

# Chapter 2

## The Islamophobia misinformation experts

A small group of conservative foundations and wealthy donors are the lifeblood of the Islamophobia network in America, supporting a central nervous system consisting of a clutch of misinformation experts. Just as Newt Gingrich relied on these experts' talking points to grossly mischaracterize the dangers of Sharia law in our country, the five men profiled in this chapter are responsible for orchestrating the majority of misinformation about Islam and Muslims in America today. This small network produces talking points and messages relied upon and repeated by every segment of this interconnected network of money, grassroots leaders, media talking heads, and elected officials.

There are five key think tanks led by scholars who are primarily responsible for orchestrating the majority of anti-Islam messages polluting our national discourse today:

- **Frank Gaffney** at the Center for Security Policy
- **David Yerushalmi** at the Society of Americans for National Existence
- **Daniel Pipes** at the Middle East Forum
- **Robert Spencer** of Jihad Watch and Stop Islamization of America
- **Steven Emerson** of the Investigative Project on Terrorism

All five are actively promoting the deeply mistaken portrayal of Islam—a religion of nearly 1.6 billion people worldwide, including 2.6 million Americans—as an inherently violent ideology that seeks domination over the United States and all non-Muslims.<sup>1</sup> Spencer neatly sums up their inaccurate and perverse view of Islam as “the only religion in the world that has a developed doctrine, theology and legal system that mandates violence against unbelievers and mandates that Muslims must wage war in order to establish the hegemony of the Islamic social order all over the world.”<sup>2</sup>

This small band of radical ideologues has fought to define Sharia as a “totalitarian ideology” and “legal-political-military doctrine” committed to destroying

Western civilization.<sup>3</sup> (See box.) But a scholar of Islam and Muslim tradition would not recognize their definition of Sharia, let alone a lay practicing Muslim. In fact, Sharia is followed in part and in different ways by every practicing Muslim. There are no Ten Commandments that make up Sharia. Instead, it is, for Muslims, the ideal law of God as interpreted by Muslim scholars over centuries to achieve justice, fairness, and mercy, primarily through personal religious observances such as prayer and fasting.<sup>4</sup>

But by intentionally misdefining Sharia itself as the problem, the misinformation experts profiled in this chapter are effectively arguing that only the extremists' interpretations of Islam are authentic, and that therefore the diversity of

## Sharia nonsense

### Manufactured by the Islamophobia network and then endlessly hyped across our country

The latest calculated smear against Islam and Muslims in America by the small but vocal members of the Islamophobia network is the deliberate misdefinition of Sharia, or Islamic religious law. This network mischaracterizes Sharia as a totalitarian ideology of hate and triumphalism committed to replacing the U.S. Constitution with a radical Islamist Caliphate that will subordinate and punish all non-Muslim adherents.

This description is unrecognizable to the overwhelming majority of Muslims here and abroad. In fact, Sharia is followed in part and in different ways by every practicing Muslim. There is no Ten Commandments that encapsulate Sharia. Instead it is, for Muslims, the ideal law of God as interpreted by Muslim scholars over centuries to achieve justice, fairness, and mercy through personal religious observance such as prayer and fasting.<sup>1</sup>

Undeterred, the Islamophobia network's description of Sharia is spread based on a sophisticated misinformation campaign designed to draw donations to the right-wing foundations, think tanks, grassroots organizations, and conservative Christian fundamentalist groups, to drum up political campaign contributions and votes for radical right-wing politicians, and to boost the political power of right-wing media organizations that promote such hate and fear. Here's a sampling of the Islamophobia network's consistent public campaign to use their skewed version of Sharia over time for their own monetary and political ends.

