and "violent rhetoric," and is aligned with neo-Nazi movements and far-right racist groups.²⁷ Deemed by the Southern Poverty Law Center to be a "thuggish anti-Muslim street movement," the EDL has joined Geller in her campaign against the Park 51 initiative. Members of the group joined Geller at the September 11 protest of the Park 51 project.

Robert Spencer and Jihad Watch

Spencer offers an intellectualized Islamophobia through "selectively ignoring" Islamic texts and principles that do not fit his view of Islam as the enemy.

Spencer operates the blog "Jihad Watch," which is notorious for its depiction of Islam as an inherently violent faith that is a threat to world peace.

Spencer has referred to Islam's Prophet Muhammad as a "con man. Someone who is knowing [sic] that what he is saying is false, but is fooling his followers." In the same video he asserts, "From a historical stand point, it is not even clear that Muhammad existed."²⁸

In a special report, the independent national media watch group Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR), identified Spencer as one of the "Dirty Dozen: America's Leading Islamophobes" who systematically "spread fear, bigotry, and misinformation."²⁹

In that report, FAIR notes, "By selectively ignoring inconvenient Islamic texts and commentaries, Spencer concludes that Islam is innately extremist and violent, and quotes Spencer as saying, 'Unfortunately, however, jihad as warfare against non-believers in order to institute 'Sharia' worldwide is not propaganda or ignorance, or a heretical doctrine held by a tiny minority of extremists. Instead, it is a constant element of mainstream Islamic theology.'"

In 2006, Spencer participated in a conference honoring anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant Dutch politician Pim Fortuyn, who sought to

legalize government discrimination in the Netherlands.

Spencer proudly highlights his participation in this conference among his “Notable Speaking Engagements.”³⁰ Fortuyn’s anti-Muslim views and the resulting backlash against Muslims living in the Netherlands are noted in the Department of State’s International Religious Freedom Reports for 2002 and 2005.

Brigitte Gabriel and Act! For America

Gabriel makes no attempt to hide her efforts to dehumanize Muslims and restrict them from public life.

ACT! for America leader Brigitte Gabriel once told the *Australian Jewish News*: “Every practicing Muslim is a radical Muslim.”³¹ Gabriel also claimed that “Islamofascism is a politically-correct word...it’s the vehicle for Islam...Islam is the problem.”

When asked whether Americans should “resist Muslims who want to seek political office in this nation,” Gabriel said:

“Absolutely. If a Muslim who has—who is—a practicing Muslim who believes the word of the Koran to be the word of Allah, who abides by Islam, who goes to mosque and prays every Friday, who prays five times a day—this practicing Muslim, who believes in the teachings of the Koran, cannot be a loyal citizen to the United States of America.”³²

Along with her stated desire to have Muslims barred from public office, Gabriel has also claimed that Arabs “have no soul”³³ and that Muslims worship “something they call ‘Allah,’ which is

very different from the God we believe [in].”

Gabriel also stated: “America and the West are doomed to failure in this war unless they stand up and identify the real enemy: Islam.”³⁴

Frank Gaffney and the Center for Security Policy (CSP)

For all out Looney Tunes bigotry, American Muslims can always count on Frank Gaffney’s Center for Security Policy for some 1930s style minority-bashing.

Frank J. Gaffney, Jr. is president of the Center for Security Policy. CSP asserts that it is a “non-partisan national security organization.”³⁵

In a November 10, 2010 letter, after noting CSP’s “xenophobic, anti-Muslim and hate-based tactics,” Rep. Betty McCollum (D-MN) wrote that the center, “has earned a reputation for being radical in philosophy and extremist in practice.”

Suhail Khan, a member of the board of the American Conservative Union, says that Gaffney “issues baseless warnings to members of Congress about ‘creeping shariah.’”³⁶

Gaffney’s vision of “creeping shariah” extends to profound concern that not-so-subtle messages of the impending Islamic takeover of America are being incorporated into U.S. military logos. Following the unveiling of a new logo for the Department of Defense’s Missile Defense Agency in 2010 Gaffney wrote:

“Team Obama’s anti-anti-missile initiatives are not simply acts of unilateral disarmament of the sort to be expected from an

Alinsky acolyte. They seem to fit an increasingly obvious and worrying pattern of official U.S. submission to Islam and the theo-political-legal program the latter’s authorities call Shariah. What could be code-breaking evidence of the latter explanation is to be found in the newly-disclosed redesign of the Missile Defense Agency logo.”³⁷

In another conspiracy-theory piece that deftly paints President Obama as a Muslim (interestingly, throughout the piece Gaffney attempts to maintain plausible deniability that he made the assertion) Gaffney wrote, “The man now happy to have his Islamic-rooted middle name featured prominently has engaged in the most consequential bait-and-switch since Adolf Hitler duped Neville Chamberlain over Czechoslovakia at Munich.”³⁸

Gaffney has argued that some senators’ decisions to question the wisdom of the war in Iraq should be treating as a “hanging offense.”³⁹ He even attributed a fictitious quote to President Lincoln to shore up his argument favoring ending dissent in American political discourse.

The Center for Security Policy and Gaffney actively promote the racist and anti-Islam ideology of David Yerushalmi, the center’s general counsel.⁴⁰ Yerushalmi has advocated outlawing the practice of Islam in America and permanently closing all U.S. mosques.

Steven Emerson and the Investigative Project on Terrorism (IPT)

Discredited in the late 1990s, Emerson has used the post-9/11

era to rise again. His conspiracy theories, guilt by association tactics and selective editing find willing consumers in certain agenda-driven law enforcement and government circles.

Emerson is founder of the Investigative Project on Terrorism (IPT). IPT is little more than an anti-Muslim propaganda mouth-piece.

Recently, the Tennessean revealed that the non-profit Investigative Project on Terrorism Foundation paid Emerson's for-profit company, SAE Productions, \$3,390,000 in 2008 alone. Ken Berger, president of Charity Navigator, a nonprofit watchdog group said, "Basically, you have a nonprofit acting as a front organization, and all that money going to a for-profit. It's wrong. This is off the charts."⁴¹ The Investigative Project on Terrorism Foundation solicits donations by convincing Americans of a Muslim threat.

The *New York Times* Book Review said Emerson's 1991 book *Terrorist* was "marred by factual errors...that betray an unfamiliarity with the Middle East and a pervasive anti-Arab and anti-Palestinian bias."⁴²

Emerson said of the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, "This [the bombing] was done with the intent to inflict as many casualties as possible. That is a Middle Eastern trait."⁴³ Timothy McVeigh, a non-Middle Eastern American, was later convicted for committing the terrorist act.

In 1996, after a plane exploded off the coast of New York, Emerson quickly asserted, "I have no doubt whatsoever, at this

point, that it was a bomb that brought down TWA Flight 800 - not a missile, but a bomb..." The National Transportation Safety Board concluded that the cause of the tragedy was vapor in a fuel tank, a tragic accident rather than a deliberate bombing.

Emerson's credibility was further derailed in the late 1990s when *Florida Weekly Planet* newspaper Senior Editor John Sugg quoted two unnamed Associated Press reporters who said Emerson gave them a document on terrorism supposedly from FBI files:

"One reporter thought he'd seen the material before, and in checking found a paper Emerson had supplied earlier containing his own unsupported allegations. The two documents were almost identical, except that Emerson's authorship was deleted from the one purported to be from the FBI. 'It was really his work,' one reporter says. 'He sold it to us trying to make it look like a really interesting FBI document.'" ⁴⁴

Newt Gingrich

A consumer of the Islamophobic narrative produced by others on this list, Gingrich's credibility and visibility as a former House speaker makes his decision to adopt an anti-Muslim line in his pre-2010 election rhetoric dangerous.

Gingrich is a former Speaker of the United States House of Representatives (1995-1999). He remains a political figure of national stature.

Writing in *Time* magazine, Bobby Ghosh noted, "In France and

Britain, politicians from fringe parties say appalling things about Muslims, but there's no one in Europe with the stature of a former House Speaker who seemed to equate Islam with Nazism, as Gingrich did recently."

On the show *Fox and Friends* on August 16, 2010, Gingrich said, "Nazis don't have the right to put up a sign next to the Holocaust museum in Washington. We would never accept the Japanese putting up a site next to Pearl Harbor. There's no reason for us to accept a mosque next to the World Trade Center."⁴⁵

On Saturday, September 18, 2010, Gingrich, speaking at the Values Voter Summit, declared that "stealth jihadis use political, cultural, societal, religious, intellectual tools; violent jihadis use violence, but in fact they're both seeking to impose the same end state, which is to replace Western civilization with a radical imposition of sharia." Such statements cast suspicion on any individual Muslim or Muslim institution in the United States as possibly having nefarious purposes.

The four members of Congress who called for an investigation of Muslim Capitol Hill interns

Possessed by an impulse toward the McCarthyism of America's past, these four elected officials were apparently willingly led by an anti-Islam activist into casting suspicion upon young Muslims who were seeking to serve their country on Capitol Hill.

In October of 2009, Reps. John Shadegg (R-AZ), Paul Broun (R-GA), Trent Franks (R-AZ) and Sue Myrick (R-NC) held a

press conference during which they called for an investigation of Muslim Capitol Hill interns. The four asserted that young people entering public service jobs were possibly spies.

The allegations were sourced to a book for which Rep. Myrick had recently authored a foreword. Later, when she was confronted with one of the book's author's virulently anti-Muslim statements, Myrick said, "Dave Gaubatz did the investigating for it... And, quite frankly, Gaubatz didn't write a word of the book. And in that sense, it's kind of a shame his name is on the book because he didn't write it."

The 87-member Congressional Tri-Caucus—comprised of the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus—issued a statement responding to the allegations. In that statement, the Tri-Caucus members noted that, "We all have experienced the sting of discrimination," and said, "These charges smack of an America of sixty years ago where lists of 'un-American' agitators were identified."⁴⁶

Myrick subsequently endorsed the group ACT! For America, whose founder has said, "Every practicing Muslim is a radical Muslim."⁴⁷ In 2003, the *Charlotte Observer* reported, "In remarks about domestic security threats, Rep. Sue Myrick of Charlotte said, 'Look at who runs all the convenience stores across the country.'" ⁴⁸

In early 2008, Rep. Broun invited David Yerushalmi to speak to

congressional staff on Islamic finance. Even Daniel Pipes, one of the nation's leading Islamophobes, is on record distancing himself from Yerushalmi because of the extreme nature of Yerushalmi's views.⁴⁹

In February of 2007, Yerushalmi's group, the Society of American's for National Existence (SANE), offered a policy proposal that stated in part: "We need to implement the Separation platform with a Search and Destroy Mission whenever Islam raises its ugly head." SANE has advocated prison terms for "adherence to Islam."

Osama bin Laden, Al-Qaeda and other violent extremists

Islamophobia existed before 2001, but it took the 9/11 terrorist attacks to truly industrialize the phenomenon. Extremists who claim Islam motivates, or worse, sanctions, their atrocities have done deep harm to the reputation of the faith.

While bin Laden, Al-Qaeda and other violent extremists do not fit our definition of Islamophobes their terrorism and complete distortion of Islam provide the breeding ground for much of the anti-Muslim extremism discussed in this report.

To more than a billion Muslims worldwide, Islam is a religion that teaches tolerance, freedom and compassion. Those who understand Islam and know Muslims as friends and colleagues realize that Islam is one of the three Abrahamic faiths and that Muslims are contributing members of societies around the world.

Unfortunately, for many who know little of Islam or Muslims, violent extremists have come to personify both, fueling Islamophobia and allowing a space for Islamophobes to flourish. The worldview of these violent extremists is a complete distortion of Islam because Islamic teachings clearly state that the killing of one innocent life is the moral equivalent to the killing of all humanity.

There can be no moral, ethical or religious justification for cowardly attacks on innocent civilians. We condemn terrorism whenever it happens, wherever it happens, whoever commits it.

After reviewing a 2009 report titled *Deadly Vanguard: A Study of Al-Qaida's Violence Against Muslims*, Ralph Peters, wrote in New York's Daily Post, "Al-Qaeda does one thing extremely well: killing Muslims."⁵⁰

President Obama echoed this conclusion at a White House Ramadan fastbreaking reception in 2010 when he noted, "In fact, al Qaeda has killed more Muslims than people of any other religion — and that list of victims includes innocent Muslims who were killed on 9/11."

Daniel Pipes

The grandfather of Islamophobia in America. Pipes' eminence is fading but his contributions to anti-Muslim intolerance in America cannot be overlooked.

Daniel Pipes is director of the Middle East Forum, a right-wing think tank. In 1990, he said: "Western European societies are unprepared for the massive immigration of brown-skinned

peoples cooking strange foods and maintaining different standards of hygiene...All immigrants bring exotic customs and attitudes, but Muslim customs are more troublesome than most.”⁵⁵

“This religion would seem to have nothing functional to offer,” Pipes said of Islam in 1996.⁵⁶

Speaking before the convention of the American Jewish Congress in late 2001, Pipes said, “I worry very much from the Jewish point of view that the presence, and increased stature, and affluence, and enfranchisement of American Muslims...will present true dangers to American Jews.”⁵⁷

In 2004, Pipes said he supported the widely-repudiated internment of Japanese-Americans. He wrote: “Yes, I do support the internment of Japanese Ameri-

cans in World War II.”⁵⁸

President George W. Bush was forced to bypass a Republican-controlled Senate confirmation process to place Pipes temporarily on the board of the United States Institute of Peace (USIP). Pipes faced stiff opposition to his USIP nomination and would not have been confirmed if his nomination was subjected to a vote. At a July 23, 2004, Senate committee meeting, Sens. Edward Kennedy (D-MA), Christopher Dodd (D-CT) and Tom Harkin (D-IA) all opposed his appointment. Sen. Harkin, who was involved in the formation of the USIP, spoke at length about Pipes’ statements warning of the “dangers” posed by the enfranchisement of American Muslims and his “dossiers” on academic critics of Israeli policies. Pipes only served an interim term.

Pipes has stated that the views of far-right French racist Jean-Marie Le Pen “represent an important outlook in the national debate over immigration and Islam” and said that he (Pipes) supports racial and religious profiling of Muslims and Arabs.

Pipes was a featured speaker for a series of “Islamofascism Awareness Week” lectures at university campuses nationwide. Other speakers on that lecture tour included Islamophobes such as Robert Spencer and Ann Coulter.

Pipes also launched Campus Watch, a website that included “dossiers” on professors and academic institutions he considered to be too critical of Israel or too sympathetic to Islam and Muslims.

The State of Islamophobia in America



Interviewees for this report were asked, ***“On a scale of 1-10, with one being an America free of Islamophobia and 10 being the worst possible situation for Muslims in America, how would you rate the state of Islamophobia in America today?”***

Interviews were conducted in September and October of 2010.

Where We Are



“In the USA [the] situation of Muslims did not improve...”
-- the Organization of the Islamic Conference’s
Third OIC Observatory Report on Islamophobia, May 2010

Is America Islamophobic? No. The revulsion expressed by most Americans in August and early September 2010 over a proposed Quran burning in Florida is evidence of that fact.

Is there an Islamophobic element in America? Yes.

By 2008 Anti-Muslim Discrimination Was ‘Leveling Off’

In late 2009, CAIR reported: “Observing a second year’s decline in reported hate crimes, CAIR reaffirms its cautious optimism that America may be witnessing a leveling-off of

“I think that the election of Obama and events after the election provided a platform for the expression of both ill-informed and ill-intentioned views directed largely against Muslims in a way that was not the case before the election,” observed Aziz Huq, an assistant professor of law at the University of Chicago.

the post-9/11 backlash against Americans of the Islamic faith.” Data collected by CAIR in 2008

supported that conclusion.

Based on observations made by our interviewees, our reading of the news and assertions made in other reports, CAIR believes that the trends pointing toward that leveling off began changing in January 2009.

After the 2009 Inauguration, the Nation’s Tone Became Angry

In March 2009, Rep. Russ Carnahan (D-Mo.) found a coffin on his front lawn. This troubling incident was one of many that occurred during the national conversation over health-care reform. *Politico* reported others, including “Rep. Tom Perriello’s (D-Va.) brother’s gas lines were cut, Rep. Bart Stupak (D-Mich.) received death threats and Rules Committee Chairwoman Louise Slaughter (D-N.Y.) received a message saying snipers were being deployed to kill children of those who voted for health care overhaul.”⁵⁹

The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund (LCCREF) expressed concern that year over the tactics adopted by some groups opposing immigration reform:

“In one of the most disturbing developments of recent years, some groups opposing immigra-

tion reform, such as the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS), and NumbersUSA, have inflamed the immigration debate by invoking the dehumanizing, racist stereotypes and bigotry of hate groups. While these seemingly “legitimate” advocates against illegal immigration are frequently quoted in the mainstream media, have been called to testify before Congress, and often hold meetings with lawmakers and other public figures, their virulently anti-immigrant rhetoric veers dangerously close to—and too often crosses the line beyond—civil discourse over contentious immigration policy issues.”⁶⁰

The LCCREF also reports that the combination of the “vilification of immigrants” combined with economic downturn and the election of Barack Obama has contributed to a “surge” of white supremacist activity.⁶¹

Coming to a similar conclusion, the Southern Poverty Law Center issued a 2009 report noting, “the resurgence of the antigovernment militia movement across the country, which has been fueled by fears of a black man in the White House, the changing demographics of the country, and conspiracy theories increasingly spread by mainstream figures.”⁶²

The enraged tone continued in 2010 with reports of members of Congress being subjected to racial slurs and in one case, spat on.

A report distributed by the National Association for the

Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in the latter part of 2010 observes, “The Tea Party movement has unleashed a still inchoate political movement who are in their numerical majority, angry middle class white people who believe their country, their nation, has been taken from them.” “Tea Party organizations,” the report’s authors go on to say, “have given platforms to anti-Semites, racists, and bigots. Further, hard-core white nationalists have been attracted to these protests, looking for potential recruits and hoping to push

“Islam is not only the religion that is the most frequently mentioned in television news in the United States, but also a significant share of the coverage is negative.”

