

The Public Eye

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Editorial Preface

After the initial shock, disbelief, and horror that all of us experienced as the events of September 11th unfolded, we at PRA began to think about how best we could use our resources to understand and analyze what had transpired on that tragic day, and the subsequent reactions. We also deliberated on how best we might serve you—our readers and supporters—as a source of information on issues related to 9/11 that we felt were critical, especially for progressives but also for people in general. We decided to refocus the theme of this issue of *The Public Eye*. So we postponed our slated feature article by Chip Berlet on the U.S. Far Right, and instead highlighted some of the important issues related to the backlash to 9/11 in and around the country, both the reaction of

ordinary people as well as the U.S. State.

The tragic attack in New York on September 11, 2001 witnessed a groundswell of nationalism within the United States, gripping the political leadership as well as ordinary people. Political leaders quickly attempted to mobilize support for their agenda using nationalistic rhetoric and imagery. From the President down, politicians, pundits, and pollsters portrayed the conflict in simplistic and stark terms of good versus evil. This us/them dichotomy saw the “them” sometimes explicitly identified as particular individuals or organizations, and at other times saw Muslims/Arabs/South Asians/immigrants being tarred collectively with the terrorist brush. Flying the U.S. flag and wearing red, white, and blue became rallying points around which people were

mobilized, and nationalism and patriotism were displayed. Yet, there were those who for all the flags they might have flown and the national colors they might have worn still were made to feel, or were seen as, less than “real Americans.” Most of them were immigrants, perhaps recent immigrants who had migrated since the end of WWII. Most were also Muslim, Sikh,

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From the Director

When I started work here at PRA last fall, I knew I was entering a challenging environment. It is not easy to study the U.S. political Right in the best of times. I soon realized that the opportunity to work with brilliant, dedicated, and supportive colleagues would be a sustaining aspect of this effort.

I was especially grateful for the company of the staff when we sat together in the library, watching a fuzzy television picture of unfolding events on the morning of September 11th. Once the initial shock abated, we prepared a message to supporters and friends expressing our grief and concerns. Our statement warns of specific dangers in the aftermath of the attacks:

The prejudice, bigotry and bias so easily visible in American society and that which lies just beneath the surface will, we fear, be unleashed with new fury on anyone perceived as a potential "enemy" of American interests.

We fear that civil liberties will be curtailed in ways that are not justified by genuine security concerns.

We are concerned that the urgency of this moment will discourage a thorough review of who is conducting the response to these attacks.

Sadly, these words have lost none of their relevance. Before the events of 9/11, the Right had already consolidated substantial power within all branches of government. Now, the Bush Administration is rapidly moving through a repressive, militarist agenda—often with only the barest pretense of critical review from Congress. Our civil liberties face dramatic contraction. And there is increasing danger to those people, usually non-White, who are considered “foreign.”

We know that there are many people, here in the United States and outside its borders, who are seeking solutions that protect human rights and do not further compromise world safety. Our goal is to offer resources, background information, and analysis to advance these aims. This issue of *The Public Eye* includes resources to counter racist and xenophobic threats, drawn from *Defending Immigrant Rights*, our next Activist Resource Kit, now in preparation. Please visit our web site: www.publiceye.org for the full message from PRA and much more information regarding the protection of human rights and civil liberties.

Defending democratic principles is especially difficult in the current climate, as dissent is being demonized and analytical responses are considered by some to be apologies for terrorism. We are encouraged by the growing network of progressive forces determined to uphold human value and dignity in an atmosphere of crisis and uncertainty. We stand united with all those who support a tolerant, pluralistic society that locates our security in justice and equality.

Kate Cloud

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Hindu, Arab, or South Asian.

Popular perception in the United States often does not associate nationalism with the United States. People here tend to identify more with patriotism. The two are obviously related, but is there a significant difference? George Orwell wrote in May 1945, in “Notes on Nationalism,” that there is:

*By “nationalism” I mean first of all the habit of assuming that human beings can be classified like insects and that whole blocks of millions or tens of millions of people can be confidently labelled “good” or “bad.” But secondly—and this is much more important—I mean the habit of identifying oneself with a single nation or other unit, placing it beyond good and evil and recognizing no other duty than that of advancing its interests. Nationalism is not to be confused with patriotism. Both words are normally used in so vague a way that any definition is liable to be challenged, but one must draw a distinction between them, since two different and even opposing ideas are involved. By “patriotism” I mean devotion to a particular place and a particular way of life, which one believes to be the best in the world but has no wish to force on other people. Patriotism is of its nature defensive, both militarily and culturally. Nationalism, on the other hand, is inseparable from the desire for power. The abiding purpose of every nationalist is to secure more power and more prestige, not for himself but for the nation or other unit in which he has chosen to sink his own individuality.*¹

Elements of both are mixed into the popular reaction to September 11th. People are genuinely concerned about their security, but the flag-waving, and the hawkish and retaliatory attitudes manifested in many quarters are more closely linked to nationalism. As far as the U.S. State is concerned, there is no doubt about its desire for power and global domination that Orwell ascribes to nationalism. Using nationalism to mobilize popular support for an imperialist agenda has long been part of U.S. foreign policy in the Americas, in the Middle East, against the former Soviet Union,

and across the world.²

At PRA, we also stress the need to draw a distinction between nationalism and nativism. Nativism is rooted in a blend of xenophobia (the fear of people or ideas that are seen as foreign and/or subversive) and a chauvinistic nationalism. Nativists customarily question the fittingness for citizenship or residency of individuals or groups whom they allege to be incapable of or indisposed to being loyal citizens. Nativism goes well beyond an aversion to foreigners in its hostility to groups, including immigrants and even citizens, who are considered “un-American.” The basic definition of “real American” or “all-American” has historically been—and even now often is—narrowly imagined to mean White men, although various other groups have been grudgingly allowed into this imagined community at different points in the course of U.S. history. Immigrants—usually, more recent immigrants—have typically been scapegoated and demonized in this process.

The verbal, physical, and fatal assaults by individuals against Brown people since 9/11, regardless of their ethnic heritage or nationality, are rooted in this nativist mindset. As is the response by the Bush administration (especially the Justice Department), and Congress in seeking and approving sweeping laws that seriously threaten the human rights and civil liberties of immigrants—particularly those of Middle Eastern, North African, or South Asian origin. Even as administration officials spoke out against scapegoating various groups, a 20-year-old Pakistani student was brutally assaulted while in INS custody.³

The resurgence of nationalism and nativism in the United States has serious implications. Most immediately for those who are the obvious and visible targets—immigrants and people of color. But this eruption manifests itself in a larger assault on democracy, civil liberties and human rights with long-festered consequences for all of us. Progressives and those of us on the Left would do well to remember—in the context of the Right now being in power—that we have been historically and

typically excluded from the imagined community as “un-American.” Thus, understanding nationalism and nativism, and the role both have played in U.S. history and politics, is crucial in challenging the Right and in defending democracy, civil liberties, and human rights for us all.

Endnotes

¹ See George Orwell, “Notes on Nationalism,” posted on <http://www.resort.com/~prime8/Orwell/> Emphasis in the original.

² Little has been said, at least in the mainstream media in the United States, to contextualize U.S. retaliation and foreign policy in general with such a broader imperialist and materialist agenda. The alternative press and progressive critics here and overseas have however done so. We invite you to look at our website for some of these sources. An important print source is Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil & Fundamentalism in Central Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

³ See Alisa Solomon, “Cracking Down on Immigrants—Again,” *The Village Voice* (October 3-9, 2001). <http://www.villagevoice.com/issues/0140/fsolomon.php>. Solomon writes that the young man reported how the guards took a long time in coming to the scene and even when they arrived stood on the sidelines rather than intervening immediately. She also reports how “immigrant advocates around the country are increasingly alarmed by reports of violence, harassment, and the draconian application of immigration laws against INS detainees from countries in the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia.”

Nationalism

Nikhil Aziz and Chip Berlet

What is Nationalism?

“Nationalism is one of the most powerful forces in the modern world.”¹ This is true even in this current period of globalization in which a variety of transnational forces have emerged, escorted by claims of a weakened nation-state system. If anything, the real and perceived effects of globalization on peoples across the globe have reinforced nationalism—as much in the United States as in Iran or India.

Nationalism is an ideology grounded in the allegiance to one’s nation,² and is inseparably linked to power and the desire for power.³ It is crucial, therefore, to understand what the nation is to be able to understand nationalism. What *is* the nation? Benedict Anderson, perhaps more than any other scholar of nations and nationalism, has revolutionized our thinking with his argu-

ment that the nation is an “imagined community.”⁴

National leaders habitually profess, and average citizens of all countries often believe that their nations have been around since time immemorial or that they are immortal. Such imaginings are ahistorical, i.e. they refute the reality of history—while the Egyptian and Greek civilizations might be old, the Egyptian and Greek nations are new. Nations as we know them, and thus nationalism, are very much products of modernity.⁵ Nations have a beginning, and they can have an end.

Why is the nation an imagined community? After all it exists in very concrete and real terms. It has defined territorial boundaries, governments, populations, flags, anthems, histories, and all the trappings of what one believes to be the essential ingredients of a nation. We live and therefore participate in it. And we feel and thus experience it. This perception is even more real in times of collective celebration or mourning. Anderson argues that the nation is an imagined community because “the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.”⁶ An individual often feels an immediate kinship with another based on nothing more than that both are from the same country, or happen to speak the same language or even speak it in the same accent.

It “is imagined as *limited* because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations.” There is always a “them” where the “us” ends. A nation is imagined as “*sovereign*” because it was conceived in the crucible of enlightenment and revolution that dethroned absolute monarchs who claimed the divine right of kings to lord over their subjects.⁸ Around the world, the nation (and the nation-state) is the ultimate political authority in the minds of its members. And, “it is imagined as a *community*, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each,

the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.”⁹ Class, gender, race, sexuality, religion, and ideological beliefs that indicate difference are often entombed within the common construct of nationality, usually on terms set by the dominant group.

