

The Public Eye

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Photo by Jessica Rimaldi/Reuters

Muslims protest Rep. Peter King's congressional hearings at "I Am A Muslim, Too" rally March, 2011

It's Their Party

How the Tea Party Sustains the anti-LGBT Right

By Pam Chamberlain

2011 was a frustrating year for the anti-LGBT Right.

Despite millions of voters and many millions of dollars generated by a loose coalition of conservative forces to oppose LGBT rights, the LGBT rights movement has made tremendous progress. While homophobia remains rampant in the culture, public policy is changing. Consider these recent achievements:

- In February, the Justice Department announced that it would no longer support the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in court.
- In July, President Obama officially certified the repeal of the Defense Department's 18 year-old "Don't Ask Don't Tell" policy.
- Same-sex marriage is legal in six states as of 2011, and 40% of

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Muslim Community Resistance

Organizing & Advocacy in a Time of Struggle

By P. Adem Carroll

Since 9/11, the New York Police Department's Pre-Ramadan Conference and Breakfast has become one of the largest gatherings of Muslim leadership in New York City. Last July, I sat among a sea of suits and uniforms, colorful headscarves, turbans, and maroon fezzes. Surrounded by American flags and silk banners with a star-spangled rainbow design, NYPD Commissioner Ray Kelly's boxer stance commanded attention as he engaged a crowd of 150 Muslim police officers and roughly 250 Muslim community members.

Within the crowd, some Muslims were murmuring. These men and women were concerned about reports that police trainers had been showing *The Third Jihad*, a film made by Wayne Kopping and produced by Raphael Shore and the Clarion Fund,¹ creators of the notorious propaganda film *Obsession: Radical Islam's War Against the West*.

The Third Jihad opens with a disclaimer that "this is not a film about Islam. It is about the threat of radical Islam." However, the film's narrator, Dr. Zahdi Jasser, says that

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Shining a Fresh Light

With this issue I take the reins from Amy Hoffman as Editor of *The Public Eye*. Amy and I have known each other since our days in the trenches of Boston's alternative newspapers — she at *Gay Community News*, I at the *Real Paper* and the progressive Jewish monthly *genesis 2*. I'm a journalist and qualitative researcher by training with a specialty in studying workplace environments. I've also maintained a very active presence in the performing arts as a writer, lecturer, educator, and advocate. "Culture worker" isn't a designation recognized by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, but it's the only definition I've found that encompasses my career to date.

If I believe anything, it's that one of the great challenges of our time is the need to **marshal evidence, analysis and imagination** to build the just, safe, and dignified world every person on the planet deserves. I hope my work on *The Public Eye* will, in a small way, contribute to that effort.

This issue shines light on many of the issues central to PRA's long-standing mission. After a lapse in publication, *The Public Eye* is back with a full slate of issues and analysis. In these pages you'll read of the erosion of immigrant and LGBT civil liberties, the misuse and disguise of public resources, and even the Right's demonization of one of this country's most revered organizations, the Girl Scouts! We report on the Tea Party and its alliances on the political Right. We also offer an in-depth look at the challenges facing American Muslims who are organizing against official misrepresentation and building coalitions across faiths and regions. In future issues *The Public Eye* will be experimenting with new features and formats, and offering our perspective on this combative 2012 election season. Stay tuned!

During PRA's thirtieth anniversary year we remain committed to keeping our eyes and ears open, bringing together evidence and analysis to educate the public and inform social justice change-makers.

—Debra Cash

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ISSUE 71

When Secure Communities Meet Border Security

Looking at Michigan's Fusion Centers

In the Winter 2009/Spring 2010 edition of The Public Eye, we reported on the rise of Intelligence Fusion Centers, created to coordinate the national security intelligence efforts of the Department of Homeland Security, US Department of Justice, CIA, FBI and the Department of Defense. The initiative was designed to allow officials to collect and share “seemingly unrelated” data about incidents that might – or might not – be precursors of terrorist activity, and if needed, coordinate responses to such attacks. Public Eye’s Thomas Cincotta raised questions about the centers’ potential for racial and ethnic profiling, violations of free speech, and noted their lack of transparency and intrusive power. Amid escalating reports of racial profiling by immigration and border control officials in the Detroit area, and reports of the redirection of Homeland Security funding for local police operations, we asked journalist Eartha Melzer to report on how Michigan’s fusion centers are operating in proximity to the United States’ northern border and one of the largest, oldest and most diverse Arab-American communities in the country.

By Eartha Melzer

This past August, a broad coalition of community groups held a “March Without Fear” in Southwest Detroit. Their rally in Clark Park drew 2,000 attendees: unions, including locals of the United Auto Workers, United Food and Commercial Workers and Service Employees International Union; civil liberties groups, like the American Civil Liberties Union and the Detroit Coalition Against Police Brutality; immigrant rights groups and faith-based organizations, including the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and the Washtenaw Interfaith Coalition for Immigrants Rights. Congressmen John Conyers and Hansen Clarke gave speeches, along with UAW President Bob King and NAACP President Reverend Dr. Wendell Anthony.

The protesters were shining a light on a rise of complaints of racial profiling by the Border Patrol acting in Detroit’s neighborhoods and by the Office of Field

Eartha Melzer’s journalism on politics, civil rights and the environment has been featured on CNN, the Rachel Maddow Show, Countdown with Keith Olbermann, The Thom Hartmann Show, and in print outlets around the world. She is based in Traverse City, Michigan.



Detroiters March Without Fear August, 2011

Operations charged with immigration at the Detroit/Windsor border.

At the same time, they were drawing a connection between what they saw as the uptick in harassment of local Arabs and Latinos and the “information gathering” practices of the state’s secretive fusion centers. Calling for a redirection of funding from ineffective, abusive enforcement programs into job-creation, education, and blight elimination,¹ the protestors demanded community oversight of federal funds.

The previous spring, the U.S. government had opened such a fusion center in Harrison Township near Lake St. Clair. The \$30 million Coast Guard and Border Patrol Operational Integration Center (OIC) is located at Michigan’s Selfridge Air National Guard Base at the Canadian border. The Selfridge OIC has a binational staff: officers from the U.S. and Canadian Border Patrol, members of the U.S. Office of Field Operations and Office of Air and Marine, U.S. Coast Guard and Michigan

Photo by Peace Education Center/Flickr

The Michigan Intelligence Operations Center names the following partners

- Michigan State Police (MSP)
- Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)
- Michigan Homeland Security
- Michigan National Guard
- Michigan State University Police Department
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
- U.S. Coast Guard
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
- Michigan State University Police Department

MIOC states that it works closely with partners from the public and private sectors in 19 critical infrastructure sectors, including:¹⁰

1. Agriculture and Food
2. Banking and Finance
3. Chemical
4. Commercial Facilities
5. Communications
6. Critical Manufacturing
7. Dams
8. Defense Industrial Base
9. Education
10. Emergency Services
11. Energy
12. Government Facilities
13. Information Technology
14. National Monuments & Icons
15. Nuclear Facilities
16. Postal and Shipping
17. Public Health and Health Care
18. Transportation Systems
19. Water¹¹

State Police, and officers of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Ontario Provincial Police.

When it opened in May, the facility promised to provide, “a centralized location for Customs and Border Protection (CBP) ... to gather, analyze and disseminate operational and strategic data in the Great

Lakes region of the Northern border for use by frontline agents and officers.”² The concerns of Homeland Security were centered on recognition that Detroit is the busiest trade crossing on the U.S.-Canadian border. Detroit is also home to the region’s water infrastructure and a major oil refinery.

At the time, the Dept. of Homeland Security asserted that the limited amount of law enforcement at the Canadian border, coupled with active trade and traffic, makes the terrorist threat on the northern border greater than that faced on the border between the U.S. and Mexico. Barriers to information sharing between customs enforcement and border control personnel, a later report would note, could be a weak link in northern border security.

A retired County Sheriff said that MIOC was like “Google for police.”