—Media Tenor

these (white) protestors towards a more self-conscious and ideological white supremacy.”⁶³

Significant Share of Media Coverage of Islam Reported as Negative

According to a report issued by Gallup in 2009, Media Tenor, a research firm that monitors and analyzes media coverage, found that:

“Thirty six percent of statements about religion referred to Islam. The tone of the media coverage of Islam was negative 40% of the time, while statements about Christianity were negative 20% of the time. Media Tenor found “that two-thirds of the television coverage about Islam associates Muslims with extremism.”⁶⁴ (Media Tenor’s report covered the period from 1/2007-3/2008.)

No Room for Leveling-Off

CAIR released the report containing the “leveling-off” statement on December 3, 2009.

This was almost a month after Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan murdered a number of American service members at Fort Hood.

In late December a Nigerian man tried and fortunately failed to blow-up an airplane heading toward the United States. In May 2010, another man failed in his murder plan when he attempted to detonate a car bomb in New York’s Times Square.

In August and early September 2010 the dispute over Park 51 and a Florida pastor’s plan to burn copies of the Quran kept Islam and Muslims front-and-center in the public consciousness.

“My view is it has been a very recent spike since the start of the summer of 2010,” said a private sector civil litigator during an interview in late 2010. “If you asked me the same question [about the state of Islamophobia in America] in January of 2010 I probably would say there has not been much movement in what has become worse with Islamophobia since the inauguration.”

Though each of these incidents

The public’s favorable rating of Islam sank from 40 percent in November 2001 to 30 percent in August 2010 according to the Pew Research Center.⁶⁵ In late November 2010, the Public Research Institute found that 45 percent of Americans agree that Islam is at odds with American values.⁶⁶



is soundly condemned by the Muslim community, they have created a situation in which we can no longer assert that anti-Muslim discrimination is leveling off.

A Base for Prejudice

Polls consistently show that a sizable number of Americans hold prejudiced views toward Muslims.

A *Time* magazine poll released in August 2010 found, “Twenty-eight percent of voters do not believe Muslims should be eligible to sit on the U.S. Supreme Court. Nearly one-third of the country thinks adherents of Islam should be barred from running for President...”⁶⁷

CBS News released a poll in September 2010 finding that a majority of Americans (fifty-five percent) know someone who has negative feelings toward Muslims as a result of the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Approximately one in five say they themselves have such feelings. Forty percent of Americans do not know someone who harbors anti-Muslim feelings, and three in four say they don’t personally have negative feelings toward Muslims.⁶⁸

Public Policy Polling, a democratic party-affiliated firm, found in October 2010 that more Republicans support the hypothetical construction of a strip club than an Islamic center near Ground Zero.⁶⁹

In the early part of 2010, the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies reported, “43% of Americans admit to feeling some prejudice toward followers of Islam.” The study states, “Americans are more than twice as likely to express negative feelings about Muslims as they are about Buddhists, Christians and Jews.”⁷⁰

phobia. In large part, this is in reaction to President Obama’s election. Many bigots are upset that we have a black president. But because of the taboo associated with anti-black racism, they are constrained from openly expressing it. So they falsely declare Obama is a Muslim and feel comfortable denigrating him

“Clearly the public discourse has deteriorated to the point where Islam and I think perhaps even more so Muslims are regarded as fair game,” said a professor of contemporary Islamic studies. “They really are the only community with which people in the general public as well as people from the so-called elite of society—socially, politically—can speak with complete impunity about Muslims in a way that they would not dare without recriminations about other groups.”

A 2010 survey by LifeWay Research found that 4 in 10 U.S. Protestant pastors agree that Islam is dangerous and promotes violence.⁷¹

The Pew Research Center reported, “Eight years after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, Americans see Muslims as facing more discrimination inside the U.S. than any other major religious groups. Nearly six-in-ten adults (58%) say that Muslims are subject to a lot of discrimination. . . .”⁷²

Growth and Acceptance of Intolerant Discourse

Interviewees for this report often cited their observation that there is a general societal acceptance of derogatory commentary about Islam.

“Among a certain segment of the population, the Tea-Party and right-wing Republicans, anti-Islam bigotry has become mainstream and lost any taboo. People are unabashed and open in their displays of Islamo-

for that,” said a Muslim who has held elected office.

Human Rights First also noted this trend: “Obstacles to freedom of religion, widespread discrimination, and anti-Muslim rhetoric in mainstream media and political discourse are an important part of the context in which violent acts are being perpetrated. Intolerant public discourse that goes unchallenged fosters indifference to abuses committed against members of minority groups and promotes impunity for perpetrators of violent hate crimes against them.”⁷³

Critics may hold up NPR’s firing of commentator Juan Williams following his statement that airline passengers in “Muslim garb” make him “nervous” as evidence against this trend. However, both NPR sources and Williams have said the termination was part of a longer running dispute. Thus, CAIR does not believe the firing was specific to Williams’ anti-Muslim statement.

Anti-Muslim Discrimination

The reality of anti-Muslim discrimination—the consequence of the base for prejudice discussed above—in America is well documented. A number of incidents from CAIR’s civil rights database are included in this report.

For 2009, the FBI reports that 18.9 percent of the victim’s of hate crimes in the United States were “victimized because of a bias against a religious belief.” In all, “8.4 percent were victims because of an anti-Islamic bias.”⁷⁴

LCCREF reports that hate crimes directed against Arab Americans, Muslims, and Sikhs escalated dramatically after the September 2001 terrorist attacks. In 2009, LCCREF observed that crimes of hate remain more prevalent than pre-2001, though the number of hate crimes against these groups has declined.⁷⁵

A law enforcement professional best summed up the general community feeling regarding discrimination when the professional told CAIR interviewers: “On 9/11/2001, I responded to Ground Zero with some of my colleagues and as we were being driven to the site, we saw many people lined up on both sides of the road with signs cheering and thanking us. On one of the train trips home, we were accompanied by several senators and congressmen and some of them signed my helmet. Now it is 2010 and I dare not go anywhere near ground zero with the fear of being attacked because I am a Muslim.”

Islamophobic Acts

The cases below provide a snapshot of some of the incidents of Islamophobia recorded by CAIR in 2009 and 2010. The list is not comprehensive. Incidents related to Park 51 and the 2010 election are generally not included here as they receive their own special sections toward the end of the report. Cases not proved in a court of law are reported as allegedly occurring.

PRIVATE SECTOR

February 1, 2009 - A “biblical group” allegedly harassed Muslim worshipers at the Islamic Society of Tampa Bay Area. Over 20 people used “signs and a bullhorn to denounce the religion of Islam.”⁷⁶

February 17, 2009 - Former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum delivered a lecture at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln on the subject of Islam. Santorum argued that Muslims’ religious views cannot be changed, so democracy does not “mesh” with them. He proclaimed, “A democracy could not exist because Mohammed already made the perfect law. The Qur’an is perfect just the way it is, that’s why it is only written in Islamic.” Santorum is a self-proclaimed scholar of Islam.⁷⁷ (Note: The Quran is originally in Arabic and is available in translation in numerous languages.)

March 5, 2009 - Bell City Council candidate Ali Saleh’s Muslim faith was the center of a political attack. Fliers distributed at a lo-

cal grocery store featured a man holding a sign that read, “Islam will dominate the world,” with Saleh’s face superimposed on the picture to make it look like he was holding the sign. The fliers also included pictures of an Iraqi cleric, the World Trade Center tower burning, and a group of hooded terrorists standing over a kneeling hostage. The flyer text read “Vote NO Muslims for the Bell City Council 2009.” Both Muslim candidates for the council were defeated.⁷⁸

December 10, 2009 - In St. Cloud, Minn., “graphic, sexually explicit” anti-Muslim cartoons were posted on utility poles.⁷⁹

February 17, 2010 - A panel discussion titled “Jihad: The Political Third Rail” was held to launch the Freedom Defense Initiative during the annual Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in Washington, DC. Panel promoters asserted it was a discussion of Islam’s “war on free speech” and the threat of Islamic law. Noted Islamophobes Pamela Geller and Robert Spencer were among the speakers. Reporting on the event, Fox News called Geller “a lightning rod for controversy,” adding, “One [Geller blog post] last August questioned why the media were not reporting President Obama’s ‘strange sexual predilections’ and suggested that Obama traveled to Pakistan in the 1980s ‘for the drugs and came back with Jihad.’”⁸⁰

March 18, 2010 - CAIR-Philadelphia staff raised concerns over



a series of reference books said to portray Muslims as inherently violent and as terrorists. The 10-book *The World of Islam* series encourages children to believe Muslims are immigrating to America in order to transform American society, often through the use of terrorism.⁸¹

July 9, 2010 - The Emerald Coast Tea Party Patriots invited Brigitte Gabriel, head of the anti-Islam hate group ACT! for America, to be the keynote speaker at the group's rally in Fort Walton Beach, Fla.⁸²

July 18, 2010 - Asserting that a mosque would create a "haven for Islamic extremists," opponents fought plans to build a mosque in northeast Temecula, Calif. A local Baptist pastor who opposed the project said, "The Islamic foothold is not strong here, and we really don't want to see their influence spread." Mosque supporters noted that their community had already been active in the area for more than a decade.⁸³

July 22, 2010 - Members of Act! For America requested that the Fountain Valley, Calif., school board change state-approved social studies textbooks that they said have a "cleansed" portrayal of Islamic history. The group wanted the school board to introduce supplementary material—that incorrectly quotes or take quotes of the Quran out of context—from an independent think tank. The school board unanimously declined to add the supplementary material to the textbook.⁸⁴

August 9, 2010 - Pamela Geller's Freedom Defense Initiative paid for advertisements on

New York City buses opposing the Park 51 center. The advertisement "juxtaposes a photograph of the World Trade Center, seen in the instant before the second tower was hit, with a rendering of the controversial mosque and Islamic center planned for Lower Manhattan. In bold capital letters, the ad asks, 'Why There?'"⁸⁶

August 18, 2010 - City officials in Florence, Ky., reported that someone was distributing fliers denouncing a mosque under construction in that city and calling on residents to pressure the city to stop the project. The fliers read, "Do your part to stop the take-over of our country. Use your voice to speak out. If anti-American people do not like the way we are, they are free to leave. We are the United States of America not an Islamic Nation."⁸⁷

August 7, 2010 - Several right-wing Christians angrily confronted worshippers outside a Connecticut mosque. The demonstrators carried anti-Muslim signs and shouted "Islam is a lie" and "Jesus hates Muslims." One demonstrator confronted young children leaving the mosque and yelled "murderers." The organizer of the protest wielded a bullhorn and pledged to confront worshippers at mosques around the United States.⁸⁵

August 23, 2010 - A proposal to build a mosque, school and swimming pool in Murfreesboro, Tenn., met with strong opposition. Speaking at a Regional Planning Commission meeting, residents expressed fear that

"Sharia law" would be imposed on Murfreesboro citizens. One resident called Islam a religion of power, and the mosque an attempt to spread Islam to the small community.⁸⁸ Signs reading "Keep Tennessee Terror Free" featured at protests. The Muslim community behind the project has lived and worshiped in the town for more than thirty years.

August 25, 2010 - Stop the Islamization of America sponsored ads atop 25 taxi cabs in Chicago; the ads imply that leaving Islam may be dangerous for women. Accompanying the graphic photos is the message, "Is your family threatening you" and a website address. At the request of Yellow Cab Chicago, the ads were eventually pulled.⁸⁹

September 11, 2010 - On the anniversary of 9/11, Pastor Terry Jones of Gainesville, Fla., threatened to burn 200 copies of the Quran as part of a self-declared "International Burn a Koran Day." CAIR provided resources for the Muslim community to respond with its "Teachable Moment Community Response Guide." Under enormous pressure from public officials and interfaith leaders, Jones eventually cancelled his publicity stunt.⁹⁰ The threat became a major international news story.

PUBLIC SECTOR

September 4, 2009 - A Tennessee mayor circulated an anti-Islam e-mail to public officials. The e-mail urged "patriotic Americans" to protest a U.S. Postal Service stamp marking Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. Though the stamp was

originally issued in 2001 and is periodically re-issued as prices increase, the e-mail claimed the stamp was new and was ordered by President Obama. The e-mail urged Americans to boycott the stamp. CAIR sent a copy of the Quran to the mayor and city council members.⁹¹

October 14, 2009 - Four Republican lawmakers accused Muslim Capitol Hill interns of being “spies.” Reps John Shadegg (R-AZ), Paul Brown (R-GA), Trent Franks (R-AZ), and Sue Myrick (R-SC) made the claims upon the release of an anti-Muslim book, which included a forward by Representative Myrick.⁹²

December 10, 2009 - Lynne Torgerson, a challenger to Congressman Keith Ellison (D-MN), stated her belief that Islam encourages criminal behavior and should not be protected under the First Amendment. Torgerson also indicated her distaste for people of “other” cultures entering the United States. Torgerson used strong anti-Islam sentiment in an attempt to win support, writing: “And, what do I know of Islam? Well, I know of 9/11. Nineteen (19) men from Saudi Arabia, all Muslim, hi-jacked planes, and flew into the two (2) World Trade Towers murdering thousands of people, and tried to fly into our Pentagon, and some believe they also tried to fly an airplane into our White House. From this, what I perceive is Islam conducting an act of war against my country.”⁹³

January 28, 2010 - Members of the Muslim community in Lancaster, Calif., attended a city council meeting to voice their concerns over inflammatory

comments posted on Facebook by City Councilwoman Sherry Marquez. The councilwoman was reacting to the beheading of a Muslim woman by her husband, which was solidly denounced by Muslims. The councilwoman wrote, “This is what the Muslim religion is all about—the beheadings, honor killings are just the beginning of what is to come in the USA.”⁹⁴

March 17, 2010 - CAIR urged Representative Sue Myrick (R-NC) to withdraw her support for the anti-Islam hate group Act! For America. Myrick had circulated a letter promoting her support for the group. Brigitte Gabriel, Act! For America’s leader, claims that an American Muslim “cannot be a loyal citizen” and that “Islam is the real enemy.”

July 27, 2010 - Tennessee Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey, one of three Republican candidates running for governor, suggested that Islam may be a “cult” rather than a religion: “You could even argue whether being a Muslim is actually a religion or is it a nationality, way of life or cult, whatever you want to call it.”⁹⁵

August 18, 2010 - At a candidate forum for high school and middle school students in Panama City, Fla., congressional candidate Ron McNeil told attendees Islam is “against everything America stands for.” Commenting on the Park 51 Islamic cultural center, McNeil expressed his sense that it should be built, “nine stories underground, so we can walk above it as citizens and Christians.”⁹⁶

November 9, 2010 - A news article reports Fla. Congressman-elect Allan West’s anti-Muslim



beliefs. West is quoted as saying, “Islam is a totalitarian theocratic political ideology, it is not a religion. It has not been a religion since 622 AD.”⁹⁷ West initially selected talk radio host Joyce Kaufman as his chief of staff. However, after pressure on West because of Kaufman’s extreme views on Islam and immigration, she withdrew from the post.

MEDIA

May 20, 2009 - The Simon Wiesenthal Center’s Museum of Tolerance held a screening of the film *The Third Jihad*, which purportedly uncovers a Muslim American plot to kill all Americans. The film was produced by the Clarion Fund, an ultra-right wing group. The Clarion Fund produced *Obsession: Radical Islam’s War with the West* and distributed it to voters in 14 swing states just before the 2008 presidential election in an apparent attempt to influence voters.⁹⁸

November 15, 2009 - A New York University professor authored a column titled, “Going Muslim: America After Fort Hood,” in which he speculated that the United States is facing a new violent phenomenon and coined the phrase “going Muslim” as a spin-off of “going postal.”⁹⁹

March 24, 2010 - Rightwing commentator Ann Coulter told a Muslim student to “take a camel” as an alternative to flying. Coulter’s comment came after she previously told a gathering that Muslims shouldn’t be allowed on airplanes, and should take “flying carpets” instead. The camel comment came after a Muslim student challenged Coulter on the remark, and told her that she didn’t have a flying carpet.¹⁰⁰

April 6, 2010 - An ad sponsored by the Granite City Baptist Church-Academy, featured in Minnesota’s *St. Cloud Times*, asserted: “Moslems [sic] seek to influence the nation by immigration, reproduction, education, the

government, illegal drugs, and by supporting the gay agenda.” The ad also asserted, “It is projected that in 30 years there will be 50 million Moslems in the United States.”¹⁰¹

August 13, 2010 - Bryan Fischer, a writer and radio personality for the American Family Association wrote in his column that no building permits should be issued to any mosque, anywhere in the United States.¹⁰³

August 20, 2010 - Well-known televangelist Pat Robertson claimed that Tennessee Muslims may bribe local officials to expand their influence. Robertson made his claim during a broadcast of the *700 Club* following a report about the Islamic Center of Murfreesboro. Local officials dismissed the idea as ridiculous.¹⁰⁴

August 30, 2010 - Columnist Cal Thomas claimed that mosques across the country are being used as terrorist bases from which to wage offensive attacks.¹⁰⁵



Anti-Muslim Discrimination

In 2009 and 2010, Muslims continued to face barriers to their full and equal participation in American society.

American Muslim institutions such as CAIR were not alone in making these assertions. Here are a few examples of organizations that drew similar conclusions:

The Asian Law Caucus notes a number of specific cases of anti-Muslim discrimination in *Returning Home: How U.S. Government Practices Undermine Civil Rights At Our Nation's Doorstep*. (2009)

Human Rights First lists a number of cases of anti-Muslim discrimination in *Violence Against Muslims: An Update to HRF's 2008 Hate Crime Survey*.

The American Civil Liberties Union and the Rights Working Group present a number of cases of anti-Muslim discrimination in *The Persistence of Racial and Ethnic Profiling in the United States*.

The cases below provide a snapshot of some of the incidents of hate. This list is not comprehensive.