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For example, after September 11th, Jeff Epperly, editor of *Bay Windows* (one of Boston’s LGBT newspapers) “thought it important that they [gay Muslims] be able to give voice to *their own* thoughts on how they were being treated, U.S. policy in the Middle East—and of course the monster named Osama.”¹⁰ Surina Khan, executive director of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, responded about the anti-Muslim/Arab/South Asian backlash that, “I think what we’re seeing is a magnified sense of nationalism and patriotism.”¹¹ Beth Berlo reported that Khan felt this was the result of anger, and that she felt worried that Muslim business owners had to display the U.S. flag prominently as a safety mech-

anism because “People are very angry and they want to find someone to blame for their suffering and what emerges from that, is this sense that only a certain type of person should benefit from living in this country and that would typically be a white heterosexual male.”¹² In this context, Khan said, she felt “more connected to [her] Pakistani heritage, and [felt] more shame for being an American.”¹³

In response, Epperly fumed that “there is no line of leftist ideology that Khan doesn’t reflexively support, no sloganeering to which she will not stoop. She is the worst kind of leftist: utterly predictable. She makes the Left look just as simple and ignorant as the religious Right loonies who also subscribe to their creeds unquestioningly.”¹⁴ His backlash lacked an honest effort to engage the complexity of Khan’s views (or the Left’s in general), and resorted to name-calling—when her perspective did not fit his idea of what her response as a gay Muslim American of Pakistani/South Asian heritage should have been. This signals how majoritarian terms and conditions are the parameters within which minority views must be formed in the imagined community.

Nationalism: Imagination, Inclusion, and Independence

The conception of the nation as an imagined community is extremely relevant in the context of immigration and immigrant rights. It is precisely because the nation is imagined as limited and sovereign, and despite its being imagined as a community, that it is inherently exclusive. Inclusion and exclusion influence the outcome of who is imagined to be in the nation. Certain categories of people are included within its self-construction based on particular and narrowly defined criteria and many others are excluded. This is true for all nations. Further, these boundaries are both materially and mentally constructed—the barbed wire fences, the deep moat-like ditches, and the armed and uniformed guards exist as much in our minds as they do on the ground.

How do national leaders or members of

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nations imagine their national community? This is frequently done based on assumed ties or interests that might be shared by a group or collective. These shared interests could be based on a group having a common language, ethnicity, race, religion, culture, history, or a blend of these and other factors. These factors provide the common links between individuals to justify the creation or maintenance of a community that brings those individuals under a common jurisdiction. Such imaginings typically gloss over differences within the nation of class, race, gender, and sexuality and the structures of power and privilege within which those differences are situated, as well as the effects those differences might have on individuals or groups. However, these differences also serve to exclude other individuals or groups, including recent entrants, from the imagined community. It is important to note, however, that there is virtually no nation that

is homogenous.

In modern times, the national community has usually been manifested in a sociopolitical, territorial, geographical, and legal entity, i.e., the nation-state.¹⁵ Nationalism is the ideology through which such imagined communities are realized, and then sustained. Its origins lie in Europe and some of the settler states that the Europeans created in the Americas. European political and religious leaders challenged each other on political, spiritual, and economic authority over centuries. These disputes were settled first through the establishment of state religions (often the faith of the ruling dynasty) and then after the Enlightenment, with the separation of church and state. Anderson also contends that the rise of the print media in vernacular languages, in which Protestant Christianity played a crucial role, mobilized the masses for political and religious aims.¹⁶ These various elements contributed to the development of

nation-states that came out of the disintegration of the Holy Roman Empire when the Peace of Westphalia ended the Thirty Years War in 1648.¹⁷

According to Anderson, nationalism in Europe's settler colonies in the Americas was fueled by the disadvantaged position within the political and economic system of people of European descent compared to people in or from the "mother country."¹⁸ This is pithily summarized in the slogan of the Boston Tea Party, "No taxation without representation."

In the colonized nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America the rational and revolutionary spirit of nationalism (particularly associated with the French, Russian, and American revolutions) fueled the struggle for freedom from colonialism. However, as Partha Chatterjee notes, anticolonial nationalist ideology was deliberately crafted and used to legitimize the position of the ruling classes in postcolonial states.¹⁹ It

also charted its own course separate from the Western experience by drawing a distinction between the material and spiritual domains, declaring the “spiritual as its sovereign territory” where the West was not allowed to intervene.²⁰ Moreover, nationalism itself was not uncontested in many of these societies. South Asia’s leading political thinkers, Mohandas Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, and Muhammad Iqbal, all of them cosmopolitan universalists at their core, continually wrestled with the paradoxes of nationalism even as they participated in and led nationalist struggles against colonialism and imperialism.²¹

Nations and Mission

While nationalism is inherently exclusive in that it excludes others, many nationalists are also exclusive in that they imagine their nation as the “chosen” one. In the United States, the vision of the chosen (or blessed) nation is an older thread that in more recent times gets woven into the illusion of the indispensable nation. Both these strands are antidemocratic as much as they are exclusionary. This is one way that nationalism blends with nativism, as often-overlooked foundational building blocks of U.S. society and culture. [See article on nativism].

A Chosen People

In the first case, the early Puritan colonial settlers envisioned the creation of America as the chosen nation, as part of prophetic destiny. But their vision of the biblical “City on a Hill” was often conceived in the image of the authoritarian Calvinist theocracy in Geneva.

Like their counterparts elsewhere, nationalists in the United States nostalgically believe in a fabulous but fabricated past. Imagining the nation’s present and future thus involves imagining its past as well. Immigrants, along with other marginalized and vulnerable groups, are scapegoated in this past perfect pretense and become the locus of all the ills of the present.

Demonization and scapegoating are not a new feature of nationalism in the United

States. Its origins go as far back as the 17th century persecution of Quakers, Jesuits, and “witches” in Massachusetts. Frederick Clarkson contends that this is linked to “an animating, underlying theme of the American experience [which is] the struggle between democratic and theocratic values.”²²

Christian nationalist Jerry Falwell invokes a past valuing “the traditional family, rugged individualism, self-reliance, honesty, God-fearing scripture-believing reverence, a peace-loving but always ready-for-war patriotism (‘don’t tread on me’), discipline, faith in the ordinary man,

ular nationalists in the United States. Samuel Huntington’s grandiose “Clash of Civilizations” theory, steeped in jingoism, pits a monolithic West against virtually everyone else. This attitude is mirrored in George W. Bush’s ultimatum to the world that every nation had a decision to make—that they were either with the United States or with the terrorists. September 11th has ripped the seemingly genteel veils off the faces of many secular nationalists. So, commentator Ann Coulter harangues in the *National Review* that the United States “should invade their countries, kill their

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So, commentator Ann Coulter harangues in the *National Review* that the United States “should invade their countries, kill their leaders and convert them to Christianity.” As high-ranking an administration official as Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz twists his tongue in a blunt statement calling for simply “ending states” that harbor terrorists.

prosperity, and a mission to the world to show the better way,”²³ and blames homosexuals and feminists among others for September 11th.

When racist White nationalism blends with theocratic Christian nationalism, the most zealous outcome is a theology called Christian Identity. In this belief system adherents anticipate a prophesied End Times battle with their enemies—Jews, Muslims, other non-believers and people of color in general.

Such an apocalyptic vision of war between the races is also found among sec-

leaders and convert them to Christianity.”²⁴ As high-ranking an administration official as Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz twists his tongue in a blunt statement calling for simply “ending states” that harbor terrorists.²⁵ And Attorney-General John Ashcroft demands powers to indefinitely detain foreigners and immigrants based on his suspicions. Such vitriolic arguments as Huntington’s—along with a U.S. foreign policy grounded in a “national” interest premised on the empowerment of U.S. corporations and a small wealthy elite—should demonstrate that

the alleged demise of nationalism in our globalized age is at best an unproven assertion, and more likely a myth.

Exceptionalism

In the second instance, the belief in America as the exceptional nation, without whose leadership the world system cannot function, is sacrosanct not only on the Right but across the U.S. political spectrum. For example, former Secretary of State Madeline Albright once lectured on network television that “if we have to use force, it is because we are America. We are the indispensable nation. We stand tall, and we see further into the future.”²⁶ It is this belief that is manifested in the bullying role of global economic, political, social, and military policeman the United States has assumed—regardless of which party is in power in the White House—and is inextricably coupled with its quest for power and domination.

Even *Nation* columnist Christopher Hitchens, who accurately described the Taliban and the Osama bin Laden network as “theocratic fascists,” succumbed to the allure of U.S. nationalist exceptionalism in endorsing an aggressive and largely unilateral military response by the United States.²⁷

There are tens of thousands of people of conscience across the United States who strongly condemned the recent attack in New York and oppose the U.S. war against Afghanistan, and who are critical of U.S. imperialism in general. Yet, they are simplistically and easily portrayed and perceived as antinational, and excluded from the imagined community. When *Nation* columnist Katha Pollitt wrote about a discussion with her daughter where she explained why she would not be hanging a flag from their door, she received a large volume of angry letters.²⁸ Suppressing dissent at home and repressing peoples abroad will only have adverse implications for the sustaining of democracy in the United States.²⁹

Conclusions

In the 225 years of the United States’ existence as a nation, the groups of peo-

ple excluded from the imagined community have included among others, American Indians, women, Blacks, Catholics, Irish, Southern and Eastern Europeans, Latinos, Jews, Asians, Arabs, Haitians, lesbians and gays, and virtually throughout this time, immigrants.

Recent demographic changes and economic restructuring in the United States have led to a rise in nativism and nationalism fuelling anti-immigrant sentiment and an attack on immigrants’ rights. This is a pattern that has repeated itself consistently through U.S. history, with each economic downturn, societal change, wave of immigration, and threat to national security causing a backlash, and an attempt to reimagine the community along more restrictively homogenous lines. Although nationalism in the United States professes diversity as an ideal, it negates it in practice. The messianic and exceptionalist manifestations of U.S. nationalism justify treating citizens of other nations as “less than” Americans. Understanding the history and process of nationalism in the United States, and the ways in which it influences anti-immigrant and anti-people of color sentiments is critical to building a more just, open, and equal society at home and abroad.

Endnotes

¹ John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, eds., *Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 3.

² See Ernest Gellner, *Nationalism* (New York: New York University Press, 1997); Tom Nairn, *Faces of Nationalism: Janus Revisited* (London: Verso, 1997); and Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 1998).