In 2011, U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Alan D. Bersin referred to the OIC as a “demonstration project.”³ He described the complex technology and techniques being deployed for information sharing. The OIC brings together information feeds, including radar and camera feeds, blue force tracking, database query from databases not previously available to CBP, remote sensor inputs, RVSS [Remote Video Surveillance Systems] and MSS [Mobile Surveillance System] feeds, and video from various POEs [Points of Entry] and tunnels. Additional information feeds such as local traffic cameras and MSS will be added in the near future. “This level of personnel and technology integration may serve a model for collaboration and technology deployments in other areas of the northern border.”⁴

The Selfridge IOC site houses the control room for an elaborate, eleven-camera system that can transmit live video from locations across the Detroit metropolitan area. According to Sentrillion Corp, which installed the system, the video system provides long range (18 Km) video surveillance day and night in all weather environments, and also has an optional on-the-ground radar function. The new video surveillance system can observe activities four miles in from the border, including most of the city of Detroit. Most residents of the region are unaware that those watching the video feed also will have access to state/local databases and traffic cameras. The nearby St. Clair Shores Police Dept. reports that the OIC is helping to monitor the movements of the boats in the city marina and allows the department to use OIC databases to track movement of people and boats, including low lying “submarine” boats that are difficult to detect.

The Road to the Border

How did Michigan and the city of Detroit, a state and city in desperate financial straits, come to make such a large investment in such an intelligence gathering infrastructure?

In 2006, a group calling itself the Southeast Michigan Urban Area Security Initiative was formed to receive homeland security funding which had been earmarked for the area through the federal Urban Area Security Initiative. The group included representatives from the City of Detroit and the Counties of Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw, and Wayne.

Then-Governor Jennifer Granholm established The Michigan Intelligence Operations Center (MIOC) by executive order on December 20, 2007. MIOC’s mission was to “collect, evaluate, collate, and analyze information and intelligence and then, as appropriate, disseminate this information and intelligence to the proper public safety agencies so that any threat of terrorism or criminal activity will be successfully identified and addressed.”^{5,6} The MIOC was built in East Lansing and has

been awarded \$8.5 million in federal grants since 2006.⁷

Much of this funding has gone into the creation of complex database systems that can store data, including biometric information, and generate local and regional maps. Asked about how the existence of such a database system could help protect public safety, Dale Peet, former Commander of the MIOC, shared an anecdote

There was a threat, it was out of Flint or Genesee county high school, in which a student had posted on a blog or a web page on the Friday that on a Monday he was going to enter the school and kill a lot of people. The fusion center obtained that information, [...] tracked the residence where it was [uploaded], and local authorities obtained a search warrant.

MIOC has a privacy policy that specifies that records be kept that show what information has been accessed, by whom and for what purpose. However, it is unclear how well it is following that policy or who is monitoring its performance. Daniel Levy, chief legal officer for the Michigan Dept. of Civil Rights, is a member of the MIOC advisory board, which typically meets every other month. He said that the center itself is responsible for ensuring that the privacy policy is followed.

That said, it remains unclear what information is being gathered by Michigan's fusion centers, and who has access to that information. Terrence L. Jungel, executive director of the Michigan Sheriff's Association and a retired county sheriff, said that MIOC was like "Google for police" and expressed his belief that anyone who enters data in the system can also run searches. Jungel said that the MIOC database is a "tremendous tool" that can help law enforcement officers see patterns. "Investigating is good," he said. "We investigate to clear and exonerate as much as anything." Beat cops, he said, should know the data and surveillance tools available to them through MIOC.

There are also questions about the



Photo by U.S. Coast Guard/Flickr

High resolution surveillance at the Operational Integration Center (OIC) on Selfridge Air National Guard Base

required level of clearance for users. In a Feb. 2011 article for *Homeland Security Today* magazine, titled "Building a Better, More Effective Fusion Center"⁸ Dale Peet said that one of his greatest accomplishments as commander of MIOC was creating a system for interns to do data entry into the system, thereby sparing officers for more important jobs.

The MIOC in East Lansing shares information with the Selfridge OIC. Kapp was eager to emphasize that intelligence fusion could improve public safety services in an era of diminishing resources. There is little

The new video surveillance system can observe activities four miles in from the border, including most of the city of Detroit.

doubt that Michigan's two fusion centers have been subject to "mission creep" —allocating monies originally earmarked for "terrorism prevention" to a broader public safety agenda. A recent CBS news analysis found that the ongoing recession has forced Michigan to cut more police officers

than any other state.⁹ Recent FBI statistics indicate that the state now has four of the nation's ten most dangerous cities.

Is Fusion Center Data Being Used By ICE and for Racial Profiling?

Dale Peet, the former MIOC Commander, dismissed the idea that the MIOC database could be used to unfairly target people based on race, national origin, or visa status. As of October 2010, when he retired, he said, MIOC did not collect border patrol information. He asserted that neither Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) nor Canadian Border Patrol (CBP) had access to the system. However, this assertion was contradicted by his successor, Gene Kapp. Canadian border patrol does have access to MIOC information, he said, and always did. Kapp went on to explain that ICE can make a request of MIOC, but "visa status is not information that we retain or get involved in."

The retired sheriff and Michigan Sheriff's Association director Terrence Jungel dismissed the idea that, for instance, crossing to Canada while wearing a headscarf would be enough to trigger suspicion. "Profiling has a bad rap," he said. "We bend over backward to avoid profiling. We go where the facts lead."

Immigrants and their advocates in the Detroit community disagree with these types of official statements. Lena Masri, staff attorney for the Michigan chapter of Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), said that she is receiving an average of four reports each week from people who say they were abused at the border. Muslims, she said, have been stopped and detained at the border for several years, but recently the types of mistreatment being alleged have become much more severe. She says,

People are being handcuffed. Their cars are being surrounded by armed agents. The men are taken inside and detained in a cell for several

hours, up to 12 hours at a time. There are questions that pertain to religion, where they pray, whether they have received terrorism training.

CAIR MI has filed complaints about the treatment with the Dept. of Homeland Security and the Dept. of Justice.

Immigrant rights advocates report increasing use of joint task forces and ICE enforcement actions that involve Detroit police and the Wayne County Sheriff's department, and they say that authorities intentionally mislead people about which agency they represent. Hispanic Bar Association president Lawrence Garcia said that Southwest Detroit's large minority population makes it a hunting ground for

immigration enforcement activities and racial profiling. "Whenever ICE needs to show some resolve," he said, "rounding up people in Southwest Detroit is just too convenient of a way to do that."

One event that especially outraged locals was a situation in which ICE agents conducted an enforcement action at a local elementary school called Hope of Detroit Academy in March, 2011. According to Alliance for Immigrants Rights and Reform Michigan director Ryan Bates, Jose Maldonado Plasencia had just dropped off his child at the school when ICE agents detained him without having obtained prior authorization for performing enforcement at a school. Later that morning,

agents in SUVs and sedans with tinted windows followed two other families from their homes to the school. After the families took refuge in the school, they surrounded the building. When Bates intervened and asked whether the agents had a warrant, the agents acknowledged that they did not, and left in a convoy. Weeks after the incident, school attendance remained low because parents were afraid to bring their children to school. Five months later, the ICE Office of Professional Responsibility released a report on the investigation into these incidents that found that officers did not engage in any abuse or professional misconduct.

Rep. John Conyers (D-Detroit) said his office is reviewing ICE's investigation of the Hope of Detroit incident. "Allegations of warrantless searches, racial profiling, and unlawful detentions must be taken seriously," he said. "I have some concerns about the thoroughness of ICE's review." ■

WHEN THE THREAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL

What's the scorecard on the Michigan Operational Integration Center's ability to combine information from different sources when the threat is not terrorism but environmental disaster?

In August, 2010, the Kalamazoo River was covered with more than 800,000 gallons of tar sands crude when the Enbridge oil pipeline ruptured. In the aftermath of that spill, first responders around the state complained that they were unaware of the hazardous liquid pipelines in their communities. MOIC spokeswoman Lisabeth indicated that during this emergency, MIOC shared information about the spill with the private sector.

The Center refused to name its private sector partners, citing Michigan's FOIA law exemption for "disclosure of the identity of a confidential source, or if the record is compiled by a law enforcement agency in the course of a criminal investigation, disclose confidential information furnished only by a confidential source." Nonetheless, it's not too hard to imagine who some of the private partners might be, given the list supplied by MIOC, and there is reason to believe that the center's private partners include Dow Chemical, which is headquartered in Midland. Dow has contaminated the state's largest watershed with dioxin from operations at its Midland complex. In 2008, officials with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency warned that the company has failed to cooperate with environmental officials, used political connections in state government to avoid cleanup responsibilities, and misrepresented the contamination to the public. The company recently settled with regulators over years-long violations of the Clean Air Act.

Another likely partner is DTE Energy's Monroe coal plant. This plant, the largest individual source of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions in the state, was sued by the U.S. EPA last year for violating the Clean Air Act by failing to install required pollution control equipment. EPA said the plants operations would lead to premature death, heart attacks, and lung problems.