Hate Crimes

January 12, 2009 - Two men were verbally attacked and beaten in Seattle by a man who became enraged when he heard one of the victims speaking a language other than English. The two men, who were identi-



fied as African in police reports, were in a store when one man stepped outside to take a phone call. While talking on the phone, the victim heard a man stopped in traffic yell at him to “speak English.” When the victim replied his English was not very good the man became enraged, left his vehicle and verbally attacked the victim, resorting to the use of anti-Muslim slurs. When the victim attempted to walk away, the attacker grabbed him and punched him twice. The victim’s friend tried to stop the assault, but was also punched by the attacker, who then threatened to kill them both before returning to his vehicle and fleeing the scene. Neither of the victims was seriously injured. Police investigated the incident as a hate crime.¹⁰⁶

June 15, 2009 - A 14-year-old Staten Island student was beaten by a classmate. While the assailant was beating the young man he stated that he hates Arabs and hates the victim’s religion.¹⁰⁷

August 27, 2009 - An alleged attacker in N.Y. was charged

with second-degree aggravated harassment as a hate crime, and a misdemeanor charge after threatening to kill a Muslim mother and daughter. The attacker allegedly shouted racial and religious slurs, and spat on the victims’ car. The man then threatened to kill the women because of their religious beliefs. Both women were dressed in loose-fitting clothing and headscarves.¹⁰⁸

August 31, 2009 - CAIR called for federal and state hate crime charges to be brought against two men involved in an assault of a Calif., taxi driver. The attackers repeatedly hit the victim in the back of the head, causing facial lacerations and a broken tooth and called the victim “Taliban” and “terrorist.” CAIR-SFBA requested the attackers be charged with a hate crime if law enforcement hopes to deter future incidents of this nature.¹⁰⁹

October 8, 2009 - A N.Y. woman was verbally attacked while on her way to *iftaar* at her local mosque. The man then physically confronted the woman in front of her two children. A criminal

complaint was filed, and the man was arrested and charged with harassment in the first degree as a hate crime, assault in the third degree, and harassment in the second degree. He was released without bail pending a court appearance later that month.¹¹⁰

November 10, 2009 - A Greek Orthodox priest was attacked during his vacation in Florida. The priest asked a 28-year-old Marine reservist for directions in Tampa. The reservist hit the priest over the head with a tire iron and chased him for three blocks. The reservist then called 911 and claimed that an “Arab man” was trying to rob him. The attacker also told the police that the priest was a terrorist and that the victim shouted “Allahu Akbar.” The priest does not speak Arabic. CAIR-Tampa called for hate crimes charges.¹¹¹

December 7, 2009 - An Idaho Muslim reported that hateful graffiti was scrawled on the side of his truck, and a flier for the Aryan Nations left on his lawn. The man found the phrase “Go Home Sand N**ger” and a series of swastikas painted on his truck. Local authorities say this attack has been part of a stream of hate related incidents in the area.¹¹²

June 18, 2010 - An 18-year-old Iraqi refugee and his mother were reportedly assaulted following a softball game in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. During the game, supporters of the opposing team allegedly shouted racial slurs at the victim and his team members. After the game, the victim was allegedly hit in the jaw by an assailant from the opposing team, who shouted slurs such

as “raghead,” “terrorist” and “camel jockey.” The victim’s jaw was broken in the assault. The victim’s mother was allegedly assaulted by the same person when she tried to defend her son.

July 4, 2010 - A Muslim volunteer staffing an information booth outside an Inland Empire, Calif., mosque was allegedly assaulted by two men on their way to a fireworks show. The volunteer was staffing a booth that included a sign that read, “Ask a Muslim.” According to the victim, one of two men who were walking past saw the booth and yelled, “This is bulls**t.” The Muslim volunteer replied, “I’ll answer any questions that you have.” According to eyewitness accounts, both men charged at the volunteer and punched him in the face. When one of the men was being arrested he allegedly told the arresting officer to “kick out” all the “ragheads.”

July 8, 2010 - Vandals spray painted the phrase “Go Home” on the exterior of the Hormud Market

subsequently fired a weapon outside of another at a mosque in New York. A member of the mosque was reportedly injured when he was struck by one of the vehicles. The teenagers were charged with disrupting religious services. One teenager was also charged with criminal possession of a weapon.¹¹⁴

September 9, 2010 - A vandal scrawled anti-Muslim hate graffiti across a retaining wall in Reno, Nev. The graffiti read, “Don’t burn the Koran. Why? Just burn Muslims.”¹¹⁵

September 10, 2010 - West Springfield, Mass. Muslims reported increased hostilities against them and their faith in the weeks leading to the anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks. Members of the Muslim community reported graffiti on signs, a hateful telephone message and one incident where apples were thrown late at night at the home of an imam.¹¹⁶

August 25, 2010 - A Muslim cab driver was stabbed in what appeared to be a bias motivated crime. A 21-year-old male hailed a cab in Manhattan. He reportedly asked the driver “Are you Muslim?” When the driver responded in the affirmative the passenger slashed the driver with a knife on the throat, arm and face. The driver stopped the cab and approached a police officer, who arrested the assailant. The attacker has been charged with attempted murder as a hate crime, assault, aggravated harassment and criminal possession of a weapon.¹¹³

in St. Cloud, Minn. The market is owned by a Somali Muslim.

August 31, 2010 - A group of teenagers honked their car horns and yelled obscenities during one prayer service and

September 11, 2010 - A Muslim-owned store in Ohio was vandalized on the ninth anniversary of the 2001 terrorist attacks. Someone spray-painted “9/11” on windows and counter-tops of the store. CAIR asked

law enforcement to investigate the incident as a possible hate crime.¹¹⁷

October 28, 2010 - A 31-year-old African-American Muslim in N.C. reported that an older man verbally assaulted her after asking whether she was Muslim. He allegedly yelled slurs and spit in her direction. The man was charged with ethnic intimidation and released. A court date has been set.¹¹⁸

November 19, 2010 - A Missouri man went to court for a bias-motivated assault against a worker of an Islamic center. The man claimed the center was for “people not from the United States” who are in fact, “trying to take over the United States.” The alleged assailant also reportedly threatened the worker with a knife and a handgun and claimed he was with an organization that was “going to see to it that the building didn’t stand.”¹¹⁹

Workplace

July 24, 2009 - CAIR-Chicago announced a verdict in favor of an Arab-American correctional officer in a discrimination suit. CAIR-Chicago began litigation on behalf of the officer in 2007, after the officer reported pervasive and sustained harassment by other correctional officers. The officer, was called “terrorist,” “Hussein,” “Bin Laden,” and “camel jockey,” and reported the harassment occurred multiple times daily. Despite reporting the incidents, supervisors and internal affairs failed to take adequate action. The officer was awarded \$200,000 in damages.¹²⁰

July 1, 2009 - CAIR-Chicago filed a complaint in federal court on behalf of a Muslim woman who claims to have suffered harassment at her place of work. The woman, an American Muslim of Turkish descent, alleged that she was harassed repeatedly by co-workers and management at the Bridgeview Bank Group. The manager failed to address the problem, and after being denied a transfer to another branch, the woman felt compelled to resign.¹²¹

July 9, 2009 - A Muslim man of South Asian descent alleges he suffered from workplace harassment and wrongful termination from his position at Affiliated Computer Services. The man claims he was repeatedly harassed by coworkers because of his race and religion. After attempting to convert the victim to Christianity, an employee began targeting the man with slurs such as “terrorist” and “Bin Laden,” and in one incident sprayed aerosol cleaner into the Muslim worker’s eye. A manager also escalated the harassment by cutting the Muslim employee’s bonus in half, increasing his work load, issuing written complaints for minor incidents, and finally terminating the man without justification. CAIR-Chicago filed suit.¹²²

September 17, 2009 - A woman was denied employment at an Abercrombie Kids store in Oklahoma because of her decision to wear a hijab. The woman was reportedly told that she would not be hired because her hijab did not “fit the Abercrombie image.” CAIR-OK called on Abercrombie to apologize to the woman and clarify their position



on religious accommodation to comply with the Civil Rights Act of 1964.¹²³

October 22, 2009 - A Muslim employee of Sprint was terminated after receiving a hate call at work. A customer, calling the Oklahoma City service center inquired about the employee’s name and asked if he was a Muslim. When the employee replied in the affirmative the customer replied “Well I don’t want to talk to you, and you can go to hell.” The employee hung up on the customer and reported the incident. One week later the man was terminated, without prior notice due to a company policy that an employee should never hang up on a customer. CAIR-OK has asked Sprint to apologize and review their policy as it relates to hate calls.¹²⁴

October 30, 2009 - A Muslim doctor was denied her right to wear a hijab in her potential work

place. The woman was told at an interview in Texas that the company's no hat policy would prohibit her from wearing a hijab to work. In a letter to the potential employers CAIR noted that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that employers accommodate the religious practices of their employees within reason.¹²⁵

February 26, 2010 - A 19-year-old woman of Indian and Pakistani descent was fired by the Abercrombie and Fitch company for refusing to remove her headscarf. When she interviewed for a job at a Hollister store at a mall in Hillsborough, Calif., she was told her hijab would not be a problem. The young woman worked without incident until the district manager paid a visit to the store. The manager stated that the hijab was not in compliance with the "look policy" of the company. Shortly thereafter, the woman was fired for refusing to take off her headscarf. CAIR-SFBA filed a complaint with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, alleging racial discrimination. Abercrombie reached a \$50 million agreement with the EEOC in 2004 over similar racial discrimination complaints.¹²⁶

March 15, 2010 - The EEOC concluded that New York City's Department of Education wrongly fired a Muslim American school principal. The former principal was pressured to resign after a burst of outrage over the woman's attempt to explain that "intifada" is not synonymous with terrorism. The findings concluded that the woman was discriminated against due to her race, religion, and national origin.¹²⁷

April 9, 2010 - In January 2010, DuPage County Board members voted 10-7 to deny a conditional-use permit requested for a proposed Islamic educational center in Illinois. CAIR-Chicago filed a federal lawsuit asserting that the zoning officials denied the permit on discriminatory grounds.¹²⁸

April 9, 2010 - A former Miami Beach Police Officer has sued the department over racial slurs endured during his employment. According to the complainant, his supervisor repeatedly called him derogatory terms such as "rag head" and "camel jockey," referring to his Arab-American heritage.¹²⁹

April 13, 2010 - CAIR-MI filed an EEOC complaint against a McDonald's restaurant in that state on behalf of a Muslim who alleges denial of employment based on her ethnicity and religion. During a job interview, the woman alleges one of the restaurant managers asked about her nationality and ethnicity and informed her that wearing an Islamic head scarf, or hijab, would be a problem.

April 17, 2010 - A teller at a PNC Bank location in Ohio was allegedly fired for speaking out against anti-Arab and anti-Muslim discrimination endured in his workplace. The teller was fired, without prior notice, very soon after he complained about the discriminatory behavior of other bank employees. CAIR-Ohio has filed a lawsuit on behalf of the teller.¹³⁰

May 10, 2010 - CAIR-WA filed an EEOC complaint on behalf of a Muslim who suffered sustained harassment at the hands

of fellow employees. Two of the man's co-workers routinely referred to him by anti-Muslim stereotypes such as, "f***ing terrorist." Though the man reported the crime, and two different supervisors promised his complaints would be investigated, no action resulted.

May 12, 2010 - The ex-city manager of Homestead, Fla. has sued the city for discrimination. The man alleges the city council slowed his promotion process because he is a Muslim and of Arab descent. Much of the complaint was directed at one council member in particular, the town's Vice Mayor.¹³¹

August 20, 2010 - A Muslim woman who works as a hostess at a Calif., Disneyland restaurant alleged that the theme park would not allow her to appear in front of customers while wearing her hijab. Disneyland requested the woman hide in the back, away from the view of customers. The woman has filed a lawsuit against the theme park with the assistance of CAIR-LA.¹³²

August 30, 2010 - CAIR-Chicago filed a discrimination complaint in federal court against the Illinois State Police (ISP) on behalf of a Chicago based imam. The ISP previously hired the imam as the first Muslim chaplain for its workforce, but later revoked its decision, citing an Internet report attacking the imam. The report was written by an anti-Muslim blogger notorious for fighting against American Muslim civic participation. The report claimed, among other things, that the Imam served on the "Palestine Committee of the Muslim Brotherhood." CAIR-Chi-

cago's lawsuit alleges discrimination based on race, religion and national origin. The suit also cites denial of the imam's First Amendment right to freedom of association.¹³³

September 15, 2010 - An former FBI agent sued the agency for alleged job discrimination. The plaintiff, born in Cairo and raised in California, was passed over for a promotion post-9/11 even though he was one of the few Arabic speakers employed by the Bureau. The plaintiff filed suit for another incident in 2003, alleging the FBI retaliated after he lodged an official complaint.¹³⁴

September 28, 2010 – CAIR-MI filed an EEOC complaint against a Popeye's Louisiana Kitchen restaurant on behalf of a Muslim who alleged denial of employment based on his religion. The complainant was hired for a position at a Detroit branch of the restaurant, but was later told to shave his beard before beginning employment. Though the complainant explained the religious significance of his beard he was told he could not begin his employment until he shaved the beard. CAIR-MI urged the restaurant to review its hiring practices to avoid religious discrimination.¹³⁵

Schools

November 20, 2009 - A Muslim student in Maine was denied her constitutionally-protected right to pray between classes. The 7th-grade student had been praying discretely in a hallway corner during her lunch break. When the school officials discovered she was praying during breaks

the student was told to never pray on school grounds again. CAIR has called for the school to allow the student her right to pray.¹³⁶

March 25, 2010 – CAIR-Minnesota asked the U.S. Department of Education to investigate reports of harassment in Minnesota public schools, including a report of a bus driver who routinely left Muslim students stranded in the middle of winter. Students also reported frequent harassment from both students and teachers. One teacher reportedly handed students a can of air freshener and instructed them to spray the room when Muslim students walked into class. Students reported to CAIR-MN that school administrators failed to effectively respond to the incidents.¹³⁷

April 15, 2010 – CAIR-Cincinnati intervened on behalf of a Muslim student at Kaplan College. Initially the college told the student she needed to present a letter from her mosque before she would be allowed to wear her hijab while she was in the school facility. CAIR-Cincinnati contacted Kaplan College, who agreed to provide religious accommodation for the student as required by law.

June 14, 2010 - The University of California Irvine banned the Muslim Student Union for one academic year and placed the organization on probation for one additional academic year. The group alleges the ban was politically motivated, and came in response to the group's peaceful protest of the Israeli ambassador's presence on the campus.¹³⁸



October 13, 2010 - The parents of a Muslim youth in N.Y. who was reportedly the victim of regular beatings at the hands of his classmates, met with school officials to discuss the possibility of a transfer. The student has allegedly suffered significant and sustained abuse at the hands of four classmates. On two separate incidents, teachers failed to adequately address the violence. The student, 16, receives psychological counseling and his parents report a significant mood change. Mayor Bloomberg's office contacted the parents to express sadness about the attacks.¹³⁹

Public Accommodation

February 4, 2009 - A San Diego branch of Navy Federal Credit Union denied a Muslim service due to her hijab. Though the woman explained her head was covered for religious purposes, the bank employees refused



to make an exception to a no hats, no hoods policy. The bank released a statement explaining that headgear of any kind including hoods, sunglasses, and hats must be removed when entering the bank for security purposes, while special considerations are at the discretion of the management at a specific location. According to CAIR, under this rule, Muslims, Jews, Sikhs, nuns, and cancer patients are all in danger of being discriminated against. The Virginia based bank has stated that it will remind the branch that the “no hats” policy does not apply to religiously-mandated headgear, and has apologized.¹⁴⁰

March 9, 2009 - A Muslim woman was twice singled out at a Navy Federal Credit Union branch in Maryland because of her decision to wear a hijab. The woman was removed from the line by bank officials and asked to conduct her business in one of the bank’s back rooms. She was also told she would have to conduct all future bank business in a separate area. On March 7, the woman was again asked to conduct her business in a back room. The woman refused and left the bank. The bank informed CAIR it would remind its employees that the bank’s ban on head coverings did not apply to religious head coverings. The policy, however remains vague.¹⁴¹

December 8, 2009 - A Muslim woman has alleged verbal abuse by a security guard at a Gresham, Ill. branch of Citibank. According to the woman, the guard informed her it was against bank policy to allow individuals wearing any sort of head covering while conducting business at the establishment. Another Citibank employee allowed the woman access, but insisted on escorting her to the counter and stood watching closely while the woman conducted her business. Throughout the process, the woman reported, the security guard made anti-Muslim remarks. CAIR called on Citibank to apologize to the woman and address its policies to avoid further discrimination.¹⁴²

April 2010 - CAIR received a number of complaints against the Washington D.C. Department of Motor Vehicles. Muslim women who wear Islamic headscarves or hijabs were frequently required to push back their scarves, exposing their hairline in their driver’s license photo. CAIR contacted the DMV and suggested an alternative language for their head cover policy. Instead of using the term “including the hairline” to describe how much of one’s face must be visible, CAIR suggested the term, “up to the hairline without exposing hair.” The DMV agreed to the wording changes.

April 13, 2010 - A Delaware Muslim woman was told to remove her hijab to take her driver’s license photo in accordance with “national security policy.” During the incident, another driver waiting in line for a photograph allegedly suggested the DMV “send them back to Af-

ghanistan.” The sixteen-year-old driver, who is of Arab-American heritage, broke down in tears. CAIR –Philadelphia intervened on the woman’s behalf and the Delaware DMV issued a swift apology and allowed the woman to re-take her photograph, with hijab, free of charge at a different facility.