³ See George Orwell, “Notes on Nationalism,” (May 1945), posted on <http://www.resort.com/~prime8/Orwell/>

⁴ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

⁵ Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 80.

⁶ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 6.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ See Jeff Epperly, “The gay Left and terrorism,” *Bay Windows*, October 18, 2001, p. 6. Emphasis added.

¹¹ See Beth Berlo, “Gay and Lesbian Muslims fear an anti-Arab Backlash,” *Bay Windows*, September 20, 2001. See <http://www.baywindows.com/main.cfm?include=detail&storyid=98231&>

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Epperly, “The gay Left.”

¹⁵ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 80.

¹⁶ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp. 37–46.

¹⁷ In 1648, The Peace of Westphalia ended the Thirty Years War in Europe. It was more momentous because it effectively ended the Holy Roman Empire and led to the evolution of the European nation-state system. The main parties were Sweden and France on one side and Spain, the Holy Roman Empire, and the newly independent Netherlands on the other.

¹⁸ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp. 47–65.

¹⁹ See Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse* (Tokyo: United Nations University, Zed Books, 1986).

²⁰ Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 6.

²¹ See Manfred Steger, *Gandhi’s Dilemma: Nonviolent Principles and Nationalist Power* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000); Ashis Nandy, *The Illegitimacy of Nationalism: Rabindranath Tagore and the Politics of Self* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994); and Ayesha Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam since c. 1850s* (New York: Routledge, 2000).

²² Frederick Clarkson, *Eternal Hostility: The Struggle Between Theocracy and Democracy* (Monroe, ME: Common Courage, 1997), pp. 4–5.

²³ See Warren Lang Vinz, *Pulpit Politics: Faces of American Protestant Nationalism in the Twentieth Century* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), p. 179.

²⁴ Ann Coulter, “This is War: We should invade their countries.” See <http://www.nationalreview.com/coulter/coulter091301.shtml>

²⁵ John Catalinotto, “As U.S. War Seems Imminent: NATO Countries Fear Being Dragged In.” See http://www.iacenter.org/nato_war0901.htm Catalinotto quotes Wolfowitz as saying, “It’s not just simply a matter of capturing people and holding them accountable but removing the sanctuaries, removing the support systems, ending states who sponsor terrorism.”

²⁶ Madeline Albright, NBC “Today” show, February 19, 1998.

²⁷ See Christopher Hitchens, “Blaming bin Laden First,” *The Nation*, October 22, 2001, p. 9.

²⁸ See Katha Pollitt, note appended to column “Where are the Women,” *The Nation*, October 22, 2001, p. 10.

²⁹ See Jean V. Hardisty, *Rights for Some: The Erosion of Democracy* (Somerville: Political Research Associates, 2000) and Alan Gilbert, *Must Global Politics Constrain Democracy? Great Power Realism, Democratic Peace, and Democratic Internationalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

Nativism

Chip Berlet, Mitra Rastegar,
and Pam Chamberlain

Introduction

Since the September 11th attacks, there has been a surge in nativist and anti-immigrant sentiment as commentators on the Right have called for increased vigilance to root out the enemy within U.S. borders. They define the enemy as Muslims and Arabs whose allegiances to Islam, to their ethnic communities, and allegedly to their nations of origin, are said to be a direct threat to the United States and its citizens. Even when acknowledging that a majority of Muslims or Arabs are not seeking to subvert or destabilize the United States, commentators refer to a significant minority of “Islamists” or militants who have seamlessly integrated themselves into that com-

munity. Daniel Pipes, Director of the Middle East Forum and frequent TV talk show guest, says that this “Islamist” element of 10 to 15 percent of the total Muslim population may seem “... peaceable in appearance, but they all must be considered potential killers.”¹ Quoting Pipes, James Fulford, on the White Nationalist forum VDARE.com, proclaimed “That’s an army of about 750,000 already present in the US.” He also cited a study alleging that most Muslim immigrants and one-third of Muslim converts felt greater allegiance to another country than to the United States.²

John Podhoretz in the *New York Post* and Martin Peretz in the *New Republic* both warned that the United States houses a “fifth column,” hidden groups sympathetic to outside threats, most likely of Middle Easterners. As Peretz put it, “these killers are not randomly distributed throughout the population. They are disproportionately

located in certain religious and ethnic communities.”³ Debbie Schlüssel on the conservative website TownHall.com, spoke of her home community in southeast Michigan, which she (incorrectly) says has the largest concentration of Arabs outside the Middle East, as “Ground Zero for those who aid and abet the perpetrators.”⁴ She also said that leaders within the Arab and Muslim American communities have stood up for known terrorists by opposing the use of secret evidence and racial profiling.

This heightened scrutiny of the loyalties and allegiances of Middle Eastern and South Asian Americans has corresponded to an increase in hate crimes and racial profiling against these and other groups. Hate crimes have been reported in over thirty states all over the country, against people who are Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Arab, Pakistani, Afghan, Indian, Iranian, Turkish, Greek, Latino and Native American. In a



“JUST LIKE PEARL HARBOR”

New York parking lot a man tried to run over a Pakistani woman and threatened to kill her for “destroying my country.” In California, a Yemeni shopkeeper was shot and killed after receiving threatening phone calls and notes. A Creek Native American woman in Tulsa was told by a group of White men to “Go back to your own country!”⁵ before she was run over by their car and killed. In at least seven separate incidents, Arab American and Muslim passengers who had passed security checks were forced off their flights because of the discomfort of other passengers.⁶ Mosques, Hindu and Sikh temples have been vandalized, shot at, picketed and bombed. Mosques, especially, have received volumes of threatening phone calls, leading many to cancel classes and other programs.⁷

While the mainstream press has increasingly acknowledged that most Muslims or Arabs do not fit the common stereotypes about them, public awareness of the cultures and peoples of North Africa, the Middle East, South Asia and other predominantly Muslim regions is very limited. Most popular media images of Middle Easterners, for example in Hollywood’s *The Siege* and *True Lies*, have shown individuals whose fanatical devotion to Islam or hatred of the West and modernity leads them to violence. The press rarely covers the cultural events and religious observances of these communities, or provides a meaningful context for their varied and complex political and social views. There has also been a conflation of all dark-skinned people, as is evidenced by attacks on people who are not of Middle Eastern descent, that shows how brown skin and “Middle Eastern/South Asian”

features has been equated with foreignness and untrustworthiness.

The recent rise in suspicion of people from the Middle East and South Asia is not an aberration within the context of U.S. history. In fact, this country has a long history of distrust, persecution and exclusion of those seen as having foreign ties and questionable allegiances. Major social movements have been based on the belief that certain ethnic, racial or political groups

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are by definition disloyal. These movements are commonly described as nativist.

What is Nativism?

Nativism, combining xenophobia, or a fear of outsiders, with chauvinistic nationalism [see article on nationalism], or a belief in the superiority of one’s homeland, is a potent ideology that has found roots in various societies around the globe. In nativism, the xenophobia appears as a fear of or disdain for people or ideas that are seen as foreign, strange, or subversive, though not all foreign-born are targeted. This finds expression in a form of nationalism that doubts the suitability for citizenship (or even residency) of those suspected of being unable or unwilling to function as loyal and patriotic citizens.

In the United States, the term nativism was first used to describe several political and social movements that flourished between 1830 and 1925. When it emerged in the 19th century, nativism marshaled a backlash against newly arrived immigrants who did not fit the mold of the “ideal” citizen or “real” American, which was essentially someone who was White (Anglo-Saxon) and Protestant. Nativism, however, is not simply the dislike of immigrants but an “intense opposition to an internal minority on the ground of its foreign (i.e., ‘un-American’) connection.”⁸ Thus, “real” Americans must protect the nation from these “alien” intruders. The nativist litmus test can use race, country of origin, religion, language, loyalty to foreign regimes, or dissident political philosophy. Popular Protestant bigotry toward Catholics and other religious traditions simultaneously integrated with and inspired nativism, especially through some interpretations of Protestant Fundamentalism.

While nativism as a major mass movement collapsed in the late 1920s, it continues to flourish both thematically and in small subcultures. Anti-immigrant and “English-Only” groups that gained popularity in the 1990s represented a revival of nativist sentiments, though many shied away from the most baldly chauvinist rhetoric that characterized the earlier movements. These anti-immigrant groups have had significant successes but it is debatable whether they have achieved the same national status as earlier nativist movements. Whenever Protestant Evangelicals call for the defense of a Christian nation under attack, there are echoes of nativism.

A racial-nationalist form of nativism resides in the contemporary Extreme Right, including various Ku Klux Klan units and neo-nazi groups such as Aryan Nations, The World Church of the Creator, and the National Alliance.

Forms of Early U.S. Nativism

American nativism emerged as three varieties, each with roots planted before the Civil War: anti-Catholicism, antiradicalism, and Anglo-Saxon racialism. Various strains of Protestantism have embraced one or more of these tendencies at points in their history.

Anti-Catholicism

Richard Hofstadter called early American anti-Catholicism “the pornography of the Puritan.”¹⁰ Early Protestant settlers saw a “great war going on in the Western world between political reaction and [Catholic orthodoxy] on one side and political and religious liberties on the other;” while a common view was that “America was a bastion of freedom, and hence an inevitable target for popes and despots.”¹¹ Similar rhetoric after September 11 claims the United States was attacked for its belief in freedom.

Scholars have documented that many colonies passed laws restricting the rights of Catholics. By the end of the American Revolution, “seven states, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Connecticut, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia insisted on Protestant office holders and other states inflicted additional liabilities on Catholics in their constitutions.”¹²

In the opinion of many Protestant nativists, “Catholic traditions continued to look dangerously un-American partly because they did not harmonize easily with the concept of individual freedom imbedded in the national culture.”¹³ The authoritarian hierarchy of Catholicism also seemed

wedded to feudal or monarchical governments of Europe. The influx of Catholic immigration in the 1800’s exacerbated this conflict.