A number of questions remain to be answered:

- What safety related information is the MOIC sharing with the state of Michigan? Is MIOC giving special treatment to corporate citizens that do not have a record of making public safety their top priority?
- How can MIOC know that the private sector partners that receive sensitive information will use it responsibly?
- How reciprocal is the relationship between MIOC and the private partners? What is the character of this partnership and why is it important that the identity of these partners remain secret?

Endnotes

- ¹ Statement from organizer Bart Kumor. Aug. 19, 2011.
- ² April 24, 2011 CBP announcement http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/newsroom/news_releases/archives/april_2011/04242011.xml
- ³ 05/17/2011 Testimony of Alan D. Bersin, Commissioner, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, Before the Senate Judiciary Committee Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees and Border Security Regarding Northern Border Security http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/newsroom/congressional_test/bersin_testifies.xml
- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ Mission statement provided by Michigan State Police.
- ⁶ <http://www.michigan.gov/mioc>
- ⁷ Interview with MIOC Commander Gene Kapp, Sept. 12, 2011.
- ⁸ <http://www.hstoday.us/blogs/best-practices/blog/building-a-better-more-effective-fusion-center/6ae6cd36764f17ba8a19d94fd8c01813.html>
- ⁹ www.cbsnews.com/8301-505245_162-57390001/as-dollars-dwindle-so-have-michigan-police-ranks/
- ¹⁰ MIOC public information officer Nicole Lisabeth, asked to describe the relationship the center has with private partners, said that these relationships are "increasing every single day" but she declined to name any of the involved parties.
- ¹¹ Information provided by Nicole Lisabeth, Public Information Officer, Michigan State Police Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division.

IT'S THEIR PARTY *continued from page 1*

Americans now live in states where some form of same-sex marriage or civil union is allowed. For the first time, in 2011, a majority of Americans indicated they believed same-sex marriage should be legal. In May, Gallup reported that a strong majority of Americans, 56%, believed that gay or lesbian relations were morally acceptable.¹ 51% of those polled by ABC News/*Washington Post* indicated they felt this way, up from 37% in a poll conducted by the same organization in 2003.² And the rate of increased support for same-sex marriage has doubled in the last fifteen years.³

- A federal hate crimes law has been in place since 2009.
- There are now over 5,000 gay-straight alliances in U.S. schools, which are more open to LGBT students than at any time in the past.

Some organizations long opposed to LGBT equality have had to admit that the tide is turning. Jim Daly, the successor to James Dobson as president of the Christian Right organization, Focus on the Family, admitted defeat to Right-wing strategist Martin Olasky in a June, 2011 interview. When Olasky asked what he felt about the campaign for same sex marriage, Daly replied:

We're losing on that one, especially among the 20- and 30-somethings: 65 to 70 percent of them favor same-sex marriage. I don't know if that's going to change with a little more age—demographers would say probably not. We've probably lost that. I don't want to be extremist here, but I think we need to start calculating where we are in the culture.⁴

Pam Chamberlain, former Interim Research Director, is Senior Research Consultant at PRA. This article is adapted from a March 2012 PRA Report, Resisting the Rainbow: Right-Wing Responses to LGBT Gains.



Photo by Bill Pugliano/Reuters

Tea Party members and Christian evangelicals at a campaign event for Rick Santorum, February 2012

Some on the anti-LGBT Right may admit to defeat around same-sex marriage, but they are not about to throw in the towel. Social conservatives who are mobilized around religious principles or the fear that LGBT people remain a threat to their way

**Some on the anti-LGBT
Right may admit to
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of life are still a major part of the political landscape. In many cases, they have been able to subtly craft the messages they send to a broader public to avoid the appearance of overt bigotry by appealing to fundamental American principles of religious freedom or majority rule, even as they

argue for what amounts to discrimination. “Traditional family values,” for instance, have evolved into more specific campaigns that oppose comprehensive sexuality education (a threat to “parental rights” since parents should teach their children their own values about sexuality themselves); welfare rights (shrinking the social safety net through “marriage promotion”); the legalization of same-sex marriage (a threat to “religious freedom” by allegedly “requiring” churches to sanctify same-sex marriage) and the need for “marriage protection” to codify discrimination against LGBT couples who seek to marry. These strategists know that a focus on issues dear to social conservatives brings voters to the polls. Once at the voting booth, they can be encouraged to support candidates with broader platforms than mere opposition to LGBT rights.

The Christian Right, including both the Roman Catholic Church hierarchy and conservative evangelical Protestants, has been the driving force in opposing LGBT rights in the U.S. An effective infrastructure of grassroots organizations, charismatic leaders, media networks, and consistent funding provided the scaffold-

ing for this Christian constituency to join with other burgeoning social movements in a powerful political force.

The rise of the Tea Party has reinforced the visibility and ultimately the electoral focus of the Christian Right. While initially galvanized around issues such as lower taxes, smaller government and national security concerns, about half of the Tea Party identifies with the Christian Right. This overlap has helped reinforce a political “litmus test” for candidates on so-called social issues like abortion, sexuality education, and the place of religion in public life. Right-wing strategists, and the candidates who follow their counsel, have targeted various groups such as immigrants, African-Americans, and Muslims as opportunities arose. The ideas that LGBT and homosexuality are threats to society were constructed as part of its overall strategy to mobilize support based on scapegoating and fear.⁵ Ample historic precedence exists for blaming immigrant communities of color for economic and social problems. LGBT people have been singled out both because they are easy targets based on fear of the “other” and that they represent departure from the idealized sexual norm.⁶

While anti-LGBT signs have been commonplace at Tea Party rallies, evidence of the apparently sanctioned homophobia within its ranks, the greater political danger to LGBT people lies with the leaders and Tea Party-supported candidates. These men and women craft positions and platforms to attract the broadest range of conservatives.

In anticipation of the January 2012 Iowa caucuses, Tea Party favorites Rick Santorum, Michele Bachmann, and Rick Perry signed a controversial anti-gay marriage pledge promoted by the conservative Iowan group Family Leader. This cemented the candidates’ support of the Defense of Marriage Act and reasserted them as standard bearers for traditional values, a position for them as important as support for smaller government and lower taxes. These latter issues are attractive to voters who see their dream of economic stability destroyed by corporate and government greed.

Traditional values are framed as the bulwark against an equal threat: those who live differently will eradicate the familiar, and superior, way of life. Together, these frames use the politics of fear to craft a potent platform.

There are indeed social libertarians within the Tea Party for whom homosexuality is not a principal political concern. On balance, however, the Tea Party represents a threat to LGBT people, both directly and indirectly.

In an election year that hinges on the state of the economy, keeping contraception and same-sex marriage in the mix is an indication of the Tea Party’s strength.

Spilling Tea: Calling Out the Players

Those who support the Tea Party are almost exclusively White, better educated than the general public, older and more likely male, and more politically conservative than most Republicans. They are middle class, and they uniformly think Obama has done a bad job as president. Depending on the wording of polls, we can estimate that by the 2010 midterm elections, between 20-28% of all U.S. voters supported Tea Party positions.⁷

The “Tea Party” is a loose affiliation of multiple organizations. Some are indeed grassroots organizations, emerging from locally organized efforts, and spearheaded by people often with little or no previous political experience. Such Tea Party organizations, as well as some larger national

groups, include members and some leaders who openly espouse White supremacy and antisemitism.⁸

Others are national groups, well financed by corporate backers, like FreedomWorks, which attempts to influence the agenda and strategies of the Tea Parties from a national perch. While FreedomWorks insists it has a membership of over one million, it functions more as a fictional grassroots, or Astroturf, group because the policy decisions, positions on issues, and funding all come from the top. (It is no coincidence that the precursor to FreedomWorks was Citizens for a Sound Economy, founded in the 1980s by prominent right-wing funder David Koch.) FreedomWorks is today headed by Dick Armey, a former Republican member of Congress and one time majority leader. FreedomWorks has pushed its own preferred economic issues, primarily in the area of deregulation of corporations, and it is in the forefront of attempts to repeal The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. Steve Forbes, the publisher of *Forbes* magazine, sits on the FreedomWorks board as well as on the board of the Heritage Foundation, a key framer of conservative ideas.