June 3, 2010 - A San Diego woman will be allowed to retake her driver’s license photo while wearing her hijab. Despite a California regulation that allows for religiously-mandated head coverings, the woman was asked to remove her hijab for the photo. CAIR-San Diego contacted the Department of Motor Vehicles and arranged for the woman to retake her driver’s license photo wearing the hijab. CAIR also provided the DMV authorities with a copy of the CAIR report, “Religious Accommodation in Driver’s License Photographs: A Review of Codes, Policies, and Practices in the 50 States.”¹⁴³

Mosque Vandalism

June 4, 2009 - A Cyprus, Calif., mosque was vandalized in the early morning of July 4, 2009. Graffiti was sprawled across the side of the building with statements such as “we’re going to kill you” and “US military is going to kill you all.” This crime was reported in the hours prior to President Obama’s Cairo speech.¹⁴⁴

July 6, 2009 - Two teens were arrested for vandalizing an Islamic school in West Kendall, Fla. The assailants, both 17, were arrested for smashing two windows on the school’s west wall with an iron rod and also slashing two tires of a 2003

Dodge van. Six months prior, the mosque was sprayed with bullets that left broken windows and holes in the building's dome. The year before, the center's sign was defaced with a Nazi swastika and profanity.¹⁴⁵

August 26, 2009 - A South Carolina mosque was vandalized with the phrase "Death to Muslims." The phrase was found scratched into the sidewalk outside the mosque. The same mosque was burned in an arson attack in 1995.¹⁴⁶

October 9, 2009 - An unidentified man entered Houston's Turkish Center Mosque and scrawled derogatory, anti-Islam remarks on the interior walls.¹⁴⁷

November 30, 2009 - An Oregon mosque was targeted by bias motivated vandalism. The mosque's mail box was scrawled with the phrase "Allah is a pig."¹⁴⁸

January 4, 2010 - A burned Quran was found at the back entrance of a Los Angeles mosque following Friday prayers. Vandals also defaced the Islamic component to an interfaith holiday display at a community center.¹⁴⁹

May 10, 2010 - A bomb exploded late in the evening outside a Jacksonville, Fla. mosque. Worshipers at the Islamic Center of Northeast Florida heard a loud noise outside the mosque shortly before the evening (isha) prayer.

July, 2010 - An Arlington, Texas, mosque was vandalized in what the Islamic center's president has labeled backlash against the proposed mosque in Lower Manhattan. The parking lot was covered with a graphic picture depicting Uncle Sam having

sex with Allah. Later the same weekend, someone attempted arson by cutting old gas lines. When their attempt to burn the mosque was unsuccessful the assailants set fire to the mosque playground instead.¹⁵⁰

August 25, 2010 - A mosque in California was vandalized with a brick and hate signs, some of which referred to the controversy over the proposed Park 51 Project. Vandals left signs at a Madera, California Islamic center. The signs read "Wake up America, the Enemy is here. ANB," "No Temple for the God of terrorism at Ground Zero ANB" and "American Nationalist Brotherhood."¹⁵¹

August 28, 2010 - Equipment at the construction site of the Islamic Center of Murfreesboro was set on fire. Gasoline was poured on several pieces of equipment at the site, but it appeared the arsonist was frightened off before more damage could be done. One piece of construction equipment was burned. One day after the attempted arson, shots were fired near the mosque while members of the congregation surveyed the fire damage.¹⁵²

August 29, 2010 - A mock pig inscribed with anti-Islam rhetoric was left at a Calif. Islamic center. The pig was left in the mailbox of the mosque and was inscribed with "No Mosque in NYC," "Remember 9/11" and "MO HAM MED the Pig."¹⁵³

September 8, 2010 - An Arizona mosque had windows broken and was vandalized with graffiti. Representatives of the mosque, which is under construction, suspect a bias motive, possibly

related to growing anti-Muslim sentiment sparked partly by the proposed Islamic cultural center in lower Manhattan.¹⁵⁴

September 14, 2010 - Burned Qurans were found outside mosques in Knoxville, Tenn., and East Lansing, Mich. Local law enforcement announced they would increase security patrols near the mosques in light of the incidents. The incidents followed a Florida pastor's controversial proposal to burn Qurans on September 11.¹⁵⁵

September 18, 2010 - Workers discovered a burnt Quran outside a mosque in San Francisco.¹⁵⁶

October 13, 2010 - Members of a mosque in Florence, S.C., discovered the mosque property defaced with bacon. Vandals wrote the words "pig" and "chump" in strips of bacon along the walkway of the mosque. When the messages were first discovered they were assumed to be a simple practical joke; however, the incident is now being investigated as a potentially bias motivated crime.¹⁵⁷

Profiling

January 2, 2009 - CAIR filed a complaint with the Department of Transportation after nine Muslim passengers were removed from an AirTran flight in Virginia. The passengers were removed after another passenger overheard a one of the party remark about the safest seating location on an airplane. The passengers were removed, denied re-boarding and barred from future AirTran flights. The passengers have since filed suit.¹⁵⁸

September 11, 2009 - A college student in Penn., was handcuffed and held for five hours by TSA agents because he had Arabic flash cards in his backpack.¹⁵⁹

December 27, 2009 - CAIR called attention to two separate airline incidents that appear to be tied to racial profiling. In Arizona, two men were removed from a US Airways flight and questioned by the FBI after another passenger heard them speaking in a language other than English. The men were released after questioning. In Mich. a Nigerian man was removed when other passengers noted he had spent a considerable amount of time in the aircraft's bathroom. The extended period in the restroom was due to the man's illness.¹⁶⁰

March 30, 2010 - A group of four Muslim men were stopped and detained for nearly an hour in Nevada. The men were driving through Nevada and stopped to pray in a parking lot. The men were stopped and detained for almost an hour based on "suspicious behavior." Their names were checked against a national terrorism watch list. CAIR-LA filed a complaint against the police officers.¹⁶¹

May 6, 2010 - A Muslim couple report harassment each time they return to the U.S. from Vancouver. They believe they have been targeted because of their faith, which is apparent both from the woman's hijab and the man's passport which indicates he has traveled to Mecca. Recently, their car was surrounded by armed border patrol officials and dogs. They were removed

from their car, handcuffed and placed in a cell. The couple was separated and the woman was questioned inappropriately about Islam. The couple was released and allowed to cross, but they were never given a reason for their detention.¹⁶²

June 17, 2010 - A United States citizen was placed on the no fly list after an eighteen-month stay in Yemen. The man was stranded in Cairo and was told he would not be allowed to board the plane home to the United States. Civil liberties groups, including CAIR, say this man's case is part of a growing trend of placing citizens on the no fly list so federal authorities may question them overseas, without legal counsel.¹⁶³

August 21, 2010 - A Pakistani couple was interrogated in a police car beneath a plane for several hours before being released. Though they asked repeatedly, the couple was not given a reason for their detention. CAIR is looking into the incident on suspicion racial profiling may be responsible for the couple's lengthy detention.¹⁶⁴

October 31, 2010 - Four Muslim men were escorted off a Delta flight when it landed at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. A flight attendant had reported suspicious behavior after one of the men dropped a pen while filling out a customs form and bent down to pick it up.¹⁶⁵

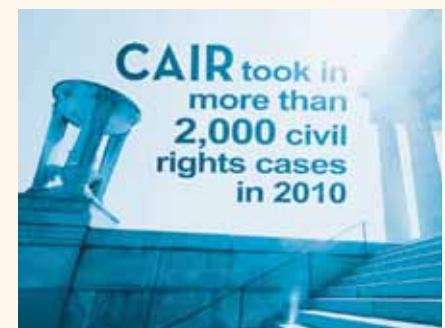
November 19, 2010 - 17 Virginia pilgrims missed their flight to participate in the annual Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca when UPS failed to deliver the package

containing their passports. The package was instead turned over to U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials. Only after CBP released the passports and agreed to cover the additional travel costs incurred, were the pilgrims able to leave for hajj.¹⁶⁶

Other

June 14, 2010 - A peace march to show support for a proposed mosque in Sheepshead Bay, N.Y. turned ugly when counter-demonstrators began shouting at the marchers. One man shouted "This is a Jewish neighborhood – build a mosque in your own neighborhood," and a woman yelled, "Muslims don't love America. They hate America."

August 23, 2010 - An African-American man was mistakenly thought to be a Muslim and was harassed at an anti-mosque rally in New York City. The crowd chanted "no mosque here" and surrounded the man, calling him a "coward." One demonstrator shouted, "Muhammad is a p*g" and another, "He must have voted for Obama." One man who tried to diffuse the tension reminded the protestors, "We're against the Muslims, not each other."¹⁶⁷



Where We Want to Go



“I would like to remind you that many of the students who attend our schools are of the Muslim faith. Many Muslims have died fighting for this country ... Are we now to demonstrate the same intolerance that the extremists demonstrate?” - John Shipp, head varsity football coach at Fountain Valley, California High School, speaking in opposition to changing school textbooks to reflect Act! For America’s hate-filled agenda, 7/23/2010

CAIR’s Vision Regarding Islamophobia in America

Our vision looks toward the time when being Muslim carries a positive connotation and Islam has an equal place among many faiths in America’s pluralistic society.

Among the indicators that this vision is a reality would be the following points:

- Islam has a 75 percent or higher favorability rating among the general public.
- A person’s Muslim faith is considered an asset in private employment and public service.
- Politicians welcome and seek public support from Americans of the Islamic faith.
- Association with anti-Muslim movements or rhetoric discredits those who put themselves forward seeking to earn the privilege of public service.

The general consensus among our interviewees was that Muslims do not seek or even desire special treatment in America. A law enforcement official summed up this attitude saying, “I do not want anything special just because I am a Muslim. I only want to see unyielding obedience to the Constitution and respect for the principles that brought this great nation into existence.”

A Vision Beyond the Negative

“Ordinary” and “normal” were adjectives interviewees used frequently to describe the public’s view of Muslims in an America that is generally free of Islamophobia.

“[A person’s] religion should be irrelevant,” said a Muslim who has held elected office. The former elected official then added, “People should not cast aspersions on [Muslims] publicly or privately for their faith.”

Indeed, the sense that Muslims simply wish to not be viewed as the “bad guys” came up so frequently that when we originally crafted our vision regarding Islamophobia in America we wrote, “Being Muslim carries no

negative connotation in America,” setting the mere absence of negative associations as an ideal, rather than positive model we ultimately chose.

This early vision was presented to attendees of CAIR’s leadership conference and 16th annual banquet in Arlington, Va., in October 2010. Asked if this was a future they supported, the people in the room generally nodded agreement.

One voice, however, disagreed. An individual seated in the back of the room argued that we should move beyond simply not being disliked into being valued for the positive ethics—honesty, fairness, integrity, community-focus—that Islam instills.

That individual set a higher bar for us all. His insight is now our vision.

One Component of a Broader Goal

Obviously, Muslims are not the only group in America facing discrimination. In focusing on pushing back against Islamophobia, we do not intend to imply that we are ignoring the hatred we



see directed toward Hispanics, African-Americans, Mormons, Jews and other ethnic, cultural and faith minorities.

“While America has made major progress in racial harmony, there is still a long road ahead of us to reach our destination when all people are judged on the content of their character and neither on the color of their skin or their faith,”¹⁶⁸ CAIR’s former research director Mohammed Nimer wrote in a book on Islamophobia and anti-Americanism in 2007.

Knowing it was a utopian vision, CAIR interviewers asked the question, “What does an America free of Islamophobia look like?” to our interviewees. The intent was to try to define a

concrete vision regarding Islamophobia in America.

In answering the question, many interviewees noted that opposition to Islamophobia must occur in step with the struggle against all xenophobia and prejudice.

Imam Sayed Moustafa al-Qazwini sums up this consensus: “America without prejudice, without discrimination, not only Islamophobia, is a paradise. I look at it as a paradise. I look at it as the best place on Earth where people of many races and ethnicities and creeds and cultures and colors they get along well they live together they contribute to the richness of this society.”

“An America free of Islamophobia looks like the America in the imagination of people,” a professor of contemporary Islamic studies said in echo of the imam’s thoughts. “More specifically, it is an America that has learned from its own history and is secure enough with itself not to romanticize it in order to create a mythical America or a mythical American history.”

Seeking the ‘Reset’ Button

Our future vision of America gives us direction. Our understanding that this future vision is part of a broader goal of ending discrimination in America gives us energy. The last component we need is hope.

Sometimes the daily serving of mosque opposition, political or simply bigoted attacks on our Islamic faith, or reports of discrimination can seem overwhelming.

While distressing, the current situation is not insurmountable.

“America has a reset button,” a professor of contemporary Islamic studies told us. “It has the ability that once in a while the historical processes come to bear where the group that previously had been marginalized, discriminated against, persecuted that America hits the reset button and that from that point on that group has now become vested, that group has become indigenized.”



Recommendations

Unchallenged, Islamophobia will continue to increase. For this first report, we are directing our recommendations to the Muslim community in the United States. While all of society should and must be involved in eradicating all forms of bigotry from our nation, Muslims must be willing to take the lead when it comes to pushing back against Islamophobia.

There are many recommendations below, but the key point is this: Put your faith into action. Do something positive, however small, on a consistent basis.

“It should not be one percent of our attention or one percent of our time or one percent of our wealth,” said CAIR Executive Director Nihad Awad. “We should be generous, as if we are giving to ourselves.”

Recommendations to American Muslim Individuals

1 Be an example of the Islamic traditions of patience and reason

Muslims should avoid responses that play into the agendas of those seeking to smear our faith.

God states in the Quran: “(But whatever they may say or do,) repel the evil (that they commit) with something that is better: We are fully aware of what they attribute (to Us).” (The Holy Quran, 23:96)

And also: “(Since) good and evil cannot be equal, repel (the evil deed) with one that is better. Then you will see that he

“The best thing I could always suggest to an individual is to act by example. Their example must be one that is calm and collected. Reflect the teachings of Prophet Mohammad—even in the face of his greatest enemies and critics and people who threw garbage on him, he treated people with the utmost respect and dignity,” said Asad Ba-Yunus.

with whom you had enmity, will become your close friend.” (The Holy Quran, 41:34)

A Christian leader offered this observation during an interview for this report:

“I think there is the double burden that American Muslims have of both having to explain and convey their faith to a group of people who are non-Muslim who may be asking very ignorant and silly questions but nonetheless ones that are genuine. I think having an enormous amount of patience with non-Muslims is not necessarily a fair thing, but nonetheless an important thing. Trying hard to explain their faith as much as they possibly can without going crazy but also having patience and understanding with non-Muslims who perhaps should have a better understanding but actually don't, and I think that's an incredibly, incredibly important thing.”

2 Be an open neighbor

“I do not think that we as individuals have been forthright in being able to express our values,” said

In a well-known saying, Prophet Muhammad instructed Muslims, “Whoever sees something evil should change it with his hand. If he cannot, then with his tongue; and if he cannot do even that, then [he should hate it] in his heart. And that is the weakest degree of faith.” (Sahih Muslim)

For this first Islamophobia report, we are directing our recommendations toward American Muslims and their institutions. This is a reflection of our belief that American Muslims must take the lead in pushing back against Islamophobia. We should not just hate bigotry in our hearts; we should use all legal and peaceful means available to us to change it with our actions. If we do not, how then can we ask our friends and neighbors to shoulder the burden?

In a future report, we will offer recommendations to the public and private sectors. For now we offer the following requests to those who wish to help rid our country of Islamophobia and other forms of intolerance:

1. Elected officials should pass legislation banning racial profiling.
2. People in positions of leadership and influence should speak strongly against smearing entire faiths or peoples.
3. All of us should refuse to offer a legitimizing platform to those who spout anti-Muslim bigotry or Islamophobia.
4. When intolerance occurs, people of conscience should band together and provide positive alternatives.

Haris Tarin, Washington D.C. office director for MPAC. “We have just taken for granted the fact that our fellow citizens are good people. They know me, so they do not need to know my values and my principles and my religion. I think that has got to change. I think the average individual to a certain extent needs to engage in conversations that humanize Muslims, humanize Islam. Because that is the way you defeat Islamophobia on the ground.”

CAIR’s research supports this assertion.

Additionally, a Gallup study indicated that, “personal affiliation with a Muslim may help to soften extreme prejudice, but is not enough to eliminate it.” Gallup adds, “One’s perception of the faith is as strongly associated with tolerance, as is one’s perception of the characteristics of the faith group in general. Those who associate attributes such as gender issues, peace, and inter-faith acceptance with Muslims are more likely to claim no prejudice against the faith group.”¹⁶⁹

Suggestions:

1. Introduce yourself to your neighbors of all faiths, races and ethnicities. Take them food or other small gifts on Islamic holidays or on their holidays. Invite them to social occasions you host in your home. We recommend discussing the issue of religion if and when it comes up naturally, whether that is to explain a dietary or other religious observation or as part of a broader discussion of beliefs.
2. Repeatedly speak out in a clear and thoughtful manner condemning any form of bigotry.

3 Be active in community life

1. Get involved in your neighborhood watch or community association.
2. Pioneer or join a community clean-up or other neighborhood improvement events.
3. Join your children’s school’s Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or other community organization.
4. Put together a Ramadan or Hajj display at a local organization, school or library.
5. Donate books, DVDs and other materials about Islam to your local public and school libraries.
6. Join or start a local CAIR chapter.
7. Submit an opinion piece to your newspaper about an issue of local importance.

4 Be active in political life

1. Attend school board meetings and city council meetings.
2. Make sure you register to vote and cast your ballot in local, state and national elections.
3. Volunteer to campaign for a candidate you feel reflects your values.
4. Contribute to candidates for political office.
5. Run for elected office.
6. Write, call or e-mail the elected officials who represent you in Congress about issues that are important to you.
7. Orient your children toward

public service, law, political science, and media-related fields.

8. Create Muslims professional associations and neighborhood organizations whose aim is to serve all members of your local community, e.g. free clinics, supporting little leagues and pee wee leagues (which are drying up due to lack of funding), homeless shelters, soup kitchens, etc.
9. Create blogs and websites that put the Muslim-haters on the defensive.

5 Document and report acts of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim discrimination.

Report such incidents to the appropriate authorities. Both Human Rights First and the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights note that hate crimes are underreported in the United States.¹⁷⁰ This matches CAIR’s experience.

We understand that reporting an incident is often that last thing a person wants to do, but it is the best thing for ensuring justice and protecting others from experiencing similar incidents.

Perpetrators of discrimination cannot be allowed to think their crime carries no consequences. The public must see and share the natural revulsion that accompanies hearing and seeing the results of bigotry.

Documentation is important. Take pictures of vandalism; record bigoted speech when you see it on TV.

To report an Islamophobic act or an incident of anti-Muslim

discrimination, call CAIR at (202) 488-8787 or go here: <http://www.cair.com/FileACase/tabid/62/Default.aspx>.