The Center for Security Policy's Frank Gaffney warns that a new missile defense logo is evidence of Obama's submission to Sharia:

*Team Obama's anti-anti-missile initiatives are not simply acts of unilateral disarmament of the sort to be expected from an Alinsky acolyte. They seem to fit an increasingly obvious and worrying pattern of official U.S. submission to Islam and the theo-political-legal program the latter's authorities call Shariah.<sup>2</sup>*

Islamophobia grassroots activist Brigitte Gabriel promotes her ACT! for America conference on Radical Islam:

*They also need to understand the many ways in which jihad is being carried out against the United States, from violent jihad to "stealth" jihad to the advance of creeping shariah Islamic law into our society.<sup>3</sup>*

Propagandist Andrew McCarthy, a leading purveyor of the "creeping Sharia" myth, writes an article on *The National Review* with the title:

*The President Stands With Sharia<sup>4</sup>*

moderate interpretations within Islam is meaningless. They also cast suspicion upon all observant American Muslims.<sup>5</sup>

Similarly, they boldly mischaracterize the extent to which radical Islam is infiltrating America through the presence and active participation of American Muslims in civic, social, and political life. Look no further than the controversy in 2010 surrounding the Park51 community center in lower Manhattan, which revealed how these experts perpetuate the notion that mosques are no longer houses of worship but “Trojan horses” harboring and disseminating radical Islamic theology.<sup>6</sup>

Daniel Pipes, another go-to expert in the Islamophobia network, repeats the attack on Obama:

*Mr. Obama, in effect, enforced Islamic law, a precedent that could lead to other forms of compulsory Shariah compliance.<sup>5</sup>*

Newly elected Rep. Allen West (R-FL) says Congress needs to address the Sharia threat:

*I think one of the critical things that we must come together is that there is an infiltration of the Sharia practice into all of our operating systems in our country as well as across Western civilization. So we must be willing to recognize that enemy.<sup>6</sup>*

Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-MN) on the killing of Osama bin Laden and Sharia law:

*Tonight's news [of bin Laden's death] does not bring back the lives of the thousands of innocent people who were killed that day by Osama bin Laden's horrific plan, and it does not end the threat posed by terrorists, but it is my hope that this is the beginning of the end of Sharia-compliant terrorism.<sup>7</sup>*

## Endnotes

- 1 Wajahat Ali and Matthew Duss, “Understanding Sharia Law,” (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2011), available at [http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2011/03/pdf/sharia\\_law.pdf](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2011/03/pdf/sharia_law.pdf).
- 2 Frank Gaffney, “Can This Possibly Be True? New Obama Missile Defense Logo Includes A Crescent,” Big Government, February 24, 2010, available at <http://biggovernment.com/fgaffney/2010/02/24/can-this-possibly-be-true-new-obama-missile-defense-logo-includes-a-crescent/>.
- 3 Brigitte Gabriel, “Announcing Our Second FREE National Webcast Conference,” ACT! For America, available at <http://www.actforamerica.org/index.php/second-national-webcast-conference> (last accessed August 2011).
- 4 Andrew McCarthy, “The President Stands with Sharia,” National Review Online, August 14, 2010, available at <http://www.nationalreview.com/corner/243733/president-stands-sharia-andy-mccarthy>.
- 5 Daniel Pipes, “PIPES: ‘Rushdie Rules’ reach Florida,” *The Washington Times*, September 20, 2010, available at <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/sep/20/rushdie-rules-reach-florida/>.
- 6 Lee Fang, “Allen West Says New Congress Should Prioritize Threat Of ‘Infiltration Of The Sharia Practice’ In U.S.,” ThinkProgress.org, January 3, 2011, available at <http://thinkprogress.org/politics/2011/01/03/136971/allen-west-sharia/>.
- 7 Office of Congresswoman Michele Bachmann, “Bachmann Statement on Death of bin Laden,” May 1, 2011, available at <http://bachmann.house.gov/News/DocumentSingle.aspx?DocumentID=238809>.

Park51 is the new name of the Cordoba Project, initiated in 2009 as a planned Muslim community center that is two blocks from Ground Zero. Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, one of the project's lead organizers, works with New York City, the FBI, and the State Department to combat Islamist extremism. His new center is modeled on New York's 92nd Street Y, a Jewish community center that serves diverse groups across the city. "We want to push back against the extremists," said Rauf, explaining his intentions behind constructing the center.<sup>7</sup> The project plans detail a cultural center to house a swimming pool, a basketball court, a library, as well as a prayer space.