In February of 2010 a social networking group called Tea Party Nation convened a national convention of Tea Party members in Nashville. Sarah Palin and Tom Tancredo, a conservative Christian and anti-immigrant politician from Colorado, spoke, signaling that at least for this sector of the movement, the Christian Right’s social agenda was an effective draw. Roy Moore, the Alabama judge who refused to remove the Ten Commandments from his courtroom, got accolades for his speech, which included:

[Obama] has ignored our history and our heritage, arrogantly declaring to the world that we are no longer a Christian nation. He has elevated immorality to a new level, setting aside the entire month of June to celebrate gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender pride. He now threatens to change our law to allow homosexuality in our military....⁹

While top-down Tea Party leaders such as Dick Armey and Matt Kibbe's FreedomWorks still work hard to keep a secular focus on "big government, lower taxes, and more freedom," conservative Christian leadership within the Tea Party has managed two major coups. It has promoted the vast majority of 2012 Republican candidate hopefuls, from Michele Bachmann to Rick Santorum, and their example pressured their fellow campaigner Mitt Romney to address traditional values questions like LGBT rights more often. In an election year that hinges on the state of the economy, keeping issues like contraception and same-sex marriage in the mix is an indication of their strength. The alliance is working because the Republicans need social conservatives in order to win in 2012.

Paul Weyrich, the Christian Right leader, co-founder of the Heritage Foundation, and master strategist for the New Right for 35 years, recognized the value of bringing various parts of the conservative movement together with a shared project. In describing the 2002 founding of the secretive rightist Arlington Group, he said, "If we could all sing off the same sheet of music, we could be a significant force. . . ."¹⁰

That project was a series of state ballot initiatives against same-sex marriage, one that united the Christian Right and showcased its renewed power. It's tempting to speculate: what if strong alliances to fight the Right had been in place in those states, as there was in Oregon in its successful 1992

Plenty of evidence exists that illustrates how current Republican candidate frontrunners use same sex marriage as a litmus test of conservatism.

campaign against Measure 9?

The 2010 midterm elections were a major show of that power. It remains to be seen what direction the Tea Parties will take in 2012. Plenty of evidence exists that illustrates how current Republican candidate frontrunners use same-sex marriage as a litmus test of conservatism. A Tea Party favorite, Rick Santorum, has campaigned on a sturdy platform plank of anti-abortion and anti-same-sex marriage. During the run-up to the New Hampshire primary, Santorum said that marriage was a privilege, not a right. "Not everybody or everything can get married."¹¹ Mitt Romney's current anti-same-sex marriage stance is consistent with his opposition to a court decision that legalized same-sex marriage in Massachusetts in 2003 when he was governor of that state. He has since courted social conservatives by attending convenings such as the annual Conservative Political Action Conference, where he boasted he was able to block Massachusetts from becoming "The Las Vegas of gay marriage."¹²

No Republican presidential candidate can win without the combined support of economic conservatives, social conservatives, and independents, and the social conservatives are already organized through the Christian Right and the Tea Parties. Although we cannot see or predict what their staying power will be, there is no question that they bear careful scrutiny and warrant swift strategic responses by the LGBT community and its allies. ■

Endnotes

¹ Linda Saad, "Doctor-Assisted Suicide is Moral Issue Dividing Americans Most," May 31, 2011, Gallup <http://www.gallup.com/poll/147842/doctor-assisted-suicide-moral-issue-dividing-americans.aspx>

² See Question #33 of the poll: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/polls/postabcpoll_071711.html. For a summary of many different polls in LGBT rights, see <http://www.pollingreport.com/civil.htm>

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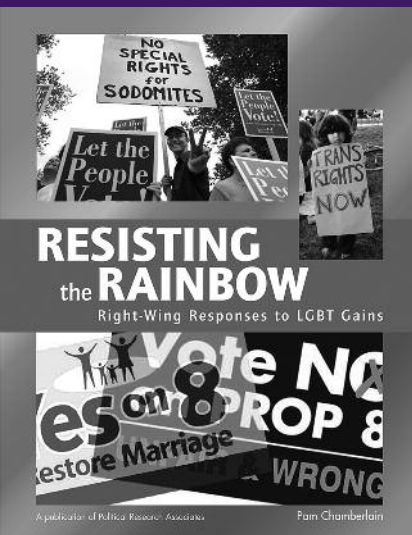
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MUSLIM COMMUNITY *continued from page 1*

he has found a document that reveals “the true agenda of *much of the Muslim leadership here in America*” [italics PRA’s]. In a series of interviews primarily consisting of neoconservative analysts, and featuring inflammatory footage of human rights abuses, violent political rallies, and images celebrating the enrollment of children in suicide missions, the film asserts that radical Muslims have a strategy to “infiltrate and dominate” America and transform it into an Islamic theocracy. Among other claims, the film cites a survey that “one in four young American Muslims condones suicide bombings” and implies that moderate American Muslim organizations, particularly the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), act deceptively to disguise their true radical agendas.

A local group, Muslim American Civil Liberties Coalition (MACLC),² had formed over three years earlier to challenge faulty NYPD threat analysis, biased law enforcement training, and community surveillance. The coalition is comprised of leading New York City-based Muslim legal and community advocacy groups, and is advised by the Brennan Center for Justice. When rumors of NYPD screenings of *The Third Jihad* began to circulate, MACLC sent a series of letters to the Commissioner requesting a meeting.

There was no response.

The morning of the breakfast, Imam Talib Abdul Rashid, a respected elder and newly chosen Amir of the Majlis Ash Shura, took the floor. As head of the imams’ leadership council, the most established Muslim leadership group in New York, he shared his concerns about the showing of the problematic film. He offered to help form a committee to vet materials about Islam for use in future training sessions.

Following the imam’s remarks, Kelly said that *The Third Jihad* had been shown only one time, and only as “background visu-

als.” Notably, though he was to deny his direct cooperation for many months, Kelly himself had been interviewed for, and appeared in, *The Third Jihad* speaking about threats associated with young Black men who were “recruited” and converted to Islam while in prison, and about the terrorist threat associated with suitcase-sized nuclear weapons, or “dirty” bombs. Kelly minimized the significance of community concerns, adding that his department was exploring convening dialogue or advisory groups with Muslims but “did not know whom to include and whom to exclude.”

CAIR’s series of trainings and pocket guides called “Know Your Rights” provide Muslim students, employees, and airline passengers with a valuable overview of their rights. The guides can be used to identify and respond to hate crimes.

Kelly’s statements raised some eyebrows. Community complaints had led MACLC members to believe the film had been shown more than once. Beyond this, MACLC members knew that the NYPD had recently begun to convene a completely separate group of Muslims to meet with, a group MACLC members supposed would be comprised of more pliable community representatives.

Muslim Community Responses

The American-Muslim community is highly diverse and decentralized; many of the national leadership groups (the alphabet soup of CAIR, ISNA, MPAC, ICNA, MANA³) coordinate on a regular, but quite loose basis. Emerging American Muslim civil society organizations also include independent groups reflecting a range of sects, religious styles, and opinions.

On a local level, Muslim, civic, and interfaith organizations have for many years responded to bias-motivated crimes and to attacks on the ability of Muslims to worship or freely associate. They are also increasingly successful in publicizing government attacks on Muslim civil rights through profiling, surveillance, detention and deportation, and biased training by public safety officers.

Coalitions (and temporarily activated social networks) play an important part in Muslim community activism. Muslim representatives from struggling new organizations may at first experience themselves as the “affirmative action member” in such groups, but over time most beleaguered Muslims gain safe and supportive spaces within these collectively organized civic efforts.

In March 2011, a major rally called “I am a Muslim, Too” was held in New York City’s Times Square to coincide with now-infamous House Homeland Security Committee hearings convened by Rep. Peter King (R-NY). The rally was supported by The Foundation for Ethnic Understanding,⁴ best known for its annual “twinning project” that now brings together more than 240 synagogues and mosques in 22 countries on four continents. This is one of a number of active coalitions working towards greater coexistence. Another, the New York Neighbors for American Values, a coalition of 150 civic groups, worked throughout 2011 to promote religious freedom and tolerance⁵ via research⁶ and through civic engagement activities such as 9/11 commemorations. It also has been raising questions about NYPD surveillance and Islamophobic training programs.

P. Adem Carroll is founder and former Executive Director of Muslim Consultative Network, which works to promote inclusion, dialogue and community strengthening in New York City.

In Washington, D.C., a new interfaith campaign, “Shoulder to Shoulder Standing with American Muslims: Upholding American Values,” housed at Islamic Society of North America,⁷ has organized an interfaith 9/11 commemoration. It issued a “Joint Statement Against Extremism of All Kinds In Support of American Values” signed by 26 national religious leaders and later released a statement opposing the widespread NYPD surveillance of Muslim students, religious leaders, and communities.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) has been able to create an important national network for Muslim communities with more than 30 local chapters, frequent email alerts, and national and local advocacy campaigns. CAIR’s series of trainings and pocket guides called “Know Your Rights” provide Muslim students, employees, and airline passengers with a valuable overview of their rights. The guides can be used to identify and respond to hate crimes.