6 Confront Islamophobia in the news and entertainment media

1. Document

- a. Note the date and time, channel or program, and the person who made the Islamophobic comments. (Was it the host or a guest?)
- b. Try to obtain a transcript, podcast or recording of the incident.
- c. Write down the advertisers whose ads aired during the program.
- d. If you are tracking a pattern of Islamophobic discourse, begin recording the program every time it airs.

2. Report it to CAIR

- a. To help us respond effectively, include as much of the above documentation as possible.

3. Act

- a. Contact the editor, station manager, or other official from the media outlet to express your concerns. Always be polite, but clear and assertive. See “Writing a Letter to the Editor” below.
- b. Organize a coalition to arrange a community meeting with the outlet’s management.
- c. Contact CAIR to obtain

copies of “American Muslims: A Journalist’s Guide to Understanding Islam and Muslims” and distribute them to local media.

4. If these meetings do not yield a satisfactory result, consider launching an advertiser campaign. Contact CAIR for more detailed guidance on this step.

7 Write a letter to the editor

To increase your chances of publication, follow these guidelines:

1. React quickly to the news of the day, negative coverage or views you support. If possible, have the letter in the hands of an editor on the same day.
2. Check online letter submission guidelines for that particular publication.
3. Address the letter to the media outlet’s opinion editor.
4. Keep your letter to no more than 150 to 250 words.
5. State the purpose of the letter in 25 words or less.
6. Pick one main topic and focus only on that one issue.
7. Be authoritative. If possible, speak on behalf of a local organization in which you are involved.
8. Give background information on the issue or misconception. Cite impartial and objective sources.
9. Offer a reasonable and fair solution to the problem you are addressing in your letter.
10. Be passionate or even con-

troversial, but avoid rhetoric and defamation.

8 Address Islamophobia on the Internet

1. Leverage social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter) to network and promote a positive and accurate image of Islam and Muslims.

- a. One easy method is to re-post items distributed by CAIR. To join CAIR’s e-mail list, go to www.cair.com and click on “Email: Join our mailing list” on the right side of the page.
- b. Use your talent to start a blog to increase knowledge and familiarity with Islam and Muslims.
- c. Produce short educational videos and post them on YouTube.
- d. Responding to insulting chain e-mails or online comments with accurate and balanced information about Islam can help stop the cycle of misinformation.

2. Gauge the influence of the source of Islamophobia on the internet. Many obscure individuals or organizations are desperate to get the publicity a controversy would bring them. We should try not to give them more publicity than they can get on their own. In many such cases, the best response is not to react at all.

3. If the Islamophobic content comes from an influential source, document it.

- a. Save the URL (Internet address) and note the date and time you accessed the Islamophobic content.

- b. Save a screen shot/print screen image of the Islamophobic content.
- c. Include as much information about the author and source as possible.
- d. Note the Internet service provider or website host.
- e. Report Islamophobic content from influential sources to CAIR.

9 Confront Islamophobia from public figures

1. Document

- a. If you learn of Islamophobic comments made by a public official (elected or appointed official, candidate, school official, etc.), document the source, date and any other pertinent information.
- b. If you hear Islamophobic comments from public figures that are not recorded, write them down as soon as you can and ask others who may have heard them to write what they heard, or at least to act as witnesses to the comments.
- c. If allowed by law, record events such as town hall meetings or other public gatherings you attend.

2. Report Islamophobic incidents or comments to CAIR.

3. Organize a local letter-writing or call-in campaign to express community concerns to the person responsible for the Islamophobic statements. Submitting letters for publication in a local newspaper can help make your position known to a broader audience.

4. Get involved. Consider joining or forming community coalitions to meet with your local, state and federal elected officials. While meetings may be a good response to Islamophobic comments by public officials, it is more effective to establish good relationships prior to an incident. If an elected official knows local Muslims, and has heard their concerns and felt their support, he or she is more likely to stand up for the Muslim community when another public figure makes a bigoted or ill-informed comment.

5. Sponsor copies of the Quran to be sent to local public officials and opinion leaders. Visit: www.explorethequran.com.

10 Support local, regional and national Muslim organizations

“One thing individuals can do ... is to participate in mosque life and to encourage the participation of the mosque and the *jamaat* in American life,” said Imam Talib Abdur Rashid during an interview for this report.

Unfortunately, many excellent local efforts are not fully capitalized on or integrated with larger national endeavors. Frequently, this is purely because the organizers are unaware of others’ activities. We recommend that individuals, local and regional groups form partnerships or consider signing a memorandum of understanding with a national organization to synergize their work, granting all better results.

Working with any of CAIR’s local chapters may serve to further your cause. Find the nearest

CAIR chapter by visiting here: www.cair.com/Chapters.aspx

Recommendations to American Muslim Institutions

1 Provide positive alternatives to Islamophobic events

1. Organize events that provide a positive community outlet for concerns related to Islamophobia or other forms of intolerance. CAIR believes that the best response to an Islamophobic event is to offer a positive alternative.

2. Form community groups that promote mutual understanding. This is best done before an incident occurs in the local community that requires a unified response.

2 Invest in community development

1. Assist in the development of Muslim colleges that can produce graduates who think based on Islamic values and act in the American pluralistic and constitutional context.

Dr. Robert Crane echoes this suggestion: “Educate the younger generation with vision so that they can enter academia and help change entire paradigms of thought, or join and found think tanks in order to shape political agendas, or even prepare for a career in politics in order to work proactively from an interfaith perspective on specific policy issues unrelated to Muslims as a group or Islam as a religion.”¹⁷¹

2. Establish systematic and comprehensive programs to educate interested Americans about Islam in the form of class-

es in mosques based on a nationally established curriculum.

3 Re-introduce Islam

“There is a real set of opportunities for national Muslim organizations to really, so to speak, change the brand for Muslims in the United States. That is very hard to do,” Aziz Huq suggests. The goal he says is to “reconfigure people’s expectations about what it means to be a Muslim.”

“I do not think that we have been able to successfully put forth the counter narrative. Now the word ‘shariah’ is the new ‘jihad,’ which is being made over into a dirty word,” said Haris Tarin.

American Muslim institutions must change the dialogue from what Muslims are not (terrorists, extremists, here to remove the Constitution) to what we are.

Suggestions:

1. Support, promote and encourage books, movies and art produced by objective people or by Muslims.
2. Unite scholars and communications professionals to counter the narratives that misrepresent Islam, such as verses quoted out of context, mistreatment of women in Islam, co-opted terms such as “jihad” and “shariah.” Have them produce narratives that are accurate, easily understood and formatted for forums in which concise responses are required.

4 Begin to host Muslim achievers banquets

1. Recognize local Muslims and display their work, both to encourage young people and

also to allow your neighbors to see the good work Muslims are doing.

5 Expose the Islamophobes

1. They are small in number and they do not represent the majority of the public; however, they can poison the general public by providing misinformation.
2. In many instances, Muslim institutions are placed in situations where they must respond to material created by individuals and institutions. Institutions should unify efforts to expose the purposes and methods of funding of those who manufacture Islamophobia.

6 Promote volunteerism

Acting in the Islamic tradition of volunteerism should be a constant push from community leaders, not only during emergencies, but consistently encouraged during sermons and at other opportunities. Local institutions should offer their congregations or members regular opportunities to volunteer. We must better leverage the deep professional resources in finance, law, and medicine available in our community.

“I think we really need to serve the society,” said CAIR-National Executive Director Nihad Awad during a discussion about this report. “We need to do service beyond our immediate circles, beyond the traditional religious functions. I think that is when the community will find itself at home and when other people will find the community worthy of respect.”

7 Hold open houses

We recommend at least one open house per quarter for mosques and Islamic centers. The event need not specifically focus on Muslim topics. CAIR’s national headquarters hosted an open house during the 2009 presidential inauguration, offering attendees a place to recover from the January cold. Simply showing thoughtfulness and hospitality can change some people’s perceptions of Muslims.

Advertising is crucial to diversify the audience you are reaching. Many local radio and community newspapers offer an opportunity for free announcements of such community-building events. Ask the leadership of nearby churches and synagogues to announce your event to their congregants. Ask everyone to post your event announcement to their e-lists and Facebook.

Expand your event beyond a simple display of posters or ethnic food—host discussions on the issues of the day. Invite a spectrum of speakers.

8 Sponsor a CAIR “Know Your Rights and Responsibilities” workshop in your area

To schedule one for your community or company, please email info@cair.com or call (202) 488-8787.

9 Empower your community through civic engagement

CAIR offers civic participation training for those who are interested in improving the impact of the ideas and efforts. To schedule a training in your community, call (202) 488-8787 or

e-mail info@cair.com.

Download a copy of CAIR's Civic Participation Handbook, a manual designed to help you roll up your sleeves and start impacting the public sector, here:

http://www.cair.com/Portals/0/pdf/CAIR_Civic_Guide.pdf

10 Continue and strengthen outreach to law enforcement

In a 2004 press statement, Dr. Asma Mobin-Uddin of CAIR-Ohio said: "We would like to help law enforcement officials and Muslims have an appreciation for each other's needs and concerns. This way, we can improve understanding and cooperation

between the groups."

American Muslims strongly support law enforcement and the protection of our national security. As Americans, we also value the civil rights of all Americans. All Americans have the constitutional right of due process and to be politically active.

If you know of any criminal activity taking place in your community, it is both your religious and civic duty to immediately report such activity.

11 Ensure the safety and security of your institution

You can obtain a copy of CAIR's "Muslim Community Safety Kit,"

which has been developed to better equip you and your community with the knowledge necessary to protect against anti-Muslim bigotry or attacks, and to secure your basic legal rights.

Download your copy of the "Muslim Community Safety Kit" here:

<http://www.cair.com/ActionCenter/CommunityToolkit.aspx>



Park 51 and Contestation of Muslim Religious Sites

In order to situate a discussion about the Park 51 project, also referred to as Cordoba House or Cordoba Initiative, it is important to clarify what the development is. While acknowledging the enormously sensitive nature of the project, our effort here is to discern fact from fiction, clarity from hysteria, and hope from cynicism. Although not an exhaustive list, the following highlights the most important and consistently misrepresented facts about the Park 51 project.

Park 51 is:

- not a “victory memorial” to Islam;
- not located on the site of the former World Trade Center;
- not strictly a mosque (and nothing is wrong if it was a mosque);
- not a site to recruit young terrorists-in-training;
- not a site to infiltrate the United States by foreign anti-American entities;
- not the first Islamic institution to be attacked for planned construction or expansion.

Park 51 is:

- a planned 13-story Muslim community center located two blocks from the World Trade Center site in Lower Manhattan;
- a center that would include a prayer space, 500-seat auditorium, theater, performing arts center, fitness center, swimming pool, basketball court,

childcare service, bookstore, culinary school, art studio, food court, and a September 11th memorial;

- a public proposal that was submitted in December 2009, and approved by the local community board in May 2010, which attracted the attention of conservative bloggers Pamela Geller and Robert Spencer of Stop the Islamization of America (SIOA) who coined the phrase “Ground Zero mosque”;
- a platform for interfaith dialogue and community building;
- a project that made into a politically divisive campaign issue in the 2010 midterm elections;
- an issue that led to widespread protests of current and future mosque projects in other states;
- the subject of both criticism and support by families and survivors of 9/11, local Manhattanites, residents of New York City and the State of New York, and the nation.

A Quinnipiac University Poll in June 2010 found that while a majority of New York City voters opposed the construction by fifty-two percent while a majority of Manhattanites supported the project by fourth-six percent.¹⁷² Two Marist Polls of registered voters showed that support of Park 51 had increased from thirty-four percent in August 2010 to forty-one percent in September 2010, indicating moderate increase in support from liberals, whites, African Americans, Latinos, Catho-

lics, Protestants, and Jews.¹⁷³

Another Quinnipiac University Poll conducted in August 2010 found a 54% majority of New York State residents who agreed “that because of American freedom of religion, Muslims have the right to build the mosque near Ground Zero.”¹⁷⁴

Chronology of the “Ground Zero Mosque”

(This text in this chronology section is authored by Justin Elliott and is part of his article “How the Ground Zero Mosque fear mongering began” which was published by Salon.com on August 16, 2010. It is used with permission.¹)

Dec. 8, 2009: The Times publishes a lengthy front-page look at the Cordoba project. “We want to push back against the extremists,” Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, the lead organizer, is quoted as saying. Two Jewish leaders and two city officials, including the mayor’s office, say they support the idea, as does the mother of a man killed on 9/11. An FBI spokesman says the imam has worked with the bureau. Besides a few third-tier right-wing blogs, including Pamela Geller’s Atlas Shrugs site, no one much notices the Times story.

Dec. 21, 2009: Conservative media personality Laura Ingraham interviews Abdul Rauf’s wife, Daisy Khan, while guest-

¹ To view Mr. Elliott’s piece in its entirety see: http://www.salon.com/news/ground_zero_mosque/index.html?story=/politics/war_room/2010/08/16/ground_zero_mosque_origins

hosting “The O’Reilly Factor” on Fox. In hindsight, the segment is remarkable for its cordiality. “I can’t find many people who really have a problem with it,” Ingraham says of the Cordoba project, adding at the end of the interview, “I like what you’re trying to do.”

* (This segment also includes onscreen the first use that we’ve seen of the misnomer “ground zero mosque.”) After the segment — and despite the front-page Times story — there were no news articles on the mosque for five and a half months, according to a search of the Nexis newspaper archive.

May 6, 2010: After a unanimous vote by a New York City community board committee to approve the project, the AP runs a story. It quotes relatives of 9/11 victims (called by the reporter), who offer differing opinions. The New York Post, meanwhile, runs a story under the inaccurate headline, “Panel Approves ‘WTC’ Mosque.” Geller is less subtle, titling her post that day, “Monster Mosque Pushes Ahead in Shadow of World Trade Center Islamic Death and Destruction.” She writes on her Atlas Shrugs blog, “This is Islamic domination and expansionism. The location is no accident. Just as Al-Aqsa was built on top of the Temple in Jerusalem.” (To get an idea of where Geller is coming from, she once suggested that Malcolm X was Obama’s real father. Seriously.)

May 7, 2010: Geller’s group, Stop Islamization of America (SIOA), launches “Campaign Offensive: Stop the 911 Mosque!” (SIOA’s associate director is

Robert Spencer, who makes his living writing and speaking about the evils of Islam.) Geller posts the names and contact information for the mayor and members of the community board, encouraging people to write. The board chair later reports getting “hundreds and hundreds” of calls and e-mails from around the world.

May 8, 2010: Geller announces SIOA’s first protest against what she calls the “911 monster mosque” for May 29. She and Spencer and several other members of the professional anti-Islam industry will attend. (She also says that the protest will mark the dark day of “May 29, 1453, [when] the Ottoman forces led by the Sultan Mehmet II broke through the Byzantine defenses against the Muslim siege of Constantinople.” The outrage-peddling New York Post columnist Andrea Peyser argues in a note at the end of her column a couple of days later that “there are better places to put a mosque.”

May 13, 2010: Peyser follows up with an entire column devoted to “Mosque Madness at Ground Zero.” This is a significant moment in the development of the “ground zero mosque” narrative: It’s the first newspaper article that frames the project as inherently wrong and suspect, in the way that Geller has been framing it for months. Peyser in fact quotes Geller at length and promotes the anti-mosque protest of Stop Islamization of America, which Peyser describes as a “human-rights group.” Peyser also reports — falsely — that Cordoba House’s opening date will be Sept. 11, 2011.

Analysis

What occurred with the Park 51 proposal and the resulting controversy does not occlude the fact that mosques around the country were already subjects of intense scrutiny and, in some cases, vandalized and violently attacked as this report has indicated. But this particular proposal had two important effects worth noting.

First, the Park 51 proposal became a flashpoint to mobilize and solidify existing extremist anti-Muslim sentiment. In doing so, it transformed what was a New York issue into a national campaign, and made any mosque — existing and future ones — vulnerable to an easy-to-use rhetorical weapon.

Second, the inflammatory rhetoric and subsequent anti-Islamic resistance can further undermine any future development plans for a mosque, cultural center, or any other proposal linked with the Muslim American community nationwide. The subsequent protests against proposed mosques that were listed in this report are evidence of this trend. As a result, the prospects for religious freedom, education, spiritual and political leadership, and more importantly, the very symbol of faith, will not only continue to be heavily scrutinized in the public eye, but also potentially weaken efforts at community-building. This latter point is perhaps the most sobering outcome stemming from the Park 51 controversy.

The Park 51 controversy reveals how Islam and Muslim American communities will continue to be vulnerable to Islamophobic

attacks. It also demonstrates how our communities are bound together more tightly than ever before. One neighborhood's issue can have rippling effects to other communities across the country.

However, the lesson of the Park 51 proposal is not to condemn community leaders for their lack of foresight and sensitivity, or to cease our efforts in community building and retreat silently. Instead, the lesson to be learned takes its pages from the history of houses of worship and communities of faith in the United States.