In the mid-to-late nineteenth century, as the idea of centralized and standardized public education gained favor among progressive reformers, many people who held conservative religious values felt threatened. One response was the expansion of a system of Catholic parochial educational

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institutions, which themselves generated Protestant suspicion and occasionally prompted physical attacks. The most notorious attack was the 1834 burning of the Ursuline convent in Charlestown, Massachusetts. The incident was part of a wave of anti-Catholic bigotry pushed by a popular press that generated lurid (and false) claims of rape, abduction, sexual sadism, and murder inside the walls of Catholic institutions.¹⁴

Anti-Radicalism

A longstanding fear that subversive radicals were conspiring to undermine the nation posed a special problem for U.S. nativism because it had to overcome the positive image of the American Revolution where colonial patriots were pictured as heroes for overthrowing the tyrannical rule of a European power. How could contemporary radicals be denounced for being revolutionaries?

Anti-elitist European radicals were cleverly portrayed as anarchist and socialist rabble-rousers threatening the stable republican form of government created by colonial Patriots. As John Higham explained, a “persistent contrast between a generally hopeful psychology of mobility in America and the more desperate politics born in class-ridden Europe has fostered the belief that violent and sweeping opposition to the status quo is characteristically European and profoundly un-American.”¹⁵

Anglo-Saxon Racialism

Those who believed in Anglo-Saxon racialism argued that superior “White” racial stock birthed the people responsible for all the major advances of Western culture; and conversely that inferior racial types were diluting superior bloodlines and harming the future of civilization. In the 1800s, unlike today, someone who was Irish, Italian, or Polish was not considered “White.” Racialism moved from diffuse ideas of ethnic pride and a homogenous national character in the late 1700s to a pseudoscientific theory of supremacy that predominated in the late 1800s.¹⁶

In this period, the idea of scientific racism was not only popular but was also taught in biology and genetics courses at major universities. When parents hoped their children married someone “with the proper breeding” they meant that in the lit-

eral, genetic sense. A nativist “eugenics” movement encouraged people with “good” genes to procreate, while those with “bad” genes were targeted for programs discouraging “dysgenic” reproduction. Sometimes this included forced sterilization.¹⁷

Nativism: Early Roots and Branches

The roots of U.S. nativism can be traced to the 1790s and fears of subversion in the early days of independence. Many Irish-Americans supported the Irish insurrection of 1798, especially since some were themselves refugees from the struggle. The Federalists, especially John Adams, combined anti-Catholicism and antiradicalism (with the encouragement of English diplomats), to argue “that the presence of such Irish enthusiasts was a menace to fledgling American institutions and American liberty. In [the same] year of the actual rebellion in Ireland, Adams secured the passage of the Alien and Sedition acts.”¹⁸ When the anti-Federalist (and prorebellion) Thomas Jefferson became President, these acts fell into disfavor. Yet even Jefferson at one point suggested barring citizenship from any man “who took a title or gift from European powers.”¹⁹

In the late 1790s the Rev. Jedidiah Morse fueled a brief hysteria over a feared plot by members of Masonic lodges to launch a revolutionary attack on church, state, and the status quo. In the 1820s antimasonry emerged again when nativists in this period worried that the government was controlled by pro-Masonic secret elites.

A widespread anti-immigrant backlash fueled nativism during much of the nineteenth century. While we often think of the great waves of immigration taking place at the end of the nineteenth century, the U.S.

population was expanding quickly between the 1820s and 1860s. At the same time the birthplace and residence of people in the United States was changing. For instance, people living in urban areas more than doubled to about 20 percent. New York City alone saw close to a 750 percent increase in residents as over 3.5 million immigrants arrived at its docks. A large number of these immigrants were Irish Catholics, with a smaller yet substantial number of Germans, many of whom were also Catholic.

While some immigrants remained on the East Coast, others moved on to cities such as Chicago, which grew from a prairie outpost to a city of over 100,000. Dale T. Knoebel observes that “The foreign-born in Philadelphia increased from 2 percent of the total population in 1830 to 20 percent at midcentury....[and by] the end of the 1850s, California’s population was nearly 40 percent foreign-born, and immigrants constituted 35 percent of the populations of Wisconsin and Minnesota.”²⁰

In the mid 1830s distrust of immigrant foreigners was so intense that native born Protestant political activists in New York formed the New York Native Democratic

Association. Their primary targets were Irish Catholic immigrants. In New England, Samuel F. B. Morse (the son of Jedidiah) warned that the “evil of immigration brings to these shores illiterate Roman Catholics, the tools of reckless and unprincipled politicians, the obedient instruments of their more knowing priestly leaders.”²¹

Another wave of nativism crested in the mid 1850s with the appearance of the Order of the Star Spangled Banner known popularly as the “Know Nothings” because the secretive group told its members to say they “knew nothing” about the organization.²² From its base in New York State the group eventually recruited hundreds of thousands of members nationwide. In 1854 candidates backed by the Know Nothings took control of the Massachusetts state legislature, captured all Massachusetts seats for the U.S. House of Representatives, and sat in the Governor’s chair. The Know Nothings’ appeal was based on their ability to name immigration as the single cause of the structural changes in industry that were making skilled positions obsolete.²³

The Know Nothing movement collapsed as quickly as it had emerged, and by



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1857 was rapidly disappearing from the national political scene. Nativism retreated but did not vanish. After the Civil War, nativist themes were woven into the “middle-class reform movements” of the late 1800s, and “crusaders for temperance and for women’s rights assailed the immigrant’s subversive, European attitudes on these problems.”²⁴

The passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act resulted from nativist organizing. Chinese immigrants were also targets of violence from the West Coast to the Rocky Mountain States. Antipathy toward Chinese, Japanese, and Indian immigrants flourished nationwide well into the first decade of the 20th century.

The threat of Bolshevism and anarchism emerged as a major nativist issue after World War I. Beginning in late 1919, the Palmer Raids, a series of arrests and deportations by the federal government that targeted Russian and Italian immigrants, were justified as needed to block anti-American plots. This countersubversion hysteria was often racialized, with deportation ships carrying immigrants and their “alien” ideas back to Italy and Russia. The trial and execution of Sacco and Vanzetti, two anarchist immigrants in Brockton, Massachusetts, took place at the height of this wave of nativism. The 1924 National Origins Act set immigration quotas favoring Northern Europeans over people from Southern Europe, Asia, and Africa. At the same time, a nativist “Americanization” campaign sought to teach the remaining immigrants the proper character traits for true citizenship.

The popularity of Americanization helped reinvigorate the Ku Klux Klan, which in the 1920s attracted somewhere between 2 to 5 million members. KKK supporters captured political control of Indiana, and influenced state politics nationwide. The Klan’s “attacks on Catholics and foreigners and the vows to protect imperiled American women” tied it to earlier nativist movements.²⁵

Contemporary Nativism

Sara Diamond notes that a key feature of the “American Right of the Depression era was...the strident racism and anti-Semitism of its large, mass-based organizations.”²⁶ Large movements were led by charismatic demagogues such as Father Charles E. Coughlin, William Dudley Palley, Gerald Winrod, and Gerald L. K. Smith. They peddled a blend of nativism, populism, anticommunism, antisemitism, and conspiracy theories. Coughlin’s significance includes building his social movement through radio broadcasts, and mobilizing previously scapegoated Catholics as participants—a reversal Bennett calls “inverted nativism.”²⁷

World War II saw a wave of nativism directed against Japanese Americans, most vividly manifested in the internment of 127,000 Japanese Americans, both U.S.-born citizens and immigrants legally barred from naturalization. Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, who was in charge of West Coast defense during the war, testified before a congressional committee, “A Jap’s a Jap. They are a dangerous element.... There is no way to determine their loyalty.... It makes no difference whether he is an American citizen....”²⁸ The road had been paved by the American Legion which had been warning the public of a “Japanese menace” for years preceding the war.

After WWII, the distaste for European Fascism and Nazism made it difficult for nativist activists to build a mass base, although the McCarthy period Red Scare contained elements of nativist counter-subversion. White anti-integration groups in the 1960s, such as the Citizens’ Councils, revived nativist themes in attacking the civil rights movement, and KKK terror had murderous consequences. Yet no national nativist movement emerged, civil rights legislation was passed by Congress, and the 1965 Immigration Act ended the discriminatory quota system installed in 1924. Ironically, it was this legislation that fueled the modern anti-immigrant movement. Reviled by anti-immigrant groups, this Act made family reunification the pri-

mary rationale for admitting immigrants, resulting in many more newcomers of color.

Joe R. Feagin describes how nativism exerts continuing influence:

*Nativism has waxed and waned over the course of U.S. history, but it remains an important perspective that many native-born Americans use to construct and interpret hard economic times. Certain essential components of nativism remain more or less constant: the accent on the racial or cultural inferiority of immigrants, the problematizing of assimilation of immigrants, the idea that immigrants are a serious threat to the U.S. economy, and the notion that immigrants are responsible for government crises.*²⁹

Others argue that cultural or social stress can also trigger nativist fears in addition to real or anticipated economic hardship.

The 1990s saw a renewal of the biological determinist claim that genetic racial differences accounted for social and economic inequalities. *The Bell Curve*, by Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray, suggested that Blacks and Latinos were genetically inferior, and that therefore most affirmative action programs and government social welfare programs were doomed to failure.³⁰ Books such as *Measured Lies: The Bell Curve Examined*, refuted these claims,³¹ but racist arguments remained the subtext for many policy debates over street crime, welfare, and immigration, as well as political campaigns by David Duke and Patrick Buchanan.

Anti-immigrant organizing garnered national headlines with the passage of California’s Proposition 187 in 1994. Provisions included barring undocumented immigrants from attending public schools or colleges; denying them medical treatment (with a few exceptions) at hospitals or other institutions receiving tax dollars; and forcing teachers, medical staff, and social workers to inform state and federal agencies of suspected illegal status. Voters in Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, and Florida passed popular initiatives and referenda promoting English as the only proper language for education, documents, or signage.

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As we have already seen, many commentators have perpetuated nativist fears of people of Middle Eastern and South Asian descent because of what is presented as their conflicting allegiances to “un-American” forces, most prominently Islam. Whether presented as passively complicit in terrorism or as a functional “fifth column,” the message is that these communities are harboring traitors. Clearly, these sentiments have their roots in a long history of suspicion and animosity towards those seen as foreign, an entity that has changed forms but continues to have some consistent features. One of these is that the group under suspicion must overcome great obstacles to be seen as patriotic or trustworthy. Calls to the Muslim and Arab communities to more forcefully denounce terrorism, or to reclaim Islam from those who have perverted it, imply that failure to do so indicates support for the attacks. Despite the Bush administration’s continued symbolic (and important) attempts to show solidarity with select Muslim communities, the long-standing demonization of Islam and of Middle Eastern and South Asian cultures in general has continued.