In recent years, CAIR has embarked on a series of high profile lawsuits and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests pertaining to illegal anti-Muslim discrimination, harassment, and surveillance.

When it surfaced that Virginia agents at the FBI’s training center at Quantico were being shown a chart contending that the more “devout” a Muslim, the more likely that person is to be “violent,” Muslim activists responded immediately.

Their efforts have prompted some politicians and interest groups⁸ to demonize CAIR as “the legal wing of Jihad in America.”⁹ In June 2011, in association with the University of California Berkeley’s Center for Race and Gender, CAIR released its report, *Same Hate, New Target: Islamophobia and Its Impact in the United States 2009-2010*. The report provides detailed descriptions of Islamophobia effects, ranging from hate crimes and vandalism to political marginalization of affected communities.¹⁰ CAIR national legislative director Corey Saylor, one of the report’s co-authors, says he remains seriously con-

cerned about the pace of government response to these challenges.

CAIR and other national and local groups have worked to empower targeted groups to identify and report suspicious activity, develop legal contacts, and establish security in mosques and public settings. In some regions, impacted groups have begun to confront the purveyors of Islamophobic training directly, with some success.

Community Groups Win In Local Skirmishes

One of the Muslim community’s first successes in organizing against anti-Islam counterterrorism trainings dates back to Washington State in 2008. That May, a training program run by private company Security Solutions International (SSI), called “The Threat of Islamic Jihadists to the World,” took place at the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission campus in Burien, Washington. It was billed as providing insight into the formative phases of Islam, but conflated the religion’s different branches with radical Islam and a discussion about how to respond to terrorist acts.

In response to community outcry and Muslim protests, the Port of Seattle dissociated itself from further cooperation with SSI. Port Police Chief Colleen Wilson met with local CAIR representatives and offered to have them come in to do additional training.

Two years later in 2010, however, alert Muslims noticed that SSI had scheduled a



By Adam Zyglis

LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING AND THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF ISLAMOPHOBIA

According to *Slate*,⁴⁶ Department of Homeland Security has doled out more than \$300 million since 9/11 to at least eight prestigious U.S. universities to support “centers of excellence” including the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), the Center for Risk and Economic Analysis of Terrorism Events (CREATE), and the National Center for the Study of Preparedness and Catastrophic Event Response (PACER). Since 9/11, more than 200 colleges have created homeland-security degree and certificate programs. According to *Slate*, another 144 have added emergency management⁴⁷ programs “with a terrorism bent” focused on narrow topics like “the psyche of terrorists.”

Among such centers, the Center for Homeland Defense and Security⁴⁸, funded by DHS and FEMA, offers a free, ready-made curriculum to more than 130 universities. The Naval Post Graduate School’s curriculum⁴⁹ has also been especially popular. *Slate* notes a number of “disaffected Bush Administration officials” involved in this influential sector. The last time such a substantive academic shift took place on college campuses was the creation of African-American and women’s studies departments in the 1960s and ‘70s.⁵⁰

The NYPD’s acknowledged 2011 “one-off” training does not seem to have been an anomaly. A Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) surveillance detection course at the U.S. Naval Observatory in Washington, D.C., allegedly included the viewing of a propagandistic anti-Islam film that features notorious Islamophobes such as Daniel Pipes, Nonie Darwish, and Walid Shoebat, and promoted the theme “that ‘Islam is synonymous with Nazism.’”⁵¹

Law enforcement is an enormous market. According to PRA’s Thomas Cincotta, “the domestic security apparatus is estimated to employ 854,000 individuals. Another 800,000 or more police, sheriff or tribal law enforcement and emergency personnel are being mobilized to respond to terrorism threats both real and perceived” across the nation. He documents in chilling detail how some trainers troll this space to spread hateful distortions about Islam, operating with no professional standards and little accountability.⁵²

Cincotta reports how in 2009 the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) worked without tracking how counterterrorism training grants were being used and had no way to even measure if attendance at such meetings or conferences was “mission-critical.”⁵³ Similarly, in a *Washington Monthly* article⁵⁴, Meg Stallcup and Jonathan Craze documented the bewildering bureaucratic tangle that hinders oversight.

With accountability so compromised, the politicization of intelligence-related training has continued unchecked—possibly also degrading standards at more established intelligence related institutes from Monterrey to West Point.⁵⁵

Nonetheless, Muslim community efforts are largely reactive and under-resourced, often dependent on volunteer-led campaigns. Muslim donors and foundations continue to be scared away from donating to certain Muslim charities and social service organizations.⁵⁶ Over 246 Muslim organizations and individuals were slapped with the stigmatizing and confusing designation “Unindicted Co-Conspirator” following the Holyland Foundation trials, a move that has been criticized by civil liberties groups.⁵⁷ There is a profound impact on struggling organizations when donors are advised by risk management consultants to stay away from any potential controversy.

webinar that included presentations by the Seattle Police Department and Washington State Patrol. Responding to concerns expressed by CAIR Washington State, both law enforcement agencies announced that they would withdraw from the event. “We commend the Seattle Police Department and the Washington State Patrol for listening to community con-

cerns about a group that promotes anti-Muslim stereotypes and conspiracy theories,” said CAIR-WA Executive Director Arsalan Bukhari.¹¹

SSI had been in the news not long before. In Political Research Associates’ report, *Manufacturing the Muslim Menace*, Security Solutions International, LLC (SSI)¹² and two other private firms, Inter-

national Counter-Terrorism Officers Association (ICTOA) and The Centre for Counterintelligence and Security Studies (CI Centre), were shown to have speakers and materials that promoted a range of harmful anti-Muslim teachings. Many of these trainings disseminated inaccurate and conspiratorial myths that could put the rights of millions of American Muslims at risk from the very public servants who have sworn to protect them. Sparked in part by the report, Muslim and community groups convinced Paul MacMillan, Chief of Police of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) to cancel an inflammatory SSI seminar covering topics such as “Women in Islam and Female Suicide Bombers,” and “The Legal Wing of Jihad in America.”¹³

Sustaining Activism on a National Scale

Sustained organizing efforts are key to the Muslim community pushing back against the scores of campaigns demonizing Islam and institutionalizing Islamophobia since September 11, 2001. It is not difficult to recognize Islamophobia’s political usefulness:¹⁴ it perpetrates an exaggerated fear, hatred, and hostility toward Islam resulting in bias, discrimination, marginalization and the exclusion of Muslims from America’s social, political, and civic life.

Writer Reza Aslan has recently observed,

Simply put, Islam in the United States has become otherized. It has become a receptacle into which can be tossed all the angst and apprehension people feel about the faltering economy, about the new and unfamiliar political order, about the shifting cultural, racial, and religious landscapes that have fundamentally altered the world. Across Europe and North America, whatever is fearful, whatever is foreign, whatever is alien and unsafe is being tagged with the label ‘Islam.’¹⁵

When *Manufacturing* was released, the community group Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) knew how to use this research. The report’s publications coin-

cided with the U.S. House of Representatives' Homeland Security Committee hearing on American Muslim Radicalization. Even before that first hearing in March, 2011, Congressman Allen West (R-FL) claimed that he possessed the names of 6,000 Muslim Americans who secretly supported the Muslim Brotherhood in a supposed plot to take over the USA and install Sharia law.

MPAC knew what to expect from the anti-Islam hearings.¹⁶ Using data from the report, MPAC and other partners were able to convince Senators Lieberman and Collins to challenge the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Department of Justice to investigate and halt any such support. The Senators later threatened Congressional action, setting off a flurry of activity within DHS.

When it surfaced that Virginia agents at the FBI's training center at Quantico were being shown a chart contending that the more "devout" a Muslim, the more likely that person is to be "violent," Muslim activists responded immediately. The national civil liberties organization Muslim Advocates called for the U.S. Department of Justice Inspector General to investigate "the FBI's use of grossly inaccurate and bigoted trainers and training materials for its counterterrorism agents and other law enforcement." They raised further concerns about the agency's new Domestic Intelligence Operations Guide (DIOG)'s expansive ethnic mapping guidelines in a comprehensive report¹⁸ published in October, 2011. Following the exposé and outcry, the FBI went into damage control mode. The FBI was ordered to scrub its training materials of offensive and inaccurate anti-Muslim content and sources.