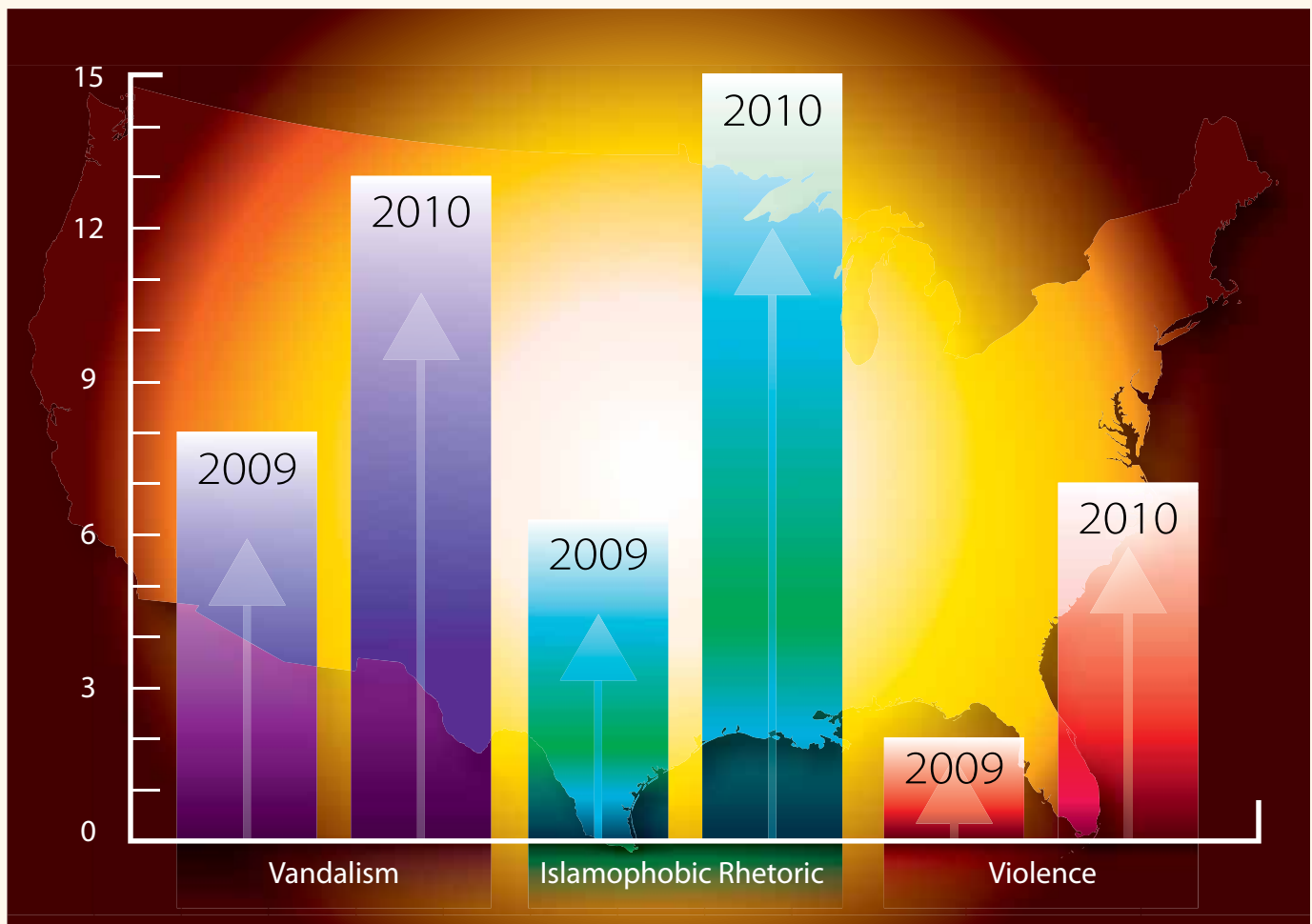
Historically, houses of worship were all sites and symbols of a community's moral conscience and cultural identity. They had undeniably positive effects, for example, by transforming neighborhood blight and reducing crime into a thriving and prosperous community.¹⁷⁵

Places of worship were also key sources for many of America's historical and contemporary movements for civil rights and social justice. From abolitionists and anti-war protestors to sanctuary movements and civil rights, communities of faith have always

organized and mobilized against the manifestation of injustice, inequality, and dehumanization.

To hear the call to retreat silently in the wake of the Park 51 controversy is to mistake humility for weakness. Instead, the greatest lesson about the historic role of houses of worship in the fight for struggle and equality is that faith compels communities to endure, to move forward and onward. In this sense, the struggle for equality and respect begins and will end with the mosque.

Vandalism, Islamophobic Rhetoric and Violence Targeting Mosques by Year





Oklahoma's 2010 Anti-Islam Ballot

Oklahoma's 2010 Anti-Islam Ballot Measure: "Fundamental Rights may not be Submitted to Vote"

The "Save Our State" amendment (SQ 755), asked Oklahomans to ban their state courts from considering or using either international or Shariah law. In defining Shariah law, the measure's text said, "It is based on two principal sources, the Koran and the teaching of Mohamed." To our knowledge, this is the first instance of a law specifically aimed at discriminating against Muslims ever passing in the United States.

CAIR monitored the voting results on November 2, 2010 and was prepared to act when the measure passed. A mere two days later, Muneer Awad, executive director of CAIR's Oklahoma chapter (CAIR-OK), filed a lawsuit as an individual challenging the constitutionality of

the ballot measure.

Awad's lawsuit, based on his own Shariah-compliant will, said SQ 755 violates the First Amendment's Establishment Clause that bars government bodies from making laws "respecting the establishment of religion."

CAIR says the ballot measure would infringe on the constitutional rights of ordinary Oklahomans—including the right to wear religious head scarves in driver's license photographs, choose Islamic marriage contracts, implement Islamic wills, or to be buried according to one's religious beliefs.

On Monday, November 28, 2010, CAIR applauded a strongly-worded ruling by a federal judge in Oklahoma granting an injunction that barred certification of SQ 755.

The ruling by Chief Judge Vicki Miles-LaGrange of the United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma ordered a preliminary injunction to block the certification of the amendment by the Oklahoma State Board of Elections until a final determination is made based on the merits of Awad's lawsuit.

In her ruling in support of Awad's legal arguments, Judge Miles-LaGrange wrote:

"This order addresses issues that go to the very foundation of our country, our (U.S.) Constitu-

tion, and particularly, the Bill of Rights.

"Throughout the course of our country's history, the will of the 'majority' has on occasion conflicted with the constitutional rights of individuals, an occurrence which our founders foresaw and provided for through the Bill of Rights. . .

"Having carefully reviewed the briefs on this issue, and having heard the evidence and arguments presented at the hearing, the Court finds plaintiff has made a strong showing of a substantial likelihood of success on the merits of his claim asserting a violation of the Free Exercise Clause.

"As set forth above, plaintiff has shown that the actual language of the amendment reasonably, and perhaps more reasonably, may be viewed as specifically singling out Sharia Law (plaintiff's faith) and, thus, is not facially neutral.

"Additionally, as set forth above, the Court finds that plaintiff has shown that there is a reasonable probability that the amendment would prevent plaintiff's will from being fully probated by a state court in Oklahoma because it incorporates by reference specific elements of the Islamic prophetic traditions.

"Further, plaintiff has presented evidence that there is a reasonable probability that Muslims, including plaintiff, will be unable to bring actions in Oklahoma

state courts for violations of the Oklahoma Religious Freedom Act and for violations of their rights under the United States Constitution if those violations are based upon their religion.

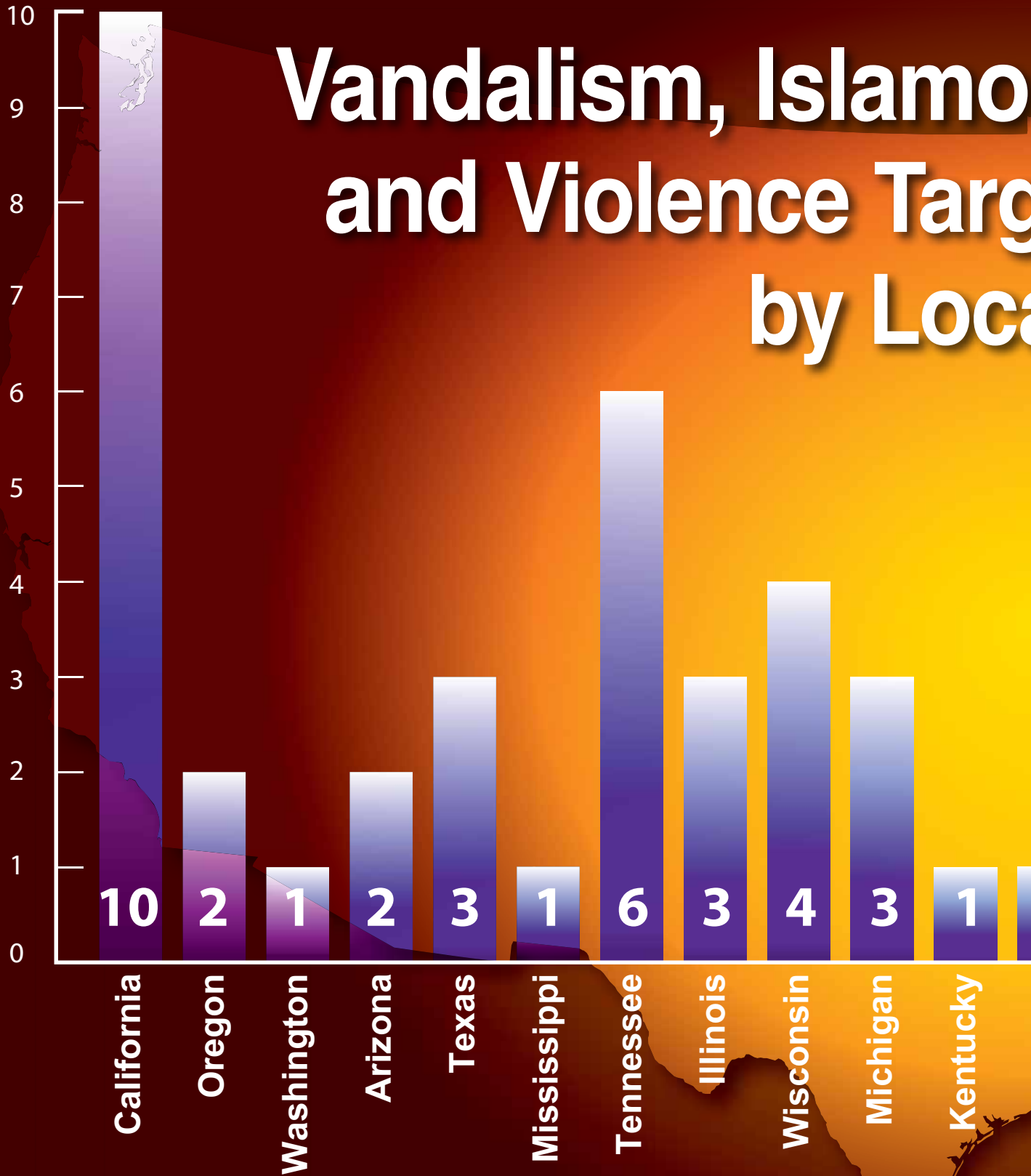
“Finally, the Court finds that defendants have presented no evidence which would show that the amendment is justified by any compelling interest or is narrowly tailored.”

CAIR National Executive Director Nihad Awad (no relation to Muneer Awad) said of the ruling, “Today marks another day in American history in which our courts have defended the Constitution against those who would deny its protections to a minority community. We agree with Judge Miles-LaGrange and the U.S. Supreme Court that ‘fundamental rights may not be submitted to vote.’”

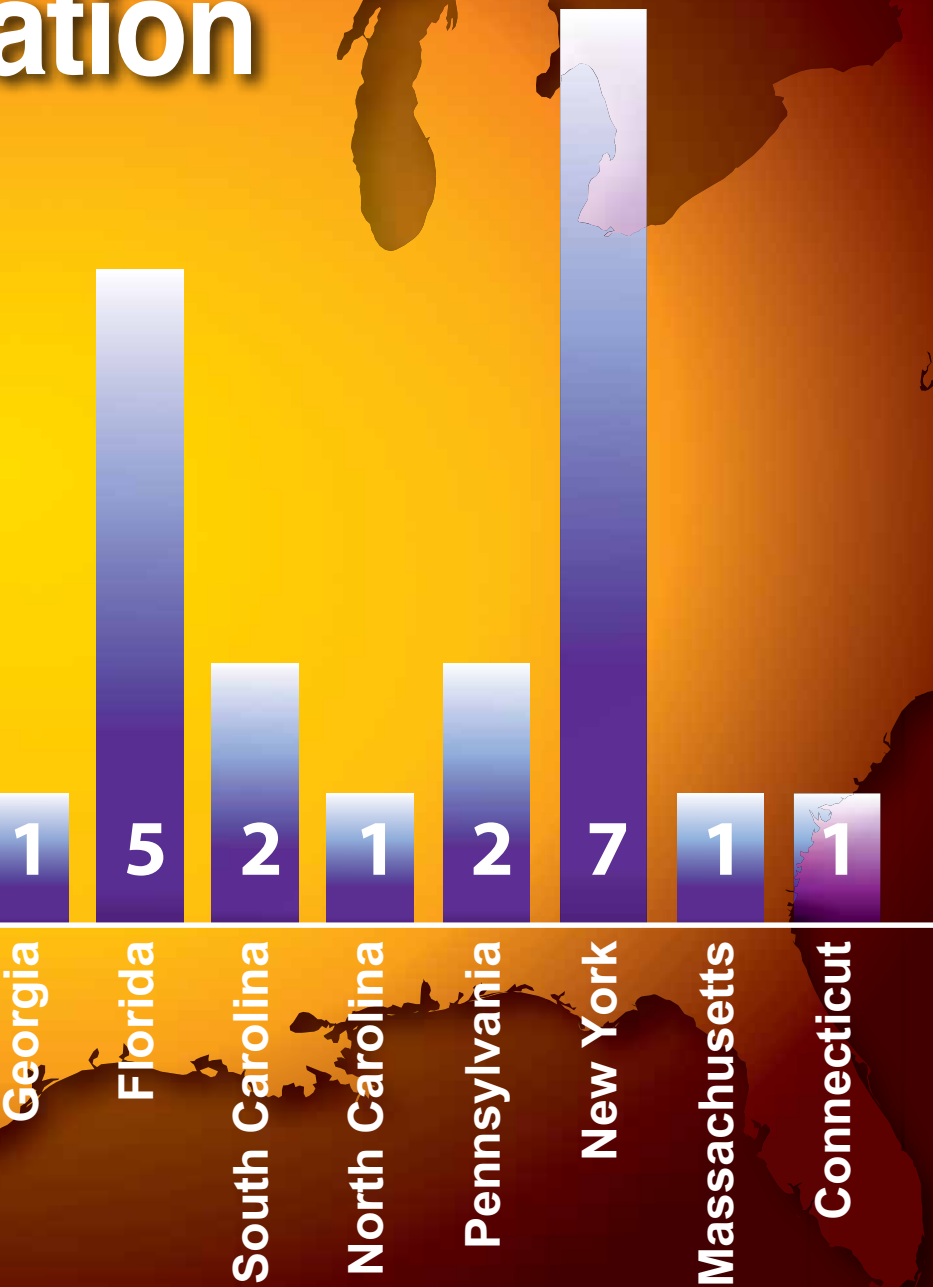
State Representative Rex Duncan (R-Sand Springs), the main sponsor of the ballot measure, has in the past proposed legislation prohibiting Muslim women from wearing religious head scarves in driver’s license photos and refused to accept a Quran from a Muslim advisory council. Duncan said he refused to accept the Quran because, “Most Oklahomans do not endorse the idea of killing innocent women and children in the name of ideology.”



Vandalism, Islamophobia and Violence Targeted by Location



phobic Rhetoric Targeting Mosques ation



Vandalism

Oakland, PA
Miami, FL
Cypress, CA
Taylors, SC
Houston, TX
Durham, NC
Azusa, CA
Phoenix, AZ
Nashville, TN
Southfield, MI
Bellevue, WA
Wilson, WI
Westbury, NY
Hudson, NY
San Antonio, TX
Lansing, MI
Knoxville, TN
San Francisco, CA
Sacramento, CA
Chicago, IL
Florence, SC

Islamophobic Rhetoric

Antioch, TN
Tampa Bay, FL
Roxbury Crossing, MA
Morada, CA
Madison, MS
Lilburn, GA
Eugene, OR
Costa Mesa, CA
Murfreesboro, TN
Brentwood, TN
Wilson, WI
Staten Island, NY
Gainesville, FL
Florence, KY
Santa Clara, CA
Chico, CA
Green Bay, WI
*New York, NY
Bridgeport, CT
Madera, CA
Oshkosh, WI

Violence

Miami, FL
Detroit, MI
Jacksonville, FL
Arlington, TX
Murfreesboro, TN
*New York, NY
Carlton, NY
Phoenix, AZ
Corvallis, OR

Other

Naperville, IL
Fairview Heights, IL
Sheepshead Bay, NY
Temecula, CA
Arlington, TX
*New York, NY
Murfreesboro, TN
Brooklyn, NY*
Philadelphia, PA

*All Park 51

Vandalism, Islamophobic Rhetoric and Violence Targeting Mosques

Date of Incident	Mosque	Location	Incident Type	Details	Source
Jan-09	Islamic Center of Pittsburgh	Oakland, PA	Vandalism	Red paint was splashed on stairs of mosque.	Roddy, Dennis. "Vandals hit Islamic Center in Oakland," Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, January 2, 2009.
Jan-09	Islamic School of Miami	Miami, FL	Violence	Shots were fired at the mosque.	Council on American-Islamic Relations. "Shots Fired at Fla. Mosque, Penn. Mosque Vandalized," news release, January 2, 2009.
Feb-09	Islamic Society of Tampa Bay Area	Tampa Bay, FL	Islamophobic Rhetoric	Protestors shouted slurs against Islam and the Prophet Muhammad.	Council on American-Islamic Relations. "CAIR Asks FBI to Probe Harassment of Florida Muslims," news release, February 3, 2009.
Apr-09	Tawheed Center	Detroit, MI	Violence	Someone broke a mosque window, poured gasoline in and set fire to the gasoline.	Krupa, Greg. "Detroit Mosque Fire Investigated," Detroit News, April 4, 2009.
Jun-09	Islamic School of Miami	Miami, FL	Vandalism	Vandals smashed two windows of the school and slashed the tires of a van used to distribute food to the homeless. Vandals admitted they believe "all Muslims are terrorists."	"Teens Accused of Vandalising Mosque," Justnews.com, July 3, 2009
Jun-09	Muslim American Society, Boston Chapter	Roxbury Crossing, MA	Islamophobic Rhetoric	Opponents to the proposed mosque claimed without evidence the planners had terrorist ties	Paulson, Michael. "Dissent Greets mosque opening," Boston Globe, June 27, 2009.
Jul-09	Morada Mosque	Morada, CA	Islamophobic Rhetoric	Morada Area Association opposed mosque and filed suit. In an e-mail Association claimed concern over "social and cultural implications. A nearby church was not similarly opposed.	Torres, Jennifer. "Planned Morada Mosque Faces Lawsuit," Recordnet.com, July 16, 2009.
Jun-09	Islamic Center of Cypress	Cypress, CA	Vandalism	Threatening graffiti on exterior wall of mosque.	Council on American-Islamic Relations. CAIR: California Mosque Targeted with Hate Graffiti, news release, June 4, 2010.
Aug-09	Mississippi Muslim Association	Madison, MS	Islamophobic Rhetoric	Opponents to the proposed mosque cited fear of radical Islam as a motivation for opposition.	Salter, Sid. "Madison Muslim Mosque Zoning Flap Reeks of Intolerance," Clarion Ledger, August 5, 2009.
Aug-09	Islamic Center and Masjid	Taylors, SC	Vandalism	"Death to Muslims" scratched on sidewalk leading to mosque.	"FBI Investigates Vandalism at Mosque," foxcarolina.com, August 26, 2009
Oct-09	Dar-E-Abbas Islamic Center	Lilburn, GA	Islamophobic Rhetoric	"I am prejudice, I just don't like Muslims and I don't want them taking over our neighborhood," said one opponent of mosque.	Paluska, Mike. "Lilburn Resident: 'I Don't Like Muslims,'" cbsatlanta.com, October 23, 2009.
Oct-09	Turkish Center Mosque	Houston, TX	Vandalism	Anti-Islam graffiti scrawled on center's wall.	Wise, Lindsay. "HPD Investigating Possible Hate Crime at Mosque," Houston Chronicle, October 8, 2009
Nov-09	Jamaat Ibad Ar-Rahman Masjid	Durham, NC	Vandalism	Windows and doors at mosque were smashed. Computer parts were stolen.	Baumgartner Vaughn, Dawn. "Vandalism of Mosques Spurs Safety Concerns," The Herald-Sun, November 6, 2009.
Nov-09	Abu-Bakr As-Siddiq Islamic Center	Eugene, OR	Islamophobic Rhetoric	"Allah is a pig" scrawled on mailbox	Oregon Mosque Targeted with Hate Graffiti (Nov. 30)
Dec-09	West Sacramento Islamic Center	Sacramento, CA	Vandalism	Vandals broke windows, damaged religious wall hangings and a bookshelf that held Qurans	Council on American-Islamic Relations. "CAIR: Sacramento Mosque Vandalized," news release, December 1, 2009.