These well-intended goals were ignored by the five men profiled in this chapter who instead promote a fabricated myth that the center would be built as a testimony to Islam's dominance. On June 30, 2010, Gaffney wrote, "The Ground Zero mosque is designed to be a permanent, in-our-face beachhead for Shariah, a platform for inspiring the triumphalist ambitions of the faithful."<sup>8</sup>

On July 25, 2010, this talking point was parroted by Newt Gingrich on Fox News, when he reiterated that the mosque is "a kind of triumphalism that we should not tolerate."<sup>9</sup> The Middle East Forum's Daniel Pipes repeated the talking point that Rauf's community center "will spread Islamist ideology."<sup>10</sup>

Then there is the conspiracy theory about Muslim American civil liberties organizations being proxies for the Muslim Brotherhood and paving the way for radical Islam. According to Gaffney—citing CSP's "Shariah: The Threat to America" report—"it is now public knowledge that nearly every major Muslim organization in the United States is actually controlled by the MB [Muslim Brotherhood] or a derivative organization. Consequently, most of the Muslim-American groups of any prominence in America are now known to be, as a matter of fact, hostile to the United States and its Constitution."<sup>11</sup> The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in Egypt in 1928 by schoolteacher Hassan al-Banna, and is regarded as the seminal Islamist political organization in the world.

Gaffney has also made similar accusations about associations with the Muslim Brotherhood about the president of the United States, the Department of Defense, and the Conservative Political Action Committee (described in more detail below). As the "smoking gun" evidence, Gaffney cites a single 20-year-old document titled "An Explanatory Memorandum on the General Strategic Goal for the Group in North America" written by one member of the Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>12</sup> That document has been thoroughly discredited as a strategy document of the Muslim Brotherhood, and revealed instead to be a piece of hapless propaganda.

Nathan Brown, professor of political science and international affairs, and director of the Institute for Middle East Studies at The George Washington University, was interviewed recently by investigative journalist Sarah Posner regarding the document. He says that “nobody has ever produced any evidence that the document was more than something produced by the daydream of one enthusiast.” Regarding Gaffney’s allegations, Professor Brown added, “Gaffney is a self-parody. I have better things to do with my time than investigating the veracity of his raving.”<sup>13</sup> And yet Gaffney’s ravings now have considerable influence on mainstream political discourse.

The patterns evident in these targeted myths by Gaffney and others is perhaps best exemplified by their greatest public relations triumph—the obfuscation of President Obama’s Christian religious identity as a potential Muslim or former Muslim. After the president’s historic 2009 Cairo speech to Muslim communities, Gaffney wrote an article titled “America’s first Muslim president?,” in which he incorrectly alleged there is “mounting evidence that the president not only identifies with Muslims, but actually may still be one himself.”<sup>14</sup> And on an April 2009 episode of “Hardball,” Gaffney said President Obama uses secret Muslim “code for those who adhere to Sharia,” as evidenced by his waist-bow greeting to the king of Saudi Arabia.

In the past two years, no evidence has been found to prove that a “waist bow” is secret code for Sharia adherents, or that President Obama intended a gesture of diplomatic respect as such. In 2005, George W. Bush held hands with Saudi Arabia’s Prince Abdullah and even kissed his cheek. No evidence suggests he is a closet or open Sharia adherent, either.<sup>15</sup>

Gaffney also believes President Obama has an “openness (to put it mildly) to bringing the [Muslim] Brotherhood to power.” He mistakenly conflates, for example, the president’s pledge to support Egypt’s new foray into democracy following the ouster of dictator Hosni Mubarak with “his embrace of the ascendant Muslim Brotherhood.”<sup>16</sup> Gaffney is out of step with many conservatives. “The Arab Spring deserves to be greeted with enthusiasm and support,” writes William Kristol, respected neoconservative analyst, director of the conservative think tank Foreign Policy Initiative, and editor of the conservative political magazine *The Weekly Standard*. “Decades of ‘stability’ in the Middle East had produced a waste land of brutal authoritarianism, Islamic extremism, and corrosive anti-Americanism.... No more. The Arab winter is over.”<sup>17</sup>

Kristol also criticized Fox News' Glenn Beck's theory that Communists and radical Muslims were causing chaos in Egypt to start a Muslim caliphate that could dominate the world. Gaffney dismissed Kristol's statements as being "ill-informed."<sup>18</sup>

Here, we profile the key ideologues who are the nerve center of the Islamophobia network, responsible for originating and manufacturing the intellectual arguments, rhetoric, and talking points used by members of this deeply interconnected network.