Back in Washington state, a coalition of 19 Seattle-area community groups held a

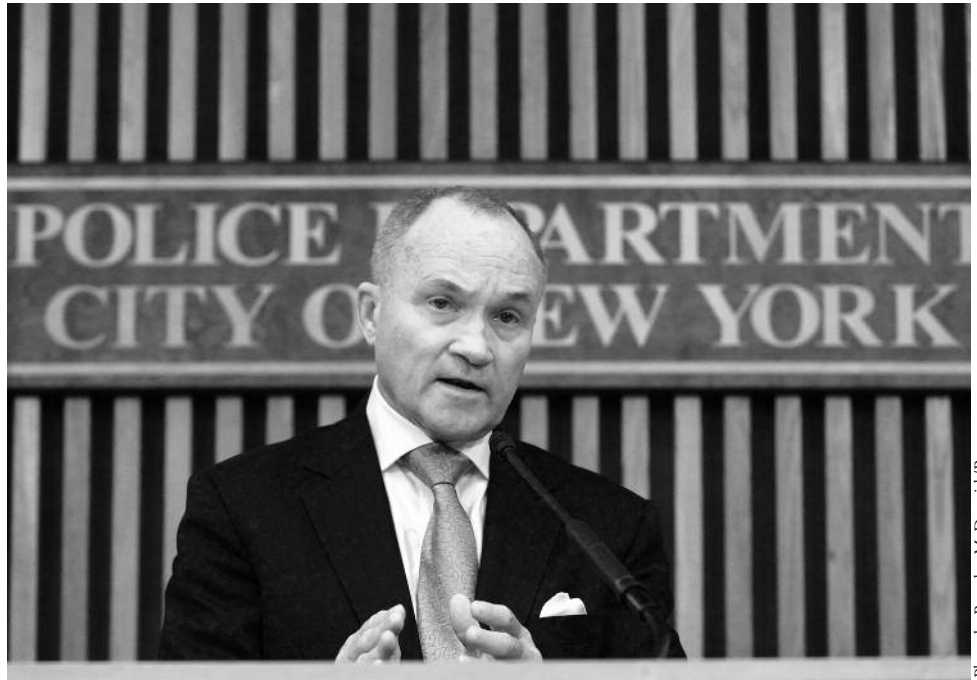


Photo by Brendan McDermid / Reuters

Ray Kelly, New York City Police Department (NYPD) Commissioner

news conference at CAIR's Seattle offices demanding an independent civil-rights investigation of FBI training methods. Ghada Ellithy, an engineer who sits on the board of the state's largest mosque, described an item she received during an FBI Seattle Citizens' Academy session the previous April. The handout was written by a local FBI counterterrorism agent named Gerry Sames¹⁹ and linked Islam to Nazism in a two-page discussion of Nazi and Arab alliances during WWII. It went on to discuss whether the current Arab-Israeli conflict is in fact a continuation of Nazi antisemitism.

Academic experts agreed the materials were distortions, inflammatory and offensive. After receiving no response to a formal complaint, the coalition decided to make the issue public.²⁰ Eventually, a Seattle FBI spokeswoman confirmed that an agency review of the incident was underway at the local and national level. Jennifer Gist, civil-rights coordinator for CAIR's Washington chapter, complimented the FBI for undertaking this review but emphasized the need for an independent monitor to ensure agents are not being trained to profile Muslims or demonize any group of people.

Nationally, the FBI stepped up its community outreach with a late December 2011 conference call with Muslim civil rights groups to apologize for offensive Islamophobic training materials²¹ and to promise a "comprehensive review." The Department of Homeland Security, which provides most funding for state and local training, has also recently issued a set of "Best Practices" recommendations for countering violent extremism training.²²

Paranoia and Practical Success

As Faiza Patel of the Brennan Center noted,

At the same time as federal and local law enforcement agencies have expanded their monitoring of American Muslim communities, they have emphasized the need to build relationships with these communities...Such efforts have been criticized as uncoordinated and ineffective. It is rarely recognized, however, that even the best-coordinated outreach efforts are unlikely to succeed when paired with an approach to radicalization that emphasizes intelligence-gathering

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about religious behaviors and practices.²³

In the past year, Islamophobes have found safe haven in Tea Party circles, actively advising Presidential candidates, with Walid Phares advising Mitt Romney,²⁴ and Frank Gaffney advising Michele Bachmann.²⁵ Others have introduced bills against Sharia Law in numerous state legislatures, from Alaska to Pennsylvania, based on a legislative template created by David Yerusalami.²⁶ Presidential candidate Newt Gingrich has joined a long list of politicians seeking to gain votes by running against the public stereotype of Islamic law.²⁷ Among Christian evangelicals, some have taken the position that Islam is the false religion of the anti-Christ and therefore to be wholeheartedly opposed.²⁸

Direct publicity can be very effective in countering Islamophobia. The creation of accurate film and video representation of Islam and Muslims has shown promise in countering misconceptions and hate among members of the general public. Offsetting the poisonous imagery of *Obsession*, *The Third Jihad*, and other such propaganda, interactive film projects like Change the Story, Islam Project (*Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet and Muslims*), *New Muslim Cool* and *Hawo's Dinner Party*²⁹ have been packaged along with curricula and teaching tools.

Taking a more critical approach to media literacy, the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC)'s "Truth Over Fear: Countering Islamophobia" campaign is a workshop and training program designed to empower local communities to counter Islamophobia "in a proactive manner." MPAC's hands-on training sessions are linked to the "Hate Hurts" campaign, with training modules directly critiquing *Obsession*, and rebutting its Islamophobic content.

While the Muslim community turns to public safety officers for protection, they may also be kept under watch. In October, 2011, AP reported that the police were keeping watch on Imam Shamsi Ali and Sheikh Reda Shata, two community leaders who had been particularly close and

open with the authorities. Moreover, a follow-up story in February, 2012³⁰ divulged the existence of undercover officers known as "mosque crawlers" who provided weekly reports on a wide range of mosques and imams regardless of their politics, and also conducted surveillance on Muslim student clubs throughout the Northeast.

Mistrust between the community and authorities has been an issue since the days of "COINTELPRO" yet the current situation has eroded trust and lines of com-

A Muslim leader who positions himself as an insider risks a loss of legitimacy with the community, and in some cases may be suspected of being a confidential government informant.

munication even further. A Muslim leader who positions himself as an insider risks a loss of legitimacy with the community and in some cases may be suspected of being a confidential government informant. This is especially problematic as such players often try to depict themselves as the "most moderate" of Muslims. Paradoxically, it is these self-proclaimed leaders—like Zuhdi Jasser—who find it easiest to obtain funding and support.

Stories of successful dialogue are emerging, however. In Oklahoma, police have been meeting with Muslim residents monthly since 9/11. Early dialogue meetings initially attracted very few participants, but the anti-Sharia bills spurred the

community into action and into coalitions with other members of the public. "We defeated two separate legislative attempts to ban Sharia in Oklahoma ..." says Oklahoma CAIR Director Muneer Awad. "We have partnered with the Chamber of Commerce, the Jewish community, and the interfaith community to defeat these bills." He also noted that "our opponents have partnered with the same group of people heavily involved in the anti-Muslim training, especially ACT for America which helped fund the campaign to pass the first anti-Sharia amendment in Oklahoma."

In places like Tennessee where anti-Sharia bills are also pending, new allies including the NAACP, ACLU, the immigration reform group PIRCC, and even the Scientologists, have come forward to get provisions of the bill watered down.

In Los Angeles, which in 2007 backed down from a law enforcement plan to map local mosques,³¹ LA County Sheriff Leroy Baca has developed a positive reputation among local Muslims and was invited to Washington D.C. to counter the assertions of Congressman Peter King. Nonetheless, Sheriff Baca has had to defend himself for his support of immigrants, engagement with Muslims, and he even has been accused of endangering Israel by this behavior.³²

Sustaining ongoing relationships with the authorities is a double-edged sword. At an acrimonious 2011 event in Washington state, a Police Department detective observed, "The community is tired of seeing their images represented" in presentations about terrorism. FBI assurances that they do not profile were also unpopular: "When you say you don't profile — and our reality is you do — you negate everything else you say," said Jeff Siddiqui, a Pakistani-American member of American Muslims of Puget Sound.