Vandalism, Islamophobic Rhetoric and Violence Targeting Mosques

Date of Incident	Mosque	Location	Incident Type	Details	Source
Dec-09	Al-Fatiha Islamic Center	Azusa, CA	Vandalism	Broken windows and doors, extensive interior damage.	CAIR: Southern California Mosque Vandalized http://ca.cair.com/losangeles/news/cair_southern_california_mosque_vandalized
Jan-10	Islamic Education Center of Orange County	Costa Mesa, CA	Islamophobic Rhetoric	Burned Quran left at mosque entrance	Pak, Elynn. "Police Consider Torched Quran a Hate Crime," Ocregister.com, January 15, 2010.
Jan-10	Islamic Center of Murfreesboro	Murfreesboro, TN	Islamophobic Rhetoric	Site of future mosque painted with the words "not welcome."	"Muslims: Tenn. Incident is a Hate Crime," UPI.com, January 19, 2010.
Feb-10	Islamic Community Center of Phoenix	Phoenix, AZ	Vandalism	Vandals climbed on top of building, painted words that were visible from nearby interstate	Snyder, Stephanie. "Phoenix Mosque Vandalism Being Investigated by FBI," The Arizona Republic, September 8, 2010.
Feb-10	Al Farooq Mosque	Nashville, TN	Vandalism	Vandals spray-painted "Muslims go home" along with Crusader-style crosses on a mosque.	Phillips, Sherry. "Community Reaches Out to Local Islamic Center After Hate Crime," The City Paper (Nashville), February 11, 2010.
Apr-10	Irshad Learning Center	Naperville, IL	Other	CAIR-Chicago sues DuPage County Board alleging that a substantial burden was placed on mosque supporters that was not placed on supporters of other religious institutions.	Goldsborough, Bob. "Islamic Center Suing DuPage Board," Chicago Tribune, April 9, 2010.
May-10	Islamic Association of Michigan	Southfield, MI	Vandalism	Vandals broke windows twice in one week	Council on American-Islamic Relations. "CAIR Seeks Probe of Bias Motive for Vandalism at Mich. Mosque," news release, May 16, 2010.
May-10	Islamic Center of Williamson County	Brentwood, TN	Islamophobic Rhetoric	Opponents to the mosque incited fear by claiming that planners may have ties to terrorists.	"Mosque Backers Give Up Plans," The Tennessean, May 28, 2010.
May-10	Islamic Society of Sheboygan County	Wilson, WI	Islamophobic Rhetoric	At a hearing opponents of the mosque said, 'You don't believe in God; you believe in Allah,' and 'The mosque will be creating terrorists.'	Abel, Barbara and Julia Lieblich. "Rural Controversy: A Mosque in Sheboygan," Time, August 19, 2010.
May-10	Islamic Center of Northeast Florida	Jacksonville, FL	Violence	Firebomb planted and detonated-outside mosque while approximately 60 people were inside.	Council on American-Islamic Relations. "CAIR to Offer Reward for Info on Fla. Mosque Attack," news release, May 12, 2010.
Jun-10	Islamic Center of Eastside	Bellevue, WA	Vandalism	Feces smeared on a van outside the center. The van was decorated with graphics about Islam.	Hicks, Joshua. "Feces Smeared on Van Near Bellevue Mosque" Bellevue Reporter, June 25, 2010.
Jun-10	Sheepshead Bay Mosque	Sheepshead Bay, NY	Threat of Violence	Bomb Threat Leveled at Mosque.	Council on American-Islamic Relations. "CAIR-NY: Brooklyn Resident Threatens to Bomb Mosque," news release, June 28, 2010.
Jun-10	Islamic Center of Tennessee	Antioch, TN	Islamophobic Rhetoric	Opponents to the mosque expressed concern the mosque would become a terrorist training center.	"Proposed Antioch Mosque Met with Opposition," wkrn.com, June 29, 2010.
Jun-10	Muslim American Society (Staten Island Branch)	Staten Island, NY	Islamophobic Rhetoric	Following "fear of terrorism, distrust of Islam," a church recanted on plans to sell an old convent to a Muslim community.	Vitello, Paul. "Heated Opposition to a Proposed Mosque," New York Times, June 10, 2010.
Jun-10	Islamic Society of Sheboygan County	Wilson, WI	Vandalism	Chunks of asphalt used to break windows; anti-Muslim rhetoric used by opponents to mosque	"Sheboygan Mosque Already Vandalized," wtaq.com, June 11, 2010.

Vandalism, Islamophobic Rhetoric and Violence Targeting Mosques

Date of Incident	Mosque	Location	Incident Type	Details	Source
Jul-10	Islamic Center of Temecula Valley	Temecula, CA	Other	California Tea Party supporters were told to bring dogs to harass Muslim worshippers during Friday congregational prayers.	Council on American-Islamic Relations. "CAIR: Calif. Tea Party to Use Dogs to Harass Muslim Worshipers," news release, July 27, 2010
Jul-10	Islamic Center of Gainesville	Gainesville, FL	Islamophobic Rhetoric	Congregants of the Dove World Outreach Center, known for its "Islam is of the Devil" and "International burn a Koran Day," protested at a mosque, signs included "All cultures are not equal."	"G'ville Chruch Protests Mosque," News4Jax.com, July 5, 2010.
Jul-10	Islamic Center of Northern Kentucky	Florence, KY	Islamophobic Rhetoric	Flyers urging "stop the takeover of our country" were distributed in opposition to an expanding mosque	Scherer, Ron. "Ground zero and beyond: four mosque battles brew across US," Chrsitian Science Monitor, August 19, 2010.
Jul-10	Dar El-Eman Islamic Center	Arlington, TX	Violence	Fire set in mosque playground. Two days prior anti-Muslim graffiti portraying Uncle Sam and Allah in an obscene position was discovered in mosque parking lot.	Mitchell, Mitch. "Arlington Mosque Reports Vandalism, Fire," Star-Telegram, July 29, 2010.
Aug-10	Muslim Community Association	Santa Clara, CA	Islamophobic Rhetoric	Opponent of a planned addtion of a minaret to a mosque cited fears of "Islamic domination" and "Muslims taking over America." Minaret was approved.	Fernandez, Lisa. "Mosque's 64-foot minaret Okay'ed by Planning Commission," Contra Costa Times, August 12, 2010.
Aug-10	Chico Islamic Center	Chico, CA	Islamophobic Rhetoric	A toy pig inscribed with "No mosque in NYC" and other statements left at California Islamic Center	Council on American-Islamic Relations. "CAIR: 'No Mosque in NYC' Pig Left at Calif. Islamic Center," news release, August 29, 2010.
Aug-10	Islamic Society of Wisconsin	Green Bay, WI	Islamophobic Rhetoric	Islamophobic statements were made at a city council hearing. In one instance, Alderman Guy Zima said, "But this religion on its depths, I don't think really has the same interest as the American way of life or its values."	Devries, Vickie. "Green Bay Council makes way for Mosque," fox11online.com, August 18, 2010.
Aug-10	Park 51	New York, NY	Violence/ Threat of Violence/ Islamophobic Rhetoric	Major incident with stories in media ranging from December 2009 to present. Peaked during August 2010.	Multiple Sources
Aug-10	Masjid An-Noor	Bridgeport, CT	Islamophobic Rhetoric	Anti-Islam demonstrators carrying signs saying "Islam is a lie" confronted and harrassed worshippers. One protestor yelled, "Jesus hates Muslims."	Council on American-Islamic Relations. "CAIR-CT Seeks Protection for Muslim Worshipers," news release, August 7, 2010.
Aug-10	Madera Islamic Center	Madera, CA	Islamophobic Rhetoric	Menacing signs reading "Wake up America, the enemy is here" and "No temple for the God of Terrorism at Ground Zero" left in front of Islamic Center. A brick was thrown through a window as well.	Council on american-Islamic Relations. "CAIR: Calif. Mosque Vandalized with Hate Signs Referring to NY Controversy," news release, August 25, 2010.
Aug-10	Islamic Center of Murfreesboro	Murfreesboro, TN	Violence	Construction equipment set on fire, nine shots fired near mosque	"Fire at Tenn. Mosque Building Site Ruled Arson," cbsnews.com, August 28, 2010.
Sep-10	Muslim American Society	Brooklyn, NY	Threat of Violence	Opponents to the proposed mosque made unfounded claims that the center would be tied to terrorism. One protestor threatened to bomb the mosque.	New York Daily News, The Brooklyn Paper, New York Community Media Alliance, The New York Post

Vandalism, Islamophobic Rhetoric and Violence Targeting Mosques

Date of Incident	Mosque	Location	Incident Type	Details	Source
Sep-10	Islamic Center of Long Island	Westbury, NY	Vandalism	Vandals threw stones at cars in the mosque parking lot shattering windows.	Akbar, Farah. "Controversy Over Islam and Mosques Spread Beyond Park 51," gothamgazette.com, September 2010.
Sep-10	World Sufi Foundation	Carlton, NY	Violence	Teens in two vehicles outside a mosque discharged a shotgun, honked horns and yelled obscenities. One car hit a mosque attendee, causing a concussion.	Tokasz, Jay. "Incident Worries Memebers of Mosque," Buffalonenews.com, September 2, 2010.
Sep-10	Islamic Community Center of Phoenix	Phoenix, AZ	Violence	paint spilled on floor, windows broken by what appeared to be gunshots, anti-Muslim graffiti	Snyder, Stephanie. "Phoenix Mosque Vandalism Being Investigated by FBI," The Arizona Republic, September 8, 2010.
Sep-10	Jamia Mosque	Philadelphia, PA	Other	Thre times in one month protestors greeted worshippers, one time trying to block access to building.	http://www.masjid-aljamia.org/in-the-news.html
Sep-10	Hudson Islamic Center	Hudson, NY	Vandalism	Three men charged with spray-painting a racial slur on the mosque.	"Arrests Made in Vandalism at Upstate NY Mosque," Associated Press, September 10, 2010.
Sep-10	Islamic Center of San Antonio	San Antonio, TX	Vandalism	Vandals spray-painted symbols and letters on mosque. A few days prior cars in the center's parking lot were spray-painted with anti-Muslim messages.	Gardner, Noel. "San Antonio Mosque Vandalized Amid National Tensions Over NYC Mosque," KENS5.com, September 6, 2010.
Sep-10	Islamic Center of East Lansing	Lansing, MI	Vandalism	Vandals left a burnt Quran. Feces covered pages torn from the Quran surrounded the mosque.	Dorell, Oren. "Desecrated Qurans Spur Security Patrols," USA Today, September 14, 2010.
Sep-10	Annor Mosque	Knoxville, TN	Vandalism	Vandals left a burnt Quran.	Dorell, Oren. "Desecrated Qurans Spur Security Patrols," USA Today, September 14, 2010.
Sep-10	Islamic Society of San Francisco	San Francisco, CA	Vandalism	Vandals left a burnt Quran.	Council on American-Islamic Relations. "CAIR:Burned Quran Found at San Francisco Mosque," news release, Septbemt 18, 2010.
Sep-10	Muslim Community Center	Chicago, IL	Vandalism	Vandals left a burnt Quran.	"Burnt Copy of Quran found Outside Muslim Community Center," Chicago Tribune, September 14, 2010.
Oct-10	Saint Louis Mosque	Fairview Heights, IL	Threat of Violence	A man was indicted after threatening to bomb a mosque.	BNO News
Oct-10	Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Center	Oshkosh, WI	Islamophobic Rhetoric	Opponents to the center cited Muslim extremism and possible violence as reasons to not approve a permit.	Bollier, Jeff. "Neighbors Oppose Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Oshkosh Chapter Plan," greenbaypressgazette.com, October 31, 2010.
Oct-10	Florence Islamic Center	Florence, SC	Vandalism	Vandals defaced mosque with slices of bacon that spelled out the words "PIG CHUMP" on a walkway.	Council on American-Islamic Relations. "CAIR: South Carolina Mosque Defaced with Bacon," news release, October 12, 2010
Nov-10	Salman Al-Farisi Islamic Center	Corvallis, OR	Violence	FBI reports an apparent attack on mosque. Fire and smoke damage to building structure reported.	Federal Bureau of Investigation. "FBI offers \$10,000 Reward in Attack on Corvallis Mosque," news release, November 28, 2010.

Islamophobia: Fear, Bigotry, and Racism Find the Ballot Box in the 2010 Midterm Elections

During the 1988 presidential election, Lee Atwater, the campaign manager for George H.W. Bush, had Larry McCarthy produce what would become the infamous “Willie Horton” advertisement. In 1986, Horton, a convicted felon, was given a weekend pass under a Massachusetts prison furlough program. He did not return to prison and resurfaced a year later after raping a woman. According to PBS, the ad McCarthy produced, “used a menacing mug shot of an African-American criminal and was widely denounced as appealing to racial prejudices.”¹⁷⁶

The ad’s explicit goal was to make Horton “every suburban mother’s greatest fear.”¹⁷⁷ Atwater described the desired outcome for the ad by saying: “By the time this election is over, Willie Horton will be a household name.”¹⁷⁸ The ad proved critical in helping Bush win the White House in 1988.

During the 2010 midterm elections, Larry McCarthy, the Horton ad’s creator, began producing Islamophobic television spots for a number of political hopefuls. McCarthy again appealed to prejudice, seeking to exploit the average American’s fears and helping to normalize anti-Muslim discourse in political and public campaigns.

The UC Berkeley Center for Race and Gender maintains that a central purpose of today’s generation of Islamophobic political ads and rhetoric is to make Islam

and American Muslims synonymous with terrorism and to define the religion and its adherents as threats to America’s values and freedoms. If Willie Horton was the suburban mother’s greatest fear, Islam and Muslims would be America’s greatest fear.

Why Make Islam the Enemy?

In the 2010 midterm campaign season, elements of the Tea Party movement employed masterfully crafted ads to transform Islam into a singular, monolithic, and all-encompassing ideological and civilizational threat. A “threatening” ideology called Islam was constructed as the new evil.

Meanwhile, Islamophobes were able to cast themselves as defenders of liberal democratic principles by focusing their campaign around this constructed ideology rather than individuals or a group of individuals. The problem, they were able to say, was not your Muslim neighbors and friends, who were as deserving of universal rights as anyone else, but the ideology of violence espoused by Islam.

The institutions and individuals producing and disseminating Islamophobia in the United States are seeking to disenfranchise the growing American Muslim community. This is done by casting Islam as something to be feared and as the un-American other. If successful, this campaign will lead to isolation and distrust of the American Muslim community by the broader American society.

This isolation can push American Muslim youth toward disenchantment and marginalization, which can be manipulated into senseless extremism and violence.

Hence, Islamophobia can be seen as designed, in part, to attempt to promote radicalization in the American Muslim community, providing further rationalization for the “domestic war on terror” and all the funding and resources connected to it.

At a time of deep economic recession, Islamophobia provides opportunistic politicians and partisan elites an easy target—an “alien” religious group who call themselves “Muslims”—to present to the American people, who are frustrated about job losses, foreclosures, and future uncertainty.

In the 2010 midterm elections, “Islam” and “Muslim” became a trope for opposition to healthcare reforms, unemployment, dependence on foreign oil, increases in defense spending, high deficits, delays and body scanners at long airport security lines, and death visited upon our troops who are spreading democracy in distant and “backward” Muslim lands.

Why Islamophobia, Fear, and Racism at the Ballot Box?

In his book *Communication Power*, Manuel Castells maintains that voters are mainly motivated by feelings of fear and anxiety. Furthermore, Castells writes that “decision-making has two paths, one based on framed reasoning, the other directly emotional.”¹⁷⁹ It

is often this emotional brain that campaign issues are framed to engage. Fear, in particular, is an emotional trigger point.