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### Frank Gaffney, founder of the Center for Security Policy

Gaffney, 58 years old, holds a master of arts degree in international studies from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies and a bachelor of science in foreign service from the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service. From August 1983 until November 1987, he was deputy assistant secretary of defense for nuclear forces and arms control policy under Assistant Secretary Richard Perle. In April 1987, Gaffney was nominated by President Reagan to become the assistant secretary of defense for international security policy.

In 1988 he founded the Center for Security Policy as a not-for-profit, nonpartisan think tank. Most of CSP's staff and fellows lean neoconservative, among them Richard Perle, Douglas J. Feith, and the former secretary of education in the Reagan administration, William Bennett.<sup>19</sup> Gaffney, though, stands out at the institute for his increasingly strident anti-Muslim views. As the head of CSP and its most public face, this fact cannot be lost on its funders.

In 2009, CSP's annual revenue was nearly \$4 million, and Frank Gaffney's annual salary was nearly \$300,000 as president of the organization.<sup>20</sup> Over the past decade, the Scaife foundations gave CSP nearly \$3 million, the Bradley Foundation more than \$800,000, the Becker foundations about \$375,000, and the Anchorage and William Rosenwald funds about \$437,000, with the Fairbrook Foundation contributing smaller amounts. All told, CSP received about \$20 million in revenue between 2002 and 2009.

Gaffney and CSP use this money to promote an increasingly paranoid misrepresentation of the threats posed by Islam in America. The baseless accusations peddled by Gaffney and his think tank echo the tactics of Sen. Joseph McCarthy

in the 1950s, who claimed that communists had thoroughly infiltrated the federal government of President Dwight D. Eisenhower. But Gaffney's tactics take a page from the radical religious right as well, conflating all of the followers of a non-Christian religion as enemies of the state and society and then providing talking points that marry the two nonexistent threats. Anders Breivik, the confessed Norway terrorist, cited Gaffney and CSP seven times in his manifesto.<sup>21</sup>

Several examples of how Gaffney and the Center for Security Policy develop and deploy their incorrect academic research using the foundation's money to spread an increasingly shrill message of hate and fear prove these points.

### Seeing mosques as Trojan horses

Mosques, like churches, synagogues, temples, and other places of worship, are constitutionally protected houses of worship in America, but Gaffney sees them as "Trojan horses"<sup>22</sup> used by Muslims to promote "sedition." He then conflates mosques with the Park51 community center in New York City, declaring on Fox News that it is a "mosque that is used to promote a seditious program, which is what Sharia is... that is not a protected religious practice, that is in fact sedition."<sup>23</sup> And then CSP almost simultaneously created and funded stop911mosque.com—the official website of the Coalition to Honor Ground Zero and a who's who of radical right-wing leaders, organizations, and notable anti-Muslim advocates.<sup>24</sup>

These allies working through stop911mosque.com were responsible for manufacturing the 2010 hysteria around the construction of the Park51 community center. The website repeats many of Gaffney's unsubstantiated claims about "stealth jihad," the "imposition of Sharia law," and the proliferation of "radical mosques."<sup>25</sup>

In 2010, Gaffney also carried his anti-mosque campaign to Tennessee, where he testified against the construction of a mosque in Murfreesboro. "I'm here to warn this community of seditious acts of Sharia Law," Gaffney told a local court. "I have not determined this is happening here, but that it is present in mosques like this."<sup>26</sup> He further testified that 80 percent of mosques in America are financed by allies of the Muslim Brotherhood, a claim that has been readily debunked by academic experts.<sup>27</sup> Armed with Gaffney's "evidence," the plaintiffs in the case argued that Islam is not a real religion deserving of constitutional protections. In November

Gaffney makes unsubstantiated claims about "stealth jihad," the "imposition of Sharia law," and the proliferation of "radical mosques."

2010, Chancellor Robert Corlew III disagreed, ruling that “Islam is in fact a religion,” and denied the emergency injunction blocking the project’s construction.<sup>28</sup>

## Creating the Sharia threat

Despite his testimony in Tennessee, Gaffney is upfront about his lack of expertise in Sharia. “I don’t hold myself out as an expert on Sharia Law... but I have talked a lot about that as a threat.”<sup>29</sup> Yet he is one of the lead engineers of the “anti-Sharia” movement sweeping the nation. His think tank released the 2010 report “Shariah: The Threat to America,” which reframed Sharia, or Islamic religious law followed by any practicing Muslim, as a “totalitarian ideology” and “legal-political-military doctrine.”<sup>30</sup>

The American Civil Liberties Union summed up this nonexistent threat best in its concise, six-page report, “Nothing to Fear: Debunking the Mythical ‘Sharia Threat’ to Our Judicial System,” in which it states that these claims of a Sharia infiltration are “wrong” and “based both on misinformation and a misunderstanding of how our judicial system works.” The report adds, “There is no evidence that Islamic law is encroaching on our courts. On the contrary, the court cases cited by anti-Muslim groups as purportedly illustrative of this problem actually show the opposite: Courts treat lawsuits that are brought by Muslims or that address the Islamic faith in the same way that they deal with similar claims brought by people of other faiths or that involve no religion at all.”<sup>31</sup> The ACLU report points to the insidious purpose behind the crusade to ban Sharia: “Prohibiting [U.S.] courts from considering Islamic law serves only one purpose: to bar Muslims from having the same rights and access to the courts as any other religious individuals.”

Gaffney’s Sharia report also erroneously suggests that every practicing Muslim engages in “taqiyya,” which CSP incorrectly defines as religiously mandated lying. This assertion suggests all practicing Muslims as unreliable and potential threats to America. In fact, taqiyya is an Arabic word that means concealing one’s faith out of fear of death and is practiced by only a minority of Muslims.<sup>32</sup> This practice equips Muslims past and present with a faithful “precautionary denial of religious belief in the face of potential persecution.”<sup>33</sup>

## Warning: Radical Islam has infiltrated the Department of Defense and the Conservative Political Action Conference

Gaffney put his center's funding to a new purpose in 2011, incorrectly documenting extremist Islamist infiltration anytime Muslim American individuals or organizations exercise their right to participate in civic and political society. Gaffney warns that "most of the Muslim-American groups of any prominence in America are now known to be, as a matter of fact, hostile to the United States and its Constitution."<sup>34</sup>

His think tank commissions papers to make these exaggerated and incorrect conclusions. CSP-funded research by David Gaubatz, a former federal agent in charge of special investigations for the U.S. Air Force and a U.S. State Department-trained Arabic linguist who referred to President Obama as "our Muslim leader,"<sup>35</sup> and writer Paul Sperry, the author of the 2005 book *Infiltration: How Muslim Spies and Subversives have Penetrated Washington*.<sup>36</sup> They attempted to document in their "expose" *Muslim Mafia: Inside the Secret Underworld That's Conspiring to Islamize America* the allegation that Muslim spies have posed as interns and infiltrated Capitol Hill with a nefarious Islamist agenda.<sup>37</sup>

Nonetheless, the book found an outlet, getting published in June 2011 by the right-wing, conspiracy-minded online magazine WorldNetDaily, founded by Joseph Farah, who in the past admitted his website publishes "some misinformation by columnists."<sup>38</sup> Farah also gave "Walker, Texas Ranger" actor Chuck Norris his own week-long series to warn America about the threat of "creeping Sharia," in which he repeats most of Gaffney's groundless allegations.<sup>39</sup>

Gaffney even charges that the conservative movement has been infiltrated. He insists the American Conservative Union, which hosts the annual Conservative Political Action Conference, has been successfully infiltrated by "Islamists" due to their associations with Grover Norquist and Suhail Khan.<sup>40</sup> Norquist is famous for his take-no-prisoners approach to tax increases, but he also was the Republican strategist central to the George W. Bush administration's outreach to Muslim and Arab Americans.<sup>41</sup> Suhail Khan, a Muslim American senior political appointee in the George W. Bush administration, boasts a 20-plus-year record of service with the Republican Party. He is also a recipient of the prestigious Young Conservative Coalition's Buckley award for his grassroots leadership.<sup>42</sup>

During the Bush administration, Gaffney led vicious smear campaigns against Khan and other Muslim staffers who worked in the White House. In 2003, Gaffney turned his sights on Ali Tulbah, an associate director of the White House's Office of

Cabinet Affairs, for similarly reaching out to Muslim groups. “The Islamists’ White House gatekeeper,” Gaffney said of Tulbah in *The Washington Times* in 2003.<sup>43</sup>

Gaffney also accused U.S. Army General David Petraeus of “submission” to Islamic Sharia law because he strongly condemned the burning of a Koran by radical Christian pastor Terry Jones, who heads the Dove World Outreach Center, a fundamentalist Christian church in Florida with a handful of followers. Jones first decided to burn the Koran on September 11, 2010, to protest “the brutality of Islamic law” because he believes “Islam is of the devil.” General Petraeus warned that such an act “puts our soldiers in jeopardy” and “images from such activity could very well be used by extremists here and around the world.”<sup>44</sup> When Jones finally did burn the Koran on March 20, 2011, violent protests in Afghanistan did indeed ensue, with the Taliban exploiting the sensationalistic act to justify its attack on a U.N. building that killed 20 people.

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Gaffney also cited “proof” of Islamist infiltration in the Obama administration. His evidence? The creation of a new U.S. Missile Defense logo that “appears ominously to reflect a morphing of the Islamic crescent and star with the Obama campaign logo.”<sup>45</sup> Seeing mysterious symbols in logos is further evidence of Gaffney’s increasingly conspiracy-addled analysis. Missile Defense Agency spokesman Rick Lehne told *The Washington Post*:

*This was a logo that was developed three years ago for our recruiting materials and our public Web site. It did not replace our official MDA logo, and of course it has no ties to any political campaign. It was done one year before the 2008 elections. So the whole thing is pretty ridiculous.*

Lehne added that the insignia was chosen because it was “cheaper, because it’s three colors as opposed to the five colors on the official logo.”<sup>46</sup>

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### David Yerushalmi, founder of the Society of Americans for National Existence

David Yerushalmi, 56, is the founder of the think tank the Society of Americans for National Existence, which first proposed legislation in 2007 to make adherence to Sharia “a felony punishable by 20 years in prison,”<sup>47</sup> and is the general counsel for many of the think tanks and grassroots organizations in the Islamophobia network. The Anti-Defamation League reviewed Yerushalmi’s activities and concluded that he has a “record of anti-Muslim, anti-immi-

grant and anti-black bigotry.”<sup>48</sup> In a 2006 essay titled “On Race: A Tentative Discussion,” Yerushalmi described “blacks as the most murderous of peoples.”<sup>49</sup>

He is the general counsel for the Center for Security Policy and the co-author of CSP’s “Shariah: The Threat to America” report.<sup>50</sup> He also serves as legal counsel for the anti-Muslim group Stop Islamization of America, led by Robert Spencer, whom we profile below, and Pamela Geller, whom we profile in the media chapter of our report, along with her influential blog, Atlas Shrugs.

The Anti-Defamation League describes Stop Islamization of America as an “anti-Muslim group” that “promotes a conspiratorial anti-Muslim agenda under the guise of fighting radical Islam.”<sup>51</sup> The organization was recently listed as a “hate group” by the Southern Poverty Law Center.<sup>52</sup>

Yerushalmi also serves as general counsel for Stop the Madrasa: A Community Coalition, a New York City-based anti-Muslim right-wing grassroots organization that in 2007 attacked a New York City secular public school as a religious madrasa and Islamist front simply for teaching Arabic and the Arab culture.<sup>53</sup> In fact, the school, Khalil Gibran International Academy, strived to “offer a rigorous, interdisciplinary curriculum using project-based learning and integrates an international theme with the study of the Arabic language.”<sup>54</sup> In April 2011, the New York Department of Education announced the relocation of the school “due to long standing performance standards.”<sup>55</sup> Many supporters of the school expressed outrage at the news because they believed the decision was tied to ongoing attacks on the school.<sup>56</sup>

Yerushalmi also represents right-wing Christian groups. In December 2008, Yerushalmi represented the Thomas More Law Center, a non profit public interest law firm “dedicated to the defense and promotion of the religious freedom of Christians,” in a case defending the notorious Koran-burning Pastor Terry Jones. Yerushalmi also filed a suit against the federal government claiming its loan to American International Group, Inc., as part of the bailout of the global insurance giant amid the 2008 financial crisis, was illegal since the company had financial products that allegedly promoted Islam and were anti-Christian.<sup>57</sup>

Yerushalmi’s most useful contribution to the Islamophobia network was as the author of the model “anti-Sharia” legislation introduced in more than a dozen states—legal work premised on his work as co-author of influential policy reports framing Sharia, Islamic religious law, as a totalitarian threat infiltrating America.<sup>58</sup> He believes that “Muslim civilization is at war with Judeo-Christian civiliza-

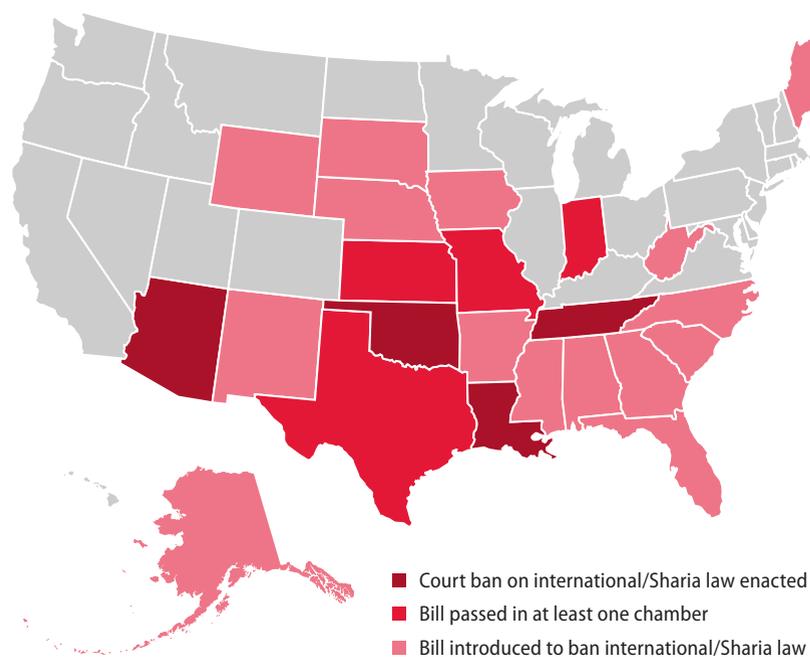
tion ... the Muslim peoples, those committed to Islam as we know it today, are our enemies.”<sup>59</sup> He says this is why he drafted anti-Sharia legislation that would deny American Muslims their constitutionally protected right to freely practice their religion.

Yerushalmi received \$274,883 from CSP for consulting services. His organization the Society of Americans for National Existence reported \$385,586 in revenue in 2007, \$389,841 in 2008, and \$310,479 in 2009, according to the organization’s latest tax filings.

Here’s what he does with that money.

## Mapping the anti-Sharia bill

Twenty-three states have some kind of legislation or law that would ban the nonexistent threat of Sharia law being used in their courtrooms



Source: CAPAF Research.

## Mapping the Sharia threat

Yerushalmi's obsession with Sharia law dates back to 2007 when his organization, the Society of Americans for National Existence, created the "Mapping Shari'a in America: Knowing the Enemy" campaign to determine what type of Sharia was practiced in every single mosque and advocated by Muslim American religious institutions.<sup>60</sup> The director of this campaign was David Gaubatz, who would later co-author the CSP-funded conspiracy book *Muslim Mafia: Inside the Secret Underworld That's Conspiring to