The anti-immigrant movement which was already expressing horror at what they described as the “alien invasion” threatening the culture, language, economy, natural resources and, most importantly, sovereignty of the country, found its opening into the national conversation following September 11th. Their portrayal of recent immigrants as threatening on multiple levels could now find its expression in a very concrete and horrifying event. Many of these groups implied that if their proposed immigration policies had been adopted, then the attacks might have been averted. Dan Stein of Federation for American Immigration Reform said, “The nation’s defense against terrorism has been seriously eroded by the efforts of open-borders advocates, and the innocent victims of today’s terrorist attacks have paid the price.”³² Mark Krikorian and Steven Camarota of the Center for Immigration

Studies (CIS) said, “a broken immigration system almost certainly is partly to blame.”³³ Negative Population Growth (NPG) called the attack “a wake-up call to the fact that the U.S. lacks meaningful immigration controls.”³⁴ Glen Spencer of the small but outspoken California group, Voices of Citizens Together, put out emails calling on supporters to contact their elected officials and demand that all non-citizens leave the country immediately.³⁵ Nowhere in this barrage of scapegoating was an acknow-

Calls to the Muslim and Arab communities to more forcefully denounce terrorism, or to reclaim Islam from those who have perverted it, imply that failure to do so indicates support for the attacks.

ledgement that substantial numbers of people killed in New York were themselves immigrants and people of color.

While some of the more mainstream anti-immigrant groups have joined the Bush administration in denouncing those who blame immigrants specifically (CIS said, “we must be careful not to seek scapegoats among the foreigners who live among us”³⁶), they have also contributed a nativist tone to the current political discussion. For them, scapegoating immigrants is an acceptable response to virtually every social, economic and environmental problem, including attacks from abroad. Whether they are criticizing the immigration policy or the immigrants themselves, the goals of these groups are the same: to keep immi-

grants, 85 percent of whom are people of color, out of the United States. Only then will they feel that the nation can be safe from harmful influences that exist within our borders and are inevitably linked to the external forces that threaten the country. The real threat, however, is that nativism’s basic beliefs obstruct a vision of democracy for this country that attempts to embrace all people. Looking at the history, organizational structure and the relative success that past nativist movements have had in institutionalizing restrictionist attitudes can help us understand the current cycle of nativism and its potential harm.

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- ¹² Ray Allen Billington, *The Origins of Nativism in the United States 1800-1844* (New York: Arno Press, 1974), p. 39.
- ¹³ Higham, *Strangers*, p. 6.
- ¹⁴ Nancy Lusignan Schultz, *Fire & Roses: The Burning of the Charlestown Convent, 1834* (New York: Free Press, 2000).
- ¹⁵ Higham, *Strangers*, pp. 7-8. The roots of this fear of subversion trace back to the 1790s when a series of books and pamphlets (first published in Europe) warned that a conspiracy of the secret Illuminati society operating within the Freemasons was plotting to overthrow all world governments. This echoes apocalyptic themes in the Biblical book of Revelation which contains prophecies of an End Times conspiracy to build a One World Government in league with the Satanic Antichrist. This prophetic vision continues to influence many Fundamentalists today.
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Terminology: Use with Caution

Chip Berlet

Since the attacks of 9/11, writers and commentators have had problems in finding accurate language to describe complicated and unfamiliar phenomena while remaining sensitive to issues of prejudice. Terms such as Islamist, radical Islamic fundamentalist and clerical fascists entered public discussion. We hope this article will help sort out some of the confusing and problematic terminology that abounds.

For instance, scholars and foreign policy analysts have used the terms "Islamist" and "Islamicist" for years to refer to a specific form of contemporary Islamic fundamentalism. As these terms began to appear in popular discussions following 9/11 their use and meaning shifted. Some commentators began to use the terms in an overly broad manner to refer to all forms of Islamic fundamentalism or traditionalism, militant political activism by Muslims, or terrorism by Muslims.

You can see the language problem in terms of relative usage. If "Islamicism" is Muslim fanaticism, then is "Judaism" thus Jewish fanaticism? An "ism" is just a belief structure. In the context of rising anti-Muslim and anti-Arab attacks, the popular use of the terms "Islamist" and "Islamicist" can inadvertently fuel bigoted attitudes. A more acceptable term would be "Islamic supremacist."

Some high profile conservative commentators such as Steven Emerson and Daniel Pipes are using the terms while stepping over the line into anti-Muslim stereotyping. Both have a history of this type

of Islamophobia. For some conservatives the problem is framing the issue as a clash of civilizations that promotes anti-Arab prejudice, called Arabophobia. And predictably, antisemitic conspiracy theories zapped across the Internet. Being an observant Muslim or even a "fundamentalist" Muslim who resents U.S. foreign policy actions in the Middle East and South Asia does not mean that one automatically supports theocracy, violence, or terrorism.

Terrorism is accurately defined as using force or the threat of force against civilians to advance a political objective. Using this definition, terrorism can be carried out by individuals, groups, or states. It can be a methodology used by the weak against the powerful, or the powerful against the weak. These complexities have been largely erased in media representations of the al Qaeda network. Terrorism is not militant non-violent civil disobedience, despite what is suggested in recent FBI reports about anti-globalization and environmentalist groups. And forces seeking the erosion of civil liberties are fanning fears of terrorism to soften their blow.

There is much confusion and disagreement surrounding the use of the term fundamentalism, to the point of even questioning its use to describe movements outside of Christianity. The original use of the term fundamentalism referred to a populist protest movement that arose in the early 20th century. It was a reaction against mainline Protestant denominations in the United States such as the Presbyterians and Baptists, and to a lesser extent Methodists, Episcopalians, and others. Leaders of these major denominations were accused of selling out the Protestant faith by forging a compromise with the ideas of the Enlightenment and modernism. In the early 1900s conservative critics of this leadership developed voluminous lists of what they considered the fundamental beliefs required for people to consider themselves Christian—thus the term fundamentalism. Anthony F.C. Wallace says similar revitalization movements exist across many spiritual and religious traditions.¹ But not all



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revitalization movements even within Christianity are fundamentalist.

The term fundamentalism is now used to describe similar but not identical religious revitalization movements in other religious traditions, including Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Fundamentalism is often confused with orthodoxy and traditionalism. Fundamentalists claim to be restoring the “true” religion by returning to “traditional” beliefs and enforcing orthodox beliefs—the set of theological doctrines approved of as sound and correct by a faith’s religious leaders. In fact, while fundamentalist movements claim to be restoring tradition and orthodoxy, they actually create a new version of an existing religion based on a mythic and romanticized past. This thesis was a central argument in Karen Armstrong’s *The Battle for God*, a comparative study of fundamentalism in Christianity, Islam, and Judaism.²

So, while fundamentalism is a reaction against the Enlightenment and modernity, it is ironically a distinctly modern phenomenon. Jamal Malik, who studies Muslim identity, explains that with Islamic fundamentalism “Islamic tradition is modernized, since the imagined Islamic society is to compete and correspond with Western achievements. This would only be possible in a centralized Islamic state over which they would wield control as the agents of God’s sovereignty on earth....”³

This explanation of Islamic fundamentalism describes a form of theocracy—a system where the only appropriate political leaders are persons who see themselves as devoted to carrying out the will of God as interpreted by a common religion. Some scholars, however, argue that not all forms of fundamentalism are necessarily theocratic, at least in practice. In the most extreme case, however, theocratic Islamic

fundamentalism could potentially be a form of neofascism.

Even in progressive publications, the terms theocratic fascism or clerical fascism were used not only to describe the Taliban and the al Qaeda networks, but also the government of Saudi Arabia and even all militant fundamentalist Muslims. This is an overly broad usage.

Fascism is an especially virulent form of extreme right populism. Fascism glorifies national, racial, or cultural unity and collective rebirth while seeking to purge imagined enemies. It attacks both revolutionary movements and liberal pluralism in favor of militarized, totalitarian mass politics. Fascism first crystallized in Europe in response to the Bolshevik Revolution and the devastation of World War I, and then spread to other parts of the world. Between the two world wars, there were three forms of fascism: Italian economic corporatism;

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German racial nationalist Nazism; and clerical fascist movements such as the Romanian Iron Guard and the Croatian Ustashi. Since WWII, neo-fascists have reinterpreted fascist ideology and strategy in various ways to fit new circumstances.

Roger Griffin, an influential scholar of generic fascism, argues that “fascism is best defined as a revolutionary form of nationalism, one that sets out to be a political, social and ethical revolution, welding the ‘people’ into a dynamic national community under new elites infused with heroic values. The core myth that inspires this project is that only a populist, trans-class movement of purifying, cathartic national rebirth (palingenesis) can stem the tide of decadence.”

There are other common components of fascism, including an exclusionary form of ethnonationalism that narrowly defines who the real “people” or Volk are; the idea of the primary importance of the homogenous whole (Integralism); and the diminution of the importance of the individual in a society ruled by leaders who metaphysically represent the will of the people (Organicism). These factors create a drive for totalitarian control in fascist movements and states. Totalitarian movements and governments insist on intruding into and controlling every aspect of a person’s life—public or private—political, social, or cultural. Totalitarianism is a term that still has analytical value despite its frequent misuse to bash the Left. Most notorious was Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, 1981-1985, who promulgated a theory that communist governments were totalitarian and could never be reformed, but brutal right-wing dictatorships were merely authoritarian and thus could be reformed through alliances with the United States. While this misrepresented the work of Hannah Arendt in her definitive book *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, it also suffered from a certain lack of historical accuracy when communism collapsed in Europe.⁵

The attacks on 9/11 generated nightmarish apocalyptic images. But the themes of apocalyptic demonization and conspiracist scapegoating go deeper than the horrific images. According to Gershom Gorenberg, fundamentalist groups within Christianity, Judaism, and Islam all have apocalyptic stories about heroic battle...

Clerical fascism is the least studied form of fascism. We can see examples of clerical fascism in the contemporary United States. Aryan Nations is a U.S. fascist movement built around the theology of Christian Identity. Aryan Nations—plural—wants to establish many racially-pure “Aryan” nations around the world. It is nationalist in desire and yet internationalist in scope. Some of its followers have engaged in violence and terrorism. Karen Armstrong refers to Christian Identity as fascist, and sees a potential for fascism in Christian Reconstructionism. As Armstrong observes, the system of dominion envisaged by Christian Reconstructionist theologians R. J. Rushdoony and Gary North “is totalitarian. There is no room for any other view or policy, no democratic tolerance for rival parties, no individual freedom.”⁶

The Protestant reformation did not start out by spreading an Enlightenment critique including the idea of liberty. One early form resulted in theocratic Calvinism and the uptight Puritans. The effort to find a compromise with the Enlightenment and modernity came later and generated the U.S. Christian fundamentalist movement.

The Christian Right Reconstructionist movement and Extreme Right Christian Identity movement are attempts to reform a Protestantism that already was the result of a previous process of reformation of Catholicism started by Martin Luther. This repeated process is common. Something similar is happening within Islam.

In Islam there was a series of reformations in the 1700s, similar to Martin Luther’s reformation of Catholicism into Protestantism, but the decentralized nature of Islam was an issue, and there were several separate reform movements. One was led by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703-92), that became the Wahhabi movement—the theology behind the Saudi government. Think of the Wahhabist Saudi government as similar to the theocratic government created by John Calvin in Geneva. Both are based on the idea of the sovereignty of God administered by righteous men.

Now there is a second reformation going on within Islam that is more global—theocratic Islamic fundamentalism. It has its roots in the theological/political theories of Abul Ala Mawdudi (1903-79) and Sayyid Qutb (1906-66). The result is a form of Islamic fundamentalism that is very repressive. Mawdudi argued that his ideal Islamic State “would be totalitarian, because it subjected everything to the rule of God...” notes Armstrong.⁷ In the most extreme case, this type of social totalitarianism based on theology has been called a new form of clerical fascism—similar to WWII European clerical fascist movements such as the Romanian Iron Guard and the Croatian Ustashi. This is a disputed view.

Although the concept of clerical fascism is used widely in analyzing certain forms of fascism, is it fair to apply it to certain forms of theocratic Islamic fundamentalism? Armstrong mentions there are some similarities worth noting.⁸ Walter Laqueur discusses its usefulness as a concept

at length in *Fascism: Past, Present, Future*.⁹ A number of academics, however, disagree with the use of the term fascism in this context. Roger Griffin believes it stretches the term fascist too far to apply the term 'fascism' to "so-called fundamentalist or terroristic forms of traditional religion (i.e. scripture or sacred text based with a strong sense of orthodoxy or orthodoxies rooted in traditional institutions and teachings)." He does, however, concede that the United States has seen the emergence of hybrids of political religion and fascism in such phenomena as the Nation of Islam and Christian Identity, and that bin Laden's al Qaeda network may represent such a hybrid. He is unhappy with the term 'clerical fascism,' though, since he says that "in this case we are rather dealing with a variety of 'fascitized clericalism.'"¹⁰

In any case, the Taliban and Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda networks are revolutionary right-wing populists seeking to overthrow existing Muslim states. They not only want to rid all Muslim nations of the evils of secularism, humanism, and Western influence, but also seek to restore a "true" Islamic theocracy based on a militant fundamentalist version of Wahhabism. Saudi Arabia is an example of a repressive and reactionary orthodox Islamic theocracy, but it is not technically fascist. The point is not to be an apologist for the Saudi regime, but to suggest that theocratic Islamic fundamentalist totalitarianism would be worse than the already repressive Saudi oligarchy.

At PRA we feel the term clerical fascism can be defended for use in public discussions and when applied specifically to the Taliban and Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda networks. However some caution is required. The term fascism is often overused, and currently some use it in a propagandistic way. Therefore we feel progressives should only use the term clerical fascism where: it is not a justification for excessive and aggressive militarism; does not demonize or scapegoat Arabs and Muslims; and is differentiated from inaccurate and sweeping misuse.

The attacks on 9/11 generated nightmarish apocalyptic images. But the themes

of apocalyptic demonization and conspiracist scapegoating go deeper than the horrific images. According to Gershom Gorenberg, fundamentalist groups within Christianity, Judaism, and Islam all have apocalyptic stories about heroic battles with evil before some expected messianic event—all of which involve the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.¹¹ Apocalypticism is the belief in an approaching confrontation, cataclysmic event, or transformation of epochal proportions, about which a select few have forewarning so they can make appropriate preparations. One version of apocalyptic beliefs involves the idea of a final showdown struggle between absolute good and absolute evil. Apocalypticism can fuel a sense that time is running out, resulting in violent confrontations or acts of terrorism. People or groups that are demonized in apocalyptic visions are easy to scapegoat.

Demonization is portraying a person or group as totally malevolent, sinful, or evil—perhaps even in league with Satan. Demonization involves marginalization (using propaganda and prejudice to set people outside the circle of wholesome mainstream society) and dehumanization (negatively labeling the targeted persons so they become perceived more as objects than as real people).

Scapegoating is blaming a person or group wrongfully for some problem. Scapegoating deflects people's anger and grievances away from the real causes of a social problem onto a target group demonized as malevolent wrongdoers. The problems being reacted to may be real or imaginary, the grievances legitimate or illegitimate, and members of the targeted group may be wholly innocent or partly culpable. In all these cases the scapegoats are stereotyped as all sharing the same negative trait or are singled out for blame in an unfair and hyperbolic manner.

Conspiracism is a narrative form of scapegoating that portrays the enemy as part of a vast insidious plot against the common good. Conspiracism assigns tiny cabals of evildoers a superhuman power to control events, frames social conflict as part

of a transcendent struggle between Good and Evil, (called dualism or Manichaeism) and makes leaps of logic, such as guilt by association, in analyzing evidence. Conspiracism sees secret plots by tiny cabals of evildoers as the major motor powering important historical events. Armstrong argues that with "most extreme types of fundamentalists, members see conspiracy everywhere and cultivate a theology of rage and resentment."¹²

In most struggles over power and privilege, the processes of demonization, scapegoating, conspiracism, and the use of an apocalyptic style are present in some form in all the individuals, groups, or governments involved. Philosopher René Girard calls this mimetic scapegoating.¹³ We need to examine our complicity in these processes both as individuals and as a nation.

Endnotes

¹ Anthony F. C. Wallace, "Revitalization Movements," *American Anthropologist*, vol. 58, no. 2, April 1956, pp.264–281.

² Karen Armstrong, *The Battle for God* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2001).

³ Jamal Malik, "Making Sense of Islamic Fundamentalism," *ISIM Newsletter* (International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World). Online at <http://www.isim.nl/newsletter/1/research/01AD30.html>. Retrieved 10/19/2001.

⁴ Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), p. xi.

⁵ On Kirkpatrick's theory, see Sara Diamond, *Roads to Dominion: Right-Wing Movements and Political Power in the United States* (New York: Guilford Press, 1995), pp. 198, 216-217. For Arendt's actual thesis, see Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973 [1951]), especially pp.468-474.

⁶ Armstrong, *Battle*, pp. 361-362.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 238.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Walter Laqueur, *Fascism: Past, Present, Future* (New York: Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp.147-178

¹⁰ E-mail exchange with author, 10/15/2001.

¹¹ Gershom Gorenberg, *The End of Days: Fundamentalism and the Struggle for the Temple Mount* (New York: The Free Press, 2000).

¹² Armstrong, *Battle*, p. 363. See also p. 244.

¹³ René Girard, *The Scapegoat* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

Resources

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION RESOURCES

The American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee

<http://www.adc.org> – 4201 Connecticut Ave NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC, 20008, 202/244-2990

–*Anti-Arab Hate Crimes and Discrimination*, 1998-2000 (Washington, DC: ADC, 2001). 77 page report on assaults and threats, hate speech, employment discrimination, civil liberties issues, educational bias, cultural stereotypes in the media, political bias in the news, and other defamation and bigotry. (Available from ADC, \$10.00 for shipping and handling).

–ADC Hate Crime Reports during the Gulf War and after the Oklahoma City bombing. (Available from ADC, \$3.00 each)

–Suha Sabbagh, *Sex, Lies and Stereotypes: The Image of Arabs in American Popular Fiction* (ADC, 1990). 57 pages. (Available from ADC, \$3.00)

–Other resources from ADC, including legal guides, information on immigration law, and resources for teachers, are listed at <http://www.adc.org/education/adcpub.htm> Additionally, the ADC website includes forms for reporting airport profiling and/or hate crimes, and information on “New Challenges to Arab American Civil Liberties.”

The Arab American Institute

1600 K Street, Suite 601, Washington, DC, 20006. 202/429-9210, <http://www.aaiusa.org/Tragedy>

Has available a resource packet for educators, including information on anti-Arab stereotypes and racism. Some portions are available online in PDF format.

Toll-free hotlines to report hate crimes, discrimination and harassment in the wake of September 11, established by the US Commission on Civil Rights

<http://www.usccr.gov>
866/768-7227 and 800/552-6843

Asian American Legal Defense & Education Fund

99 Hudson Street, 12th Floor, New York, NY, 10013, 212/966-5932
<http://www.aaldef.org>

The Council on American-Islamic Relations

453 New Jersey Ave SE, Washington, DC, 20003, 202/488-8787
<http://www.cair-net.org>

Is conducting a survey of passenger profiling in airports since September 11th.

The Sikh Coalition

<http://www.sikhcoalition.org/default.asp>

Has information on discrimination and attacks against Sikhs, including an updated list of hate crimes and a place to report hate crimes or incidents of discrimination.

The Detroit Free Press has published online *100 Questions and Answers about Arab Americans: A Journalist's Guide*

<http://www.freep.com/jobspage/arabs.htm>

Edward Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World*. 1996.

From the Iranian hostage crisis through the Gulf War and the bombing of the World Trade Center, the American news media have portrayed “Islam” as a monolithic entity, synonymous with terrorism and religious hysteria. In this classic work, now updated, the author of *Culture and Imperialism* reveals the hidden agendas and distortions of fact that underlie even the most “objective” coverage of the Islamic world. (Description from ADC)

Tolerance.org

<http://www.tolerance.org>

The mission of Tolerance.org is to create a national community committed to human rights. Its goal is to awaken people of all ages to the problem of hate and intolerance, to equip them with the best tolerance ideas and to prompt them to act in their homes, schools, businesses and communities. Tolerance.org is a Web project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, a national nonprofit civil rights organization that promotes tolerance and diversity and combats hate and discrimination through education, investigation and litigation.



Order your copy of

Rights for Some: The Erosion of U.S. Democracy!

Rights for Some discusses right-wing leaders' attempts to limit the definition of democracy, often leaving people of color, women, the glbt community, immigrants and other groups “outside the fence” and not worthy or deserving of protection under the

law. It also details the efforts of the U.S. political Right to restrict democratic participation in a number of areas, including privatization and deregulation, voting rights, the separation of church and state, immigrants' rights, and ballot initiatives.

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A Report back from the World Conference Against Racism (WCAR)

Svati P. Shah

The third World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Forms of Intolerance (WCAR) was held in Durban, South Africa from August 31 to September 8, 2001. In the wake of September 11, and the subsequent escalation of U.S. military intervention in Afghanistan, attendees of the governmental conference, and the preceding Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Forum (August 28-September 1) from the United States are left with the task of connecting the current crisis with the debates, coalitions, and results surrounding WCAR. The conference was important in light of recent events as a forum for the debate and explication of U.S. foreign policy, and as a space where representatives of minoritized and marginalized groups from around the world came together to share information and to strategize for change.

The NGO Forum

This conference, hosted by South Africa, signified a sea change from the second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (1983) which was primarily focused on eradicating apartheid. It is also significant that at least over a third of the registered participants of the NGO Forum of the conference were from the United States. In addition to intensive official conference planning, the year leading up to WCAR saw many important grassroots coalitions forming in the United States to raise money and to mobilize support for grassroots U.S. participation. Coalitions formed in support of a number of overlapping constituencies, including women, immigrants, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, people of color, and labor. There were substantial critiques from within the United States and internationally regarding the over-representation of people from the United States in the conference. While

these criticisms pointed to crucial ways in which this dynamic detracted from other perspectives being aired in the NGO Forum, the U.S. based coalitions that were built before and during the conference have persisted, either formally or informally. Many are being used to organize a progressive response to the war in Afghanistan and the backlash against Arab and South Asian communities in the United States.

Despite the overwhelming number of U.S. based delegates who attended the NGO Forum, the Forum was constituted by people from around the world giving workshops and presentations, holding smaller organizing meetings and caucuses to negotiate the drafting of the NGO Forum Declaration. The NGO Forum was formally divided into caucuses and thematic commissions that met throughout the week to share information and to discuss the NGO document. These included:

Slavery, Slave Trade, Trafficking and Debt Bondage, Colonialism, Foreign Occupation, Palestinian/New Forms of Apartheid, Religious Intolerance, Traditional Institutions and Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Displaced Persons, Migration, Refugees, and Asylum Seekers, Health and HIV/AIDS, Environmental Racism, Youth and Children, Sexual Orientation, Africans and African Descendants, Antisemitism, Dalits and Other Caste-based Discrimination, Indigenous Peoples, Gender, Roma/Sinti/Travellers, Education, Information, Communication and Media, Ethnic Minorities, and Asians and Asian Descendants.

Although these diverse themes existed in the organizing structure of the Forum, the Forum was also informally oriented around several common issues, including reparations for victims of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, and for the countries from which slaves were taken, the right of return for displaced Palestinians, and the rights of

Dalits in South Asia. This was due to a number of factors, including the use of extremely effective organizing and educational strategies by coalitions calling for reparations and for the rights of the Palestinian and Dalit communities.

In addition to the NGO Forum, events were being held in and around Durban on themes that paralleled or intersected with the stated topics of the conference. Two of the most significant of these were the satellite conference on sexual orientation hosted by the Durban Lesbian and Gay Services Center, and a land rights march in Durban held in support of the land rights of Palestinians and of the Black majority in South Africa. These kinds of events were essential for using the energy and visibility of the conference to promote more localized campaigns for social justice.

By all accounts, the NGO Forum Youth Summit, which preceded the NGO Forum itself, was efficient and effective in producing a document that reflected the politics of nondiscrimination and the necessity for structural change on issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, globalization, migration, and the like. This stood in contrast to the logistically uneven nature of the NGO Forum, and to the difficulty with which the intersections of various oppressions were negotiated. Many NGOs at the Forum had arrived ready to promote an intersectional framework for understanding marginality and oppression. The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission and the Astraea Lesbian Action Foundation commissioned a paper on the intersections of race and sexuality. The paper argued that:

“The WCAR offers governments, non-government and community-based organizations the opportunity to reflect on the causes and consequences of racism. The WCAR also offers an opportunity to reflect on the lived experience of multip[al]ly

marginalized and oppressed groups. This background paper specifically examines the intersection between racism and discrimination based on sexual orientation, sexual preference, or any aspect of sexual expression that transgresses the bounds of a socially defined status quo."¹

Other organizations also distributed position papers and analytical pieces to conference participants on intersecting oppressions, including race and gender, and race and class. These papers were extremely useful in delineating a shared analysis between various constituencies living in different regions. Although it enjoyed widespread support among conference participants, the intersectional analysis was somewhat difficult to operationalize. This was due in part to the caucus structure, which necessitated working in groups entitled "migration," "gender," "reparations," "sexual orientation," etc., although all of these categories are linked through the exercise of power by the state and non-state actors.

The WCAR Governmental Conference

The official governmental conference of WCAR, which constituted the final state-level negotiations on the Draft Declaration and the Programme of Action, was markedly different from the NGO Forum in terms of resource allocation and logistical support. The governmental forum was also distinct from other world conferences in the high degree to which NGOs were restricted from participating in the negotiating process as either observers or as lobbyists. Severely limited NGO access to negotiating rooms, ostensibly due to space constraints, enabled second and third tier negotiations between governments to be uninformed by interventions from groups representing civil society.

The governmental conference was divided thematically. The five themes were 1) Sources, cause, forms and contemporary manifestations of racism, racial discrimi-

nation and related intolerance; 2) Victims of racism, racial discrimination and related intolerance; 3) Measures of prevention, education and protection aimed at the eradication of racism, racial discrimination and related intolerance at the national, regional and international levels; 4) Provision for effective remedies, recourses, redress, [compensatory] and other measures at the national, regional and international levels; and 5) Strategies to achieve full and

Both the WCAR NGO Forum and the governmental conference included sexual orientation caucuses that attempted to push inclusion of language extending protections to people on grounds of their sexual orientation. It would have been the first time that sexual orientation was included directly in a United Nations document.

effective equality, including international cooperation and enhancement of the United Nations and other international mechanisms in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia.

The governmental conference scheduled from August 31 through September 7 reached a peak mid-week when the U.S. government decided to officially withdraw its participation from WCAR by recalling its delegation from Durban. The conference had begun amidst rumblings about a possible U.S. boycott. The U.S. government had threatened a boycott because of language concerning the relationship between

Israel and Palestine—the draft document had used the language that identified the Israeli presence in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as constituting a foreign occupation of Palestinian lands. The draft document had also reaffirmed the right of Palestinians to return to their lands. The U.S. government eventually sent a low-level delegation that reported to National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice. During the first half of the governmental conference

week, U.S. NGOs regularly organized meetings and met in their caucuses to discuss responses to official U.S. positions on a range of topics (as well as meeting in caucus groups with NGOs from other regions). NGOs from the United States largely expressed positions in keeping with the analysis from countries in the Global South that are critical of U.S. foreign policy. U.S. NGOs had also consistently demanded a meeting with the official delegation to discuss differences between the U.S. government's agenda at WCAR and that of organizations representing civil society. By mid-week, the U.S. NGO Coordinating Committee was able to organize a meeting between NGOs and the delegation. After NGO representatives had arrived at the venue, the U.S. delegation cancelled the meeting, saying that they could not meet with NGOs because they were unwilling to discuss the imminent

official U.S. withdrawal from WCAR with NGOs. This prompted a mass demonstration in front of the conference center by U.S. NGOs and allies against the walkout.

Despite this highly publicized "withdrawal," members of the U.S. government delegation remained at the conference site throughout the week, and maintained access to negotiating sessions. Although the United States did not participate in negotiations directly, the European Union and other U.S. allies promoted the U.S. position on a range of topics, including Israel and Palestine, and reparations. The final programme of action was adopted without

reference to any of the language objected to by the United States and Israel on Palestine.

Negotiations on Sexual Orientation

Both the WCAR NGO Forum and the governmental conference included sexual orientation caucuses that attempted to push inclusion of language extending protections to people on grounds of their sexual orientation. It would have been the first time that sexual orientation was included directly in a United Nations document. The sexual orientation caucus in both the forum and the governmental conference was comprised of people from North, Central and South America. The most vocal opposition to the inclusion of any language on sexual orientation came from Iran, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, and Namibia in the governmental conference. Opposition to the inclusion of sexual orientation in the NGO Forum was less visible, though present. NGO Forum opposition took the form of a series of questions on how sexual orientation is linked to racism, including why the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission and the Astraea Lesbian Action Foundation would organize a delegation to a conference on racism. That all of the delegates from these organizations were people of color helped to explain some of this connection, along with distributing literature on the intersectionalities of race and sexuality. Many NGOs, e.g., those representing the Buraku peoples of Japan and some Dalit rights groups from India, saw the potential for alliances with groups pushing for a more progressive position on sexuality, and shared that position as part of their own ideologies.

Vocal supporters of the inclusion of sexual orientation in the governmental conference included Brazil, Costa Rica, and Canada. These countries were in constant struggle between providing vocal support to the inclusion of sexual orientation and sacrificing alliances with other countries on other issues. Both Brazil and Canada made separate proposals for inclusion of the words “sexual orientation” in the govern-

mental document, none of which were successful. Despite this loss, the alliances that were formed in informal negotiations around sexual orientation—especially with countries whose delegation included NGO representation—were invaluable. Future inclusion of progressive language on sexual orientation in U.N. documents will require more analysis of the connections between the scapegoating of sexual minorities and globalization, structural adjustment, religious tolerance, and land reform.

Results

In the end, the governmental conference was extended by one day, to September 8, to accommodate the protracted negotiating process. Some lobbyists claimed that the lack of direct U.S. involvement in the negotiations allowed for more progressive language to be adopted in the final Programme of Action on some issues, including globalization. The documents that are a result of the WCAR process, in and of themselves, reflect a diminished attempt to eradicate racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance. The WCAR process revealed a great deal about the consistency of critiques of U.S. foreign policy from both progressive NGOs in the United States, and from a wide range of NGOs, universities, activists and advocates from other countries.

It was clear to participants that the U.S. government’s use of language concerning Israel in the Programme of Action was in order to escape accountability for domestically supported institutional racism, including racial profiling by the police, and reparations—even though the international media reproduced the official U.S. position labeling any criticism of Israel’s actions toward Palestine as being antisemitic. While the U.S. position on the conference did focus attention on American participation and foreign policy, NGOs and other governmental delegations were able to work together and debate a number of key issues that impact communities in many different regions, including health, women’s and migrants’ rights, and global-

ization.

A significant result of WCAR has been the heightened levels of solidarity among civil society based organizations both domestically and internationally. Many U.S. NGOs met and worked together for the first time. Many coalitions that were formed before and during WCAR have persisted. While the documents themselves are largely symbolic and legally non-binding—especially as far as the United States is concerned, as it will probably not ratify any of these—the negotiations surrounding them highlighted important geopolitical alliances and antagonisms between governments and civil society. For the United States, it should be noted that U.S. NGOs and the U.S. government were diametrically opposed on almost every issue central to the governmental document. For U.S. NGOs, the NGO Forum began as an exercise in building coalitions by distinguishing themselves from U.S. foreign policy and mainstream U.S. media representations of civil society. This indicates both the growing disconnect between the U.S. government and activist communities, and the potential for organizing in progressive coalitions across national borders.

Svati P. Shah, M.P.H., M. Phil., was a member of the International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission/Astraea Lesbian Action Foundation delegation to Durban. She was also a secondary delegate on the Third World Within delegation from New York City, where she is a community organizer and graduate student.

Endnote

¹ Svati P. Shah, “A Background paper on the Intersection of Race and Sexuality with Amendments and Proposals for the Draft Declaration and Programme of Action for the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance,” August 27, 2001. Commissioned by the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission and the Astraea Lesbian Action Foundation.

Eyes RIGHT

WAR CRIES: INVADE! KILL! CONVERT!

“This is no time to be precious about locating the exact individuals directly involved in this particular terrorist attack. Those responsible include anyone anywhere in the world who smiled in response to the annihilation of patriots like Barbara Olson.

We don’t need long investigations of the forensic evidence to determine with scientific accuracy the person or persons who ordered this specific attack. We don’t need an ‘international coalition.’ We don’t need a study on ‘terrorism.’...

People who want our country destroyed live here, work for our airlines, and are submitted to the exact same airport shakedown as a lumberman from Idaho....

Airports scrupulously apply the same laughably ineffective airport harassment to Suzy Chapstick as to Muslim hijackers. It is preposterous to assume every passenger is a potential crazed homicidal maniac. We know who the homicidal maniacs are....

We should invade their countries, kill their leaders and convert them to Christianity.”

*Source: Ann Coulter, National Review, September 13, 2001.
http://www.nationalreview.com/coulter/coulter091301.shtml*

PAT & JERRY DIVINE INVISIBLE HANDS BEHIND 9/11!

JERRY FALWELL: ...these Middle Eastern monsters are committed to destroying the Jewish nation, driving her into the Mediterranean, conquering the world. . . . And I fear, as Donald Rumsfeld, the Secretary of Defense said yesterday, that this is only the beginning. And with biological warfare available to these monsters; the Husseins, the Bin Ladens, the Arafats, what we saw on Tuesday, as ter-

rible as it is, could be miniscule if, in fact, if in fact God continues to lift the curtain and allow the enemies of America to give us probably what we deserve.

PAT ROBERTSON: Jerry, that’s my feeling. I think we’ve just seen the antechamber to terror. We haven’t even begun to see what they can do to the major population.

JERRY FALWELL: The ACLU’s got to take a lot of blame for this.

PAT ROBERTSON: Well, yes.

JERRY FALWELL: And, I know that I’ll hear from them for this. But, throwing God out successfully with the help of the federal court system, throwing God out of the public square, out of the schools. The abortionists have got to bear some burden for this because God will not be mocked. And when we destroy 40 million little innocent babies, we make God mad. I really believe that the pagans, and the abortionists, and the feminists, and the gays and the lesbians who are actively trying to make that an alternative lifestyle, the ACLU, People For the American Way, all of them who have tried to secularize America. I point the finger in their face and say ‘you helped this happen’.

PAT ROBERTSON: Well, I totally concur, and the problem is we have adopted that agenda at the highest levels of our government. And so we’re responsible as a free society for what the top people do. And, the top people, of course, is the court system.

*Source: People for the American Way.
http://www.pfaw.org/911/robertson_falwell.shtml*

DISASTER RELIEF FOR HOMOSEXUALS COULD LEAD TO GAY MARRIAGE VALIDATION!

“[Relief organizations] should be first giving priority to those widows who were at home with their babies, and those widowers who lost their wives,” Sheldon said. “It should be given on the basis and priority of one man and one woman in a marital relationship.”

“This is just another example of how the gay agenda is seeking to overturn the one man-one woman relationship from center

stage in America, taking advantage of this tragedy,” he said.

*Source: People for the American Way.
http://www.pfaw.org/news/press/2001-10-04.328.phtml*

LEFT’S ATTACK ON SCOUTS GIVES TERROR- ISTS VICTORY!

The Rev. Louis P. Sheldon, Chairman of the Traditional Values Coalition, writes “[b]ecause of the terrorist war on America, contributions to SAVE OUR BOYSCOUTS have fallen off. . . . But despite the terrorist attack on America, the Left’s war on the Boy Scouts continues. . . . The Left’s attack on the Scouts can only weaken America and

Eye LASHES

“It’s not just simply a matter of capturing people and holding them accountable, but removing the sanctuaries, removing the support systems, ending states who sponsor terrorism.”

Paul Wolfowitz,
Deputy Secretary of Defense
of the United States.

*Source: Cited in John Catalinotto, ‘As U.S. War Seems Imminent: NATO Countries Fear Being Dragged In.’
http://www.iacenter.org/nato_war0901.htm
Emphasis added!*

give the terrorists another victory. If the Left destroys the Boy Scouts, the terrorists win again.”

Source: “Urgent” Letter sent out as part of an emergency campaign by the Traditional Values Coalition.

PLEDGING PATRIOTISM

“FRC Unveils Patriotic Book Covers For America’s Students – As many of the nation’s 52 million students simultaneously recite

the Pledge of Allegiance Friday, Family Research Council unveils a new patriotic book cover featuring the words of the pledge on the front and two verses of the national anthem on the back.”

“‘The Pledge was and is a statement of unity, an important lesson for students,’ Family Research Council President Ken Connor said Friday. ‘This is a teaching moment, and schools should use it to bring back the Pledge where it has slipped from daily routines. FRC’s new book covers are designed to help accomplish this goal.’”

Source: Family Research Council Press Release, October 12, 2001. <http://www.frc.org>

HAIKU

quiet evening
mom tucks child in for the night
bomb obliterates
—kinZ3

dark morning
no rain except in mother’s eyes
bloody floor
—Ashu

earth trembles then fear
scorpions and eagles fight
doves must fly in flocks
—Chip Berlet

CALLING ALL REAL AMERICANS!

“Since Sept. 11, the words ‘God Bless America’ have been seen and heard everywhere. But the ACLU wants it stopped!

According to Fox News, the U.S. House of Representatives yesterday gave its blessing to ‘God Bless America.’

The American Family Association encourages you to contact Superintendent Brown and commend him for standing firm for America’s children against the un-American ACLU.”

Source: American Family Association Alert, October 17, 2001. <http://www.afa.net/activism/aa101701.asp>

To Our Readers

In the last issue of *The Public Eye*, I used the term “young turks” to describe the young White men of the Old Right who were the founding strategists and leaders of the New Right. I used the term in its popular sense: young men with new ideas.

We quickly received a phone call from one of our most loyal supporters, a woman of Armenian descent, who pointed out that the popular use of “young turks” is derived from the Young Turk Movement, which emerged in the early 20th century as a reform-minded group in Turkey. A sector of this movement, the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) seized and monopolized power in 1913, promoting a form of Turkish nationalism that was xenophobic and exclusionary.

The CUP devised a secret program for the extermination of the Armenian population, a civilian minority population in the Ottoman Empire. Thus, it was the CUP faction of the Young Turks who implemented the Armenian Genocide, characterized by mass deportation and slaughter.

I apologize to all our readers for my error in not knowing the historical roots of the term “young turks.” For an account of the role of the Young Turks in the history of the Ottoman Empire, see an article by Dr. Rouben Paul Adalian of the Armenian National Institute, in Israel W. Charny, ed., *Encyclopedia of Genocide* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 1999). It can also be found online at: http://www.armenian-genocide.org/encyclopedia/young_turks.htm

Jean V. Hardisty
President, PRA.

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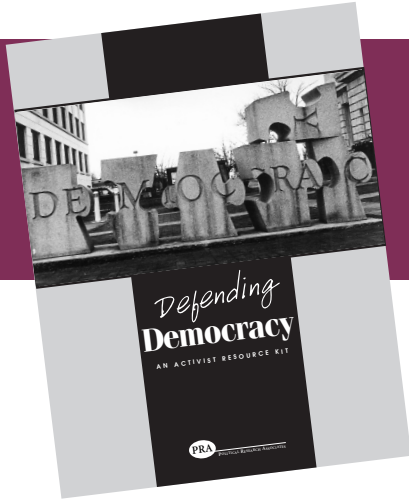
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