In August, 2011, an eye-opening report from the Center for American Progress, *Fear Inc.*,³³ detailed how more than \$40 million has flowed from seven foundations over the past ten years to fund projects promoting a politically paranoid and highly

inaccurate view of Islam and Muslims. In large part due to such generous financial support, Right-Wing conspiracy theories on a wide range of anti-Muslim topics have become accepted wisdom, influencing political and media discourse. The need for accurate information about Islam and for clearer communication between Muslim community members and law enforcement officials has never been greater—yet community surveillance policies and an overall increase in government secrecy have made this extremely difficult.³⁴

To gather evidence, 15 regional CAIR offices submitted 87 Freedom of Information Act public records requests³⁵ to the government in November 2011, which sought information about possible Islamophobic training of local, state, and national law enforcement personnel. This was not the first time CAIR and other Muslim and interfaith organizations have asked for such information. In May, 2011 Judge Cormac J. Carney determined that the FBI and the Department of Justice had lied in response to a 2006 FOIA request for documents pertaining to the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), Islamic Shura Council of Southern California, CAIR's California chapter, and other organizations. When the government appealed on the grounds of national security claims, Judge Carney rejected the appeal, writing that FOIA exemptions for national security and intelligence gathering "do not grant the Government a license to lie to the Court."

Back to Breakfast

On January 26, 2012, revelations emerging through Brennan Center FOIA requests and in the *New York Times* demonstrated that, contrary to its many public assurances, including the one made by Commissioner Kelly at the Pre-Ramadan Breakfast, the NYPD had cooperated with the making of *The Third Jihad* and promoted it much more extensively than previously admitted. The truth was consistent with NYPD's anti-Muslim history. Widely published reports demonstrate extensive NYPD mapping and surveillance of Mus-

lim individuals and institutions.

Responding quickly, the Majlis Ash Shura Islamic Leadership Council of New York joined MACLC at a press conference demanding the resignation of NYPD Commissioner Kelly and his spokesman Paul J. Browne, and the creation of permanent and independent oversight controls, such as an Inspector General responsible for the

More than \$40 million has flowed from seven foundations over the past ten years to fund projects promoting a politically paranoid and highly inaccurate view of Islam and Muslims.

NYPD. Though not all community leaders asked for the Commissioner's ouster, City Council members and interfaith leaders demanded action from the Mayor; and civic leaders from such advocacy groups as 100 Black Men in Law Enforcement and the Center for Constitutional Rights joined Muslim community leaders in denouncing official lies and demanding accounta-

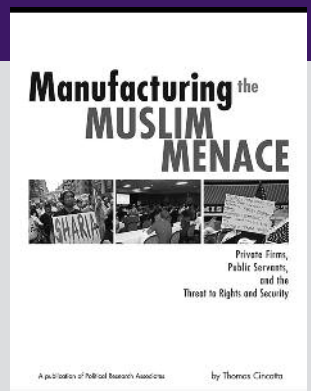
bility. This event was followed up by several more press conferences and rallies. After a year witnessing the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street movements, many local Muslims felt a surge of confidence and energy.

However, as plans were made for an ongoing campaign against NYPD profiling, the challenges of maintaining a consistent activist strategy within a diverse and decentralized Muslim community immediately became evident. Some activists insisted on demanding resignations, while other religious and community leaders—including City Council allies—felt the focus should be on policy change. Attempts were made to reach out to anti-Stop and Frisk activists and impacted communities of color. One Muslim group crafted a competing (and softer) set of demands, asking for an investigation but not a permanent oversight mechanism, which Muslim leaders friendlier with the Bloomberg administration quickly signed. A month before, when Muslim leaders boycotted an annual interfaith breakfast with Mayor Bloomberg in response to the reports of NYPD Muslim demographic mapping, others told reporters that they supported the mayor and the NYPD policy 100 percent. One such local leader (Imam Qayoom of Queens) even called the boycotters "extremists." To respond to problematic NYPD policies, different groups of Muslim activists competed in their offers to help with training oversight and in their advice to the New York State Attorney General.

Manufacturing the Muslim Menace

This report from Political Research Associates details the systematic failure of federal government to regulate the highly prejudiced content of publicly funded counterterrorism training for first responders and others. **Manufacturing the Muslim Menace** exposes the myths promoted in some training firms' curricula.

Find the full report online at www.publiceye.org or order a print version by calling our offices at 617-666-5300.



When Robert Jackson, the only Muslim Council member in New York City, was quoted in news reports saying that he had no problem with *The Third Jihad*, other Muslim advocates were aghast and were able to ensure that the Councilman quickly issued a strong statement of clarification.

Nonetheless, supporters of *The Third Jihad* seem to move in lockstep. In early February 2012, New Yorkers opened the morning news to find former DHS Director Tom Ridge and Former CIA Director Woolsey staunchly defending the film with strong statements of support for NYPD surveillance policies, attacking the notion of NYPD oversight and also once again attacking CAIR. At press time, Peter King's latest hearing on "Islamic Terrorism" had invited testimony from Mitchell Silber, the controversial Director of NYPD Intelligence Analysis. With an election year barely underway, it seems clear the controversy is not yet over—and the struggle continues. ■

Endnotes

- ¹ Funded by over \$17 million from Donors Capital, DVDs of *Obsession* were distributed to more than 28 million voters in swing states during 2008 in an apparent attempt to mobilize support for the Republican presidential nominee, John McCain. http://www.publiceye.org/magazine/v23n4/book_reviews.html
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REPORT OF THE MONTH

Is this Alabama/Es Esta a Alabama?

A video campaign by Center for American Progress (CAP), America's Voice Education Fund and Define American, February 2012
<http://listthisalabama.org/>

H.B. 56, the Hammon-Beason Alabama Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act, signed into law in June, 2011, is the harshest anti-immigration law to pass the state legislature since Arizona lawmakers passed SB 1070. [See *Public Eye*, Summer, 2011.] Its provisions affect law enforcement, transportation, apartment rentals, employment, and education.

After H.B. 56 went into effect in late September, Tracy Todd Stacy, spokesman for Republican state house Speaker Mike Hubbard said "It's a strong law, it's a good law, and most Alabamians are pleased with the fact that there is finally a law to crack down on immigration and make sure those working and living in Alabama are doing so legally... The focus is clearing up misconceptions, correcting any portions that might be vague and make it work more efficiently."

In February 2012, the progressive organizations Center for American Progress (CAP), America's Voice Education Fund, and Define American, the group led by undocumented Filipino-American journalist Jose Antonio Vargas, launched a series of short films to oppose the bill. Written and directed by Hollywood producer and director Chris Weitz (the director of *The Twilight Saga: New Moon* and most recently of *A Better Life*, believed to be first major Hollywood studio treatment of the plight of illegal immigrants), Alabamians were asked to share their thoughts about the bill. Each video asks local residents how H.B. 56 affects Alabama's communities. Each person speaks from the heart.

Among the comments are a young man who appears to be White, who says "Get the motherf**kers out of here... get your papers or get out"; a White school teacher who notes "I ask my children about their life and who they are... but it's not about documentation for me, it's just about their story"; an African-American minister who compares

his communities' struggle for equality to that of Alabama's Latino community, saying "The gloves are off... we're seeing the true attitude of many of the people, basically White, who control the state. They have decided that it's time to put people, who are unlikely, back in their places. And in terms of Hispanics, they have no place in Alabama"; and a middle-aged farmer who says "This is not the kind of America I want. Not the kind of Alabama I want, no way. We're going backwards instead of forwards. The state of Alabama is telling me who my friends can be... that's what buffalos me."

The compelling videos have been posted online and publicized by local and national news media. Right-wing media outlets have yet to respond to "Is This Alabama," but a few comments posted by anti-immigrant activists on online progressive and neutral news outlets didn't hold back. In a comment left on the National Public Radio's website, one author posted, "We have immigration laws for a reason. To vet out criminals, people with communicable diseases and people that have no means of support. You spit in the face of every legal immigrant when you help ILLEGALS."

The same month as the videos were posted, Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) and Californians for Population Stabilization (CAP) aired commercials against both "legal" and "illegal" immigration on the Superbowl telecast. One of the commercials urged Californians to vote against any policy supporting "legal" immigration. The other asked Ohio residents to do just the same. Both groups vehemently support H.B. 56. In fact, FAIR's legal expert and Kansas' Secretary of State, Kris Kobach, helped draft the legislation.

On March 1, community members held a protest outside the doors of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals holding signs that read, "We are not Illegal." While a brief filed by the Department of Justice said, "The Constitution leaves no room for such a state immigration-enforcement scheme," segments of Alabama's inhumane anti-immigrant legislation went into affect on April 1, 2012.