While Castells argues that neural brain networks responding to “self-referential stimuli” construct our reality, his use of the theory of affective intelligence provides a more applicable framework for analyzing “political psychology supporting the notion that emotional appeals and rational choices are complementary mechanisms.”¹⁸⁰

Interestingly, affective intelligence theory proposes that two emotions “are particularly relevant for political behavior”; these emotions are “enthusiasm (and its opposite depression) and fear (with its counterpart, calm).”¹⁸¹

Ted Brader’s work on the role of emotions elicited in political advertisements and their translation into voting behavior indicates that “fear ads tend to erode the opponent’s base of support among voters, while heightening the importance of voting for those viewers made anxious by the ads.”¹⁸² Thus, the usage of fear ads, which tend to “emphasize domestic dangers,”¹⁸³ is unsurprising in a close midterm election with high stakes such as control of the Congress and the Senate.

In this case, national security fears connected to 9/11 were transformed into political ads fashioned by right-wing ideologues focusing on the purported domestic threat and role or status of the American Muslim community in the “war on terrorism.” The real strategic goal behind this approach is to increase the voter turnout of

their base while chipping away margins from the opponents or alternatively bringing more of the independents into their camp. Islamophobia worked as planned and Tea Party and Republicans candidates in general rode the effects to statistical margins of victory in key races.

Opposing Islam to Win Elections in 2010?

The 2010 elections witnessed a rising popular tide brought about by the deep recession, massive lay-offs, and a nasty healthcare debate. This popular tide in-part coalesced into the Tea Party and was strategically redirected into a political campaign opposing President Barack Obama’s policies across the board. This strategy found resonance in the utilization and deployment of Islamophobia.

The Park51 community center in New York, also addressed in another section of this report, served as grassroots-mobilizing fuel for this well-financed Islamophobic opposition. The Park 51 community center was recast by Pamela Geller, founder of the Stop the Islamization of America, as the “Ground Zero Mosque” and was an instrumental tool in the efforts of Tea Party and Republican activists to reshape the debate into one focused on national security issues.

By moving the debate into national security with a focus on Islam as an ideology, the Tea Party and Republican candidates managed to avoid discussing substantive policy issues.

In this sense, Islamophobia, in the mind of its advocates, stood for opposing the policies and

agenda of President Obama and the Democratic majority. Islamophobia can be seen in the 18 to 24 percent of Americans who believe Obama to be a closet Muslim, which in reality is finding refuge in expressing opposition to the first African American occupant of the White House through the utilization of Islamophobia. Thus, the 2010 election witnessed the use of Islamophobia as a race marker and a substitute for using direct attacks on the President based on his blackness.

Islamophobic Themes During the Midterm Elections

In the midterm elections, the Center for Race and Gender documented the following manifestations of Islamophobia:

1. Using the words Muslim and terrorist interchangeably or alternatively depicting Muslims as being “terrorist sympathizers.”
2. Making Islam synonymous with terrorism; referencing Islam as something foreign and to be feared, the “other.”
3. Politicizing the Park 51 center in New York and wrongly referring to it as a “Victory Mosque” and “Ground Zero Mosque.”
4. Describing Islam as “a totalitarian, theocratic, political ideology,” or a cult.
5. Making Shari’a into a major political issue and putting it on the ballot in Oklahoma; describing Shari’a as a “cancer.” Asserting, despite a lack of supporting evidence, that Muslims are “taking over” and America

faces an imminent enforcement of Sharia law.

6. Using the internet as a major hub for Islamophobia production, dissemination, and then influencing the debate in the mainstream, without fact checking or ascertaining the validity of any claims.
7. Using Muslim-sounding or Arabic names and references to mosques in ads to imply a sinister design or conspiracy related to targeted candidates.
8. Making association with mainstream Muslim groups into a point of attack. Using “the un-indicted co-conspirator” label against a number of individuals and organizations.
9. Weaving the Palestine-Israel conflict into Islamophobia production in the campaigns.
10. Returning political donations from Muslims in order that political candidates not be identified as having cozy relations with Muslims.

Simple opposition to the Park 51 project is not Islamophobia. Can-

didates of all parties indulged in scoring political points with the Park 51 project as a focus, particularly after President Obama spoke up on the topic. Democrat’s decided that the issue was bad for them politically, with one “seasoned Democratic consultant” saying Obama, “is right on substance [of Park 51] but wrong on politics, and right now we need to focus on politics.”¹⁸⁵

U.S. Senate seat contender Jay Townsend (Republican) wrote an open letter to Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY) calling the project “highly insensitive” but not indulging in Islamophobic rhetoric while doing so. Similarly Nevada incumbent Sen. Harry Reid (Democrat), through a spokesperson, expressed his feeling that the center should be located elsewhere.

Candidates Utilizing Islamophobia

Some of the most intensive or troubling users of Islamophobia during the mid-term election included Rick Lazio, Carl Paladino, Sharron Angle, Renee Ellmers, Dan Fanelli, Ron McNeil

and Allen West.

Jeff Greene said, “President Obama has this all wrong and I strongly oppose his support for building a mosque near Ground Zero, especially since Islamic terrorists have bragged and celebrated destroying the Twin Towers and killing nearly 3,000 Americans.” Greene’s words echo the false “victory mosque” allegation advanced by a number of candidates.

Rick Lazio made opposition to the Park 51 Islamic cultural center a “centerpiece” of his campaign.¹⁸⁴ Lazio called on the state’s attorney general to investigate funding for the project. In making this call he implied that the Islamic center was a public safety issue: “This is a time when we have to ask serious questions that will keep the people of New York and the people of downtown Manhattan feeling — and actually being — safe.” Lazio ran an ad asking New Yorkers to call his opponent to say “a ground zero mosque is wrong.”

Carl Paladino aired an ad in

2010 Governor Candidates			
Candidate	Party	State	Result
Jeff Greene	Democrat	Florida	Defeated
Rick Lazio	Republican	New York	Defeated
Carl Paladino	Republican	New York	Defeated
Ron Ramsey	Republican	Tennessee	Defeated
Rick Scott	Republican	Florida	Won

2010 U.S. Senate Candidates			
Candidate	Party	State	Result
Sharron Angle	Republican	Nevada	Defeated

which he said, “As Governor I will use the power of eminent domain to stop [the Park 51 project] and make the site a war memorial instead of a monument to those who attacked our country.” He also said the project was “about the Islamists wanting to illustrate that they have conquered America by taking down the World Trade Center.”¹⁸⁶ Paladino also falsely alleged that the project’s developers planned to place a wall inside the cultural center honoring the 9/11 terrorists.

Ron Ramsey, Tennessee’s Lt. Governor who ran for governor, said that first Amendment protections may not cover Islam because it may be a “cult.”

Florida gubernatorial candidate Rick Scott also ran with the Park 51 project theme airing an ad titled “Obama’s Mosque.” The conflation of the President with Islam was interpreted as an attempt to exploit fears among some voters that Obama is a secret Muslim. Among other distortions, the ad claimed the proposed Islamic cultural center was “just yards” from Ground Zero.

Angle asserts that a “militant terrorist situation’ has allowed Islamic law to take hold in some American cities. She specifically cited “Dearborn, Michigan, and Frankford, Texas.” Frankford ceased to exist as a town in 1975 when it was incorporated into Dallas.

In a press release, Francis X. Becker asserted that the Park 51 Islamic cultural center would “serve as a memorial for the people responsible for the attacks.”¹⁸⁸

Kevin Calvey asserted that some of the leaders associated with the Park 51 project “are clearly terrorist sympathizers.” However, New York Police Department spokesman Paul Browne said, “We’ve identified no law enforcement issues related to the proposed mosque.”¹⁸⁷

An ad supporting Renee Ellmers’ election bid used the terms “the Muslims” and “the terrorists” interchangeably. The ad implied that the Park 51 Islamic cultural center is a “victory mosque” celebrating the 9/11 attacks. In the ad, Ellmers says, “The

terrorists haven’t won and we should tell them in plain English: No, there will never be a mosque at Ground Zero.” The conflation between Islam, Muslims, and terrorism was evident in Ellmers’ ad as well as in her media appearances. Ellmers used references to “Ground Zero mosque” as a “victory mosque”

and made the issue a litmus test for her opponent, while calling on President Obama to oppose or stop the building of the center. In an interview with Anderson Cooper, Ellmers suggested that “the organizers of Park51 are terrorists” before acknowledging that she did not know much about Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, a primary figure associated with the project.

An ad supporting Dan Fanelli’s bid for public office featured Fanelli pointing a Caucasian male and asking, “Does this look like a terrorist?” Next a darker skinned man seen earlier in the ad speaking Arabic steps into the camera shot, as Fanelli says, “Or does this look like a terrorist.” Later in the ad, Fanelli points to an airplane saying, “This is an

2010 U.S. House Candidates			
Candidate	Party	State and District	Result
Francis X. Becker	Republican	New York, 4th	Defeated
Kevin Calvey	Republican	Oklahoma, 5th	Defeated
Renee Ellmers	Republican	North Carolina, 2nd	Won
Dan Fanelli	Republican	Florida, 8th	Defeated
Ronald McNeil	Republican	Florida, 2nd	Defeated
Ilario Pantano	Republican	North Carolina, 7th	Defeated
Dr. Marvin Scott	Republican	Indiana, 7th	Defeated
Lynn Torgerson	Independent	Minnesota, 5th	Defeated
Allan West	Republican	Florida, 22nd	Defeated
Lou Ann Zelenik	Republican	Tennessee, 2nd	Defeated

airplane.” Fanelli then lifts up the darker skinned man from earlier, now with a ‘turban’ on his head, and says, “And this is a terrorist.”

Speaking to a group of middle and high school students, Ron McNeil said of Islam, ““That religion is against everything America stands for. If we have to let them build [Park 51], make them build it nine stories underground, so we can walk above it as citizens and Christians.”

Ilario Pantano wrote of the Park 51 center, “This Cordoba Mosque is not benign. It is not about reconciliation or understanding. It is about marking religious, ideological, and territorial conquest. This mosque is a Martyr-Marker honoring the terrorists who less than a decade ago killed thousands of us just two blocks away, and it must be stopped.”¹⁸⁹

Dr. Marvin Scott invoked anti-Muslim rhetoric during his campaign against incumbent Rep. Andre Carson, one of two American Muslims currently serving in the U.S. House. Scott ran used Carson’s faith as a campaign tool. Scott stated on his website that “Radical elements of Islam are funding and building mosques across America...I passionately defend his [Carson’s] right to become a Muslim... What they do not have the right to do is to replace American law with extremist Muslim Sharia law.”

On her web site, Lynn Torgerson wrote, “And, what do I know of Islam? Well, I know of 911. Nineteen (19) men from Saudi Arabia, all Muslim, hi-jacked planes, and flew into the two (2) World Trade Towers murdering thousands of people, and tried to fly into

our Pentagon...People say that we can’t include the moderate, peace loving Muslims. Well, I agree. But, who are they? ... I cannot tell. It is not for me to go and try and find them. Rather, it is their duty to stand up and identify themselves, if there are any.”

Allen West is unabashedly Islamophobic. An Iraq war veteran, West was praised by many for discharging a weapon near an Iraqi civilian during an interrogation session. The action resulted in West paying a fine. As one example of West’s anti-Muslim attitude, he said in a campaign speech that “Islam is a totalitarian theocratic political ideology; it is not a religion. It has not been a religion since 622 AD, and we need to have individuals that stand up and say that.”

Lou Ann Zelenik made opposition to a mosque project in Murfreesboro, Tenn. a centerpiece of her campaign. Zelenik accused American Muslim of not separating “...themselves from their evil, radical counterparts, to condemn those who want to destroy our civilization...” Her opponent Diane Black jumped on the bandwagon saying, “I’m very concerned that violent jihadism is becoming the norm, not the exception in too much of Islam today, and American communities have a right to be vigilant in ensuring that Islamic institutions in this country do not aid the jihadist viewpoint.”

Some Additional Examples of Islamophobia during the 2010 Campaign

South Carolina state Senator Jake Knotts (Republican) said of Republican gubernatorial candidate Nikki Haley, ““We’ve

got one raghead in the White House. We don’t need a raghead in the governor’s mansion.” Haley was raised Sikh but converted to Christianity. South Carolina Republicans called on Knotts to resign, which he did not do. Knotts eventually apologized for the slur.

The American Future Fund produced an ad targeting U.S. Rep. Bruce Braley (D-IA). The ad advances the false allegation that the Park 51 project is a “victory mosque.” “For centuries, Muslims built mosques where they won military victories, the ad’s narrator says. “Now they want to build a mosque at Ground Zero, where Islamic terrorists killed 3,000 Americans.” Braley won his re-election bid.¹⁹⁰

An Oklahoma ballot measure, known as State Question 755, specifically targeted the Islamic faith for state-sanctioned discrimination. The measure was passed by Oklahoma voters by a large margin. The ballot measure is covered in detail in another section of this report.

Judson Phillips, founder of Tea Party Nation, called for the defeat of incumbent Rep. Keith Ellison (D-MN) simply because of the Congressman’s Muslim faith.

Elections Outcome and Analysis

The result of the 2010 elections was that fourteen candidates using Islamophobic rhetoric lost their races, while two won. Many factors contributed to these wins and losses, so it is inappropriate to draw a conclusion at this time as to the overall effectiveness of the various campaigns’ Islamo-

phobic elements.

The Republican Party was the most frequent abuser of Islamophobic rhetoric; hence the condemnation of “Islamic terrorists” has largely become associated with that party over time. We believe Republican candidates will continue to view the use of anti-Muslim themes as a way to increase voter turn-out and attain votes.

Looking forward to the 2012 elections and beyond, we expect Islamophobia to remain in currency among Tea Party Republican candidates and activists, which will pressure traditional Republicans to follow suit so as to prevent the fringe from gaining control of the party.

We expect to see a fight for the Republican party with Islamophobia taking center stage. As it stands today, we believe that the Republican party has a serious Islamophobia crisis at its hands and its moderate elements must muster the needed courage and leadership to challenge it and resist further efforts at monetizing racism and bigotry into votes and power for a short-term gain.

On the other hand, the Democrats, in control of the White House and Senate, will be on the defensive if the economy and unemployment do not show marked improvements before Spring 2012. We expect defensive-minded Democrats will respond to anti-Muslim attacks in a fashion similar to Senator Harry Reid’s response to Sharon Angle in Nevada.

One of the most interesting 2010 outcomes are the election victories of congressmen Andre Carson and Keith Ellison, both African American Muslims running as incumbents against Republicans who strategically utilized Islamophobia in their ads and public statements. The outcome of both seats indicate that being a Muslim is not necessarily a liability and is an encouraging sign for further engagement of the American Muslim community in the political process, a fact that should be celebrated in these difficult times.

Two years is a life-time in politics; however, the 2010 results will be studied by all operatives from all parties, with the research becoming instrumental

in designing part of the 2012 campaign. Failures to confront Islamophobia on a structural and strategic basis now will only result in greater impacts in the future and the affirmation of its utility as a wedge issue in upcoming elections.

Furthermore, Islamophobia as a form of hate speech has already translated into violence directed at Muslim and Sikh individuals’ mistaken as Muslims, as well as racist incidents against African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans.

The American Muslim community, the interfaith community, and the civil rights community should be vested in a structural national response to counter Islamophobia. These communities should be prepared to mobilize of all needed resources toward this end. Islamophobia is a new wedge issue being employed to bring the right-wing base to the polls, shift the independents to the right, and siphon away a few percentage points from the Democrats. The Islamophobic strategy is clear; the question is: what is the response?

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Excerpts from some hate e-mails sent to CAIR in 2010

**From an IP in El Paso, TX,
August 23, 2010**

"It would be so nice to do to the people of Islam what Hitler did to the Jews. We don't want you here in America, period."

From Mike S., August 16, 2010

"Islam is a plague caring hate and intolerance whoever it takes hold. There is only one cure for this plague.. The complete eradication of every mosque, follower and koran from the face of this earth."

**From an IP in Phoenix, Arizona,
October 14, 2010**

"Our public eye is upon all Muslims... once you illiterate animals start any more violence in the Country of AMERICA you will be annihilated by the people of AMERICA, YOU WILL CEASE TO EXIST in this Great Country of the U.S.A.! Just so you know, this is not hate speech, it is the truth and GOD is on our side and the devil is you!"

From "J L," sent August 8, 2010

"Now, with Muslim nations possessing nuclear technology, the threat of Islam has reached critical mass. This leaves the West with only one solution. Unless we initiate a war of global annihilation and ethnic cleansing, our civilization is doomed. Muslim philosophy is incompatible with Western culture. Such a war must have as its ultimate goal, the extermination of all Muslims. By allowing them to survive, we risk their descendants taking up the cause of jihad, and again threaten us. Muslims living in Western nations, not exterminated, must be placed in labor camps and sterilized to insure

the racial cleansing of these vermin. In addition, all books and documents relating to Islam must be burned. If this sounds similar to the political agenda of The Third Reich; you're right. I make no apologies for it. The Nazi's were great visionaries when it came to formulating a Final Solution for disposal of "Undesirables". However, they lacked the understanding of how to identify the true enemy. Although they correctly selected Semites for extermination, they mistakenly targeted the Wrong subset, (Jews)."

Sent May 26, 2010:

"It AIN'T gonna happen. I can promise you that with a 100 million 'angry' Americans....muslim blood will flow deep and wide if any attempt to build a mosque anywhere near that site is made...You WILL cease to exist!"

**From an IP in San Luis Obispo, CA,
May 6, 2010**

"The only good muslim is a dead muslim"

**From David Alexander, Impe-
rial Klokard, Church Of The National
Knights of The Ku Klux Klan,
February 24, 2010**

"We have been the care takers of the Christian White Race in the United States for over 150 years and have seen them come and seen them go and we wont stop what we see as our holy crusade to rid the United Stated of your type of ilk! ... We realize that subhuman muds like yall do inhabit this great White Nation of ours so we are practicing a live and let live policy for now."

Islamophobia and Its Impact in the United States

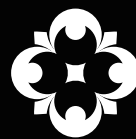
January 2009-December 2010



Same Hate, New Target



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