—Sarah Viets

Other Reports in Review

Beyond FAIR: The Decline of the Established Anti-Immigrant Organizations and the Rise of Tea Party Nativism,

by Devin Burghart and Leonard Zeskind.
Kansas City, MO, Institute for Research and Education on Human Rights, 2012, 51pp.
<http://www.irehr.org/issue-areas/tea-party-nationalism/beyond-fair-report>

Devin Burghart and Leonard Zeskind are two respected researchers of Right-Wing

activity, and their work continues to provide us with detailed information about American Nativism with this new report. Similar to their Institute for Research and Education on Human Rights report *Tea Party Nationalism*, this publication packs a lot of quantitative data into a short publication to support two simple observations: 1) the established anti-immigrant organizations in this country have diminished in size and influence over the

past few years and 2) The Tea Parties have enjoyed a simultaneous increase in membership and support.

Without drawing a hasty cause and effect conclusion between these two phenomena, Burghart and Zeskind speculate that the nativist organizations may have declined due to multiple potential factors a) Perhaps the economy contributed to a decrease in financial support for groups like FAIR, the Feder-

ation for American Immigration Reform; b) Expressing anti-immigrant sentiment has become more acceptable, moving “from the margins to the middle” of society; and c) The rise of the Tea Parties has provided competition to what Burghart and Zeskind call “the Nativist Establishment.” One possibility left unexplored by the authors is that the lack of a meaningful debate about immigration reform legislation (aside from attempts to pass the DREAM Act) since 2008 has denied these groups a forum for their views and an opportunity to increase their membership.

Whatever the reasons, it is indisputable that major anti-immigrant players such as FAIR and the Minutemen factions evince a major decrease in support. Over the same time period, roughly from 2009 until now, various

Tea Party organizations have taken on immigration as an aspect of their work. This report documents that over 100 of the 600 leaders they identify as part of the Nativist Establishment have “reached out and found a place inside the Tea Parties.”

Elected representatives and those who work on their behalf should read this report to understand the potential power of the Tea Parties and their influence on the legislative process. Burghart and Zeskind don’t mince words. All Americans, they say, “will have to decide whether or not they will challenge a mean, sometimes brutal, anti-democratic nativist social movement by their fellow Americans.”

—Pam Chamberlain



“I don’t care what the liberals say, I don’t care what the naysayers say, this nation was founded as a Christian nation. There’s only one God, and his name is Jesus. I’m tired of people telling me that I can’t say those words. [...] If you don’t love America, if you don’t like the way we do things, I have one thing to say — get out! We don’t worship Buddha, we don’t worship Muhammad, we don’t worship Allah, we worship God, we worship God’s son Jesus Christ.”

—Greenwell Springs Baptist Church
pastor Rev. Dennis Terry
March 13, 2012, introducing Family
Research Council president Tony Perkins
and 2012 Republican presidential candidate
Rick Santorum in Baton Rouge, Louisiana

“God is undoing this nation and effecting [sic] all of your lives, with the moth that quietly eats the very fabric of your national garment. Radiohead is just such an event. Freak monkey’s [sic] with mediocre tunes keeps you busy and focused by lightness.”

—Westboro Baptist Church,
offering informed rock criticism in
Kansas City, Missouri, March 11, 2012

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Platform for Prejudice:

How the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative Invites Racial Profiling, Erodes Civil Liberties, and Undermines Security

By Thomas Cincotta

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Eyes RIGHT

AS THE COOKIES CRUMBLE

When a Colorado Girl Scout troop made the decision to accept seven-year old transgender scout, Bobby Montoya, the Girl Scout's annual cookie drive took a sour turn. In an eight-minute YouTube posting, Taylor, who is identified as a 14-year old Girl Scout, laments the organization's alleged retreat from "traditional values." She denounces what she claims is a Girl Scout-wide policy of "Gay-Lesbian-Transgender-Intersex-Questioning activism." The Girl Scouts of America's official statement had been, "If a child identifies as a girl and the child's family presents her as a girl, Girl Scouts of Colorado welcomes her as a Girl Scout."

Three troops from a Christian school in Louisiana had already disbanded to protest Colorado's policy, but it is the video that has garnered the most attention. It brought attention to the website "Honest Girl Scouts." Many of the articles on "Honest Girl Scouts" decry the organization's involvement with groups like Planned Parenthood and the YWCA. For example, in a FAQ section, "Honest" encourages Scouts to ask, "Why did a Girl Scout council select Pam Smallwood, a woman with a 30-year career with Planned Parenthood in Waco Texas, (10 years as CEO) to honor as a "Woman of Distinction" for girls to emulate?" Probably because she was an amazing leader.

So far the net effect of the video has indeed been to point to influence, but not in the way "Honest" intended. Instead, the video has called into question the influence Right-Wing groups have in creating bias within the 3.2 million member non-partisan Girl Scouts organization. Instead of sparking a boycott, Taylor's video and the agitation of "Honest Girl Scouts" gave the many supporters of LGBT rights a good reason to stock up on tasty Thin Mints.

WHEN FED EX BECOMES BIG BROTHER

It started out as a joke. During a speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in February, Newt Gingrich hyperbolically advocated a government system that would use mailing services to track, and by extension, prosecute, illegal immigrants. But for two Guatemalans, the reality of the situation is not nearly as funny.

Damaris Roxana Vasquez and Gaspar Gonzalez were mailed a passport which was delivered by FedEx. The company claimed to be suspicious of document fraud and alerted Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). When Vasquez and Gonzalez drove to a FedEx facility in Florida to pick up the package, they were greeted by ICE officials who put both under arrest. Gonzalez was eventually deported. Vasquez is fighting stay in the States with her son who is a U.S. citizen. Since the incident, the two have filed a lawsuit against ICE.

This incident highlights troubling collusion between corporations and government agencies in immigration policy and enforcement. As John De Leon, the attorney representing the Guatemalans, states, "There's nothing amusing about the idea of government using corporate efficiency in order to violate people's rights." Senior Communications Specialist Chris Stanley stated that FedEx "has a long history of cooperation with law enforcement. We do not comment on the specifics of that cooperation."

FedEx, following its own corporate regulations, has oversight on any activity occurring in the course of delivering its services, such as the routine search of packages for hazardous, illegal and other prohibited materials. However, passing that right to the government becomes a violation of the unreasonable search and seizure statute. FedEx's decision to single out Guatemalans, under government discretion, is tantamount to racial profiling. The joke, it seems, is on all of us.

DESPITE WESTERN PRESSURE UGANDA ANTI-HOMOSEXUALITY BILL BACK IN PLAY

The infamous Anti-Homosexuality Bill is back on the docket of Uganda's Parliament, and once again has sexual minorities and human rights groups bracing for the possi-

bility of renewed violence and police persecution. First introduced in 2009, the original bill failed in the wake of an international outcry that included U.S. pressure on the government of strongman president Yoweri Museveni. Some of the most contentious aspects of the proposed legislation have been removed, such as capital punishment and the obligation to report known homosexual acts within 24 hours or face arrest. However, the bill still criminalizes advocacy on behalf of sexual minorities and now includes life imprisonment.

As reported in these pages [e.g., "The U.S. Christian Right and the Attack on Gays in Africa," Winter 2009], the legislation was drafted following a junket by notorious U.S. anti-gay campaigners, including Holocaust revisionist Scott Lively, and Dan Schmierer of the "ex-gay group" Exodus International. The Bill's original preamble was drawn from the text of Lively's presentations. Homosexuality is already illegal in Uganda.

Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Bill, backed by Christian clerics aligned with the U.S. Christian Right has become a template for other countries, such as Nigeria and Liberia, where U.S. rightists are also involved.

In March, the human rights group Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG) – whose Advocacy Officer David Kato was murdered last year amidst a climate of anti-gay hysteria fostered by religious groups and local media outlets – a filed suit in an American court against Scott Lively for conspiring to deprive LGBT Ugandans of their human rights. The case was brought on behalf of SMUG by the New York-based Center for Constitutional Rights under the alien tort statute, which permits foreigners to sue in American citizens who violate international law. Whether Lively or any other American is ultimately found to be legally culpable by a U.S. court, SMUG's action sends a powerful message that moral responsibility for the persecution of Africa's LGBT communities lies largely with the American Christian Right and their campaigns to impose right-wing theology onto the nations of Africa and beyond.

In the coming months PRA will be releasing a follow-up to our groundbreaking report on the U.S. Christian Right and Africa, *Globalizing the Culture Wars*.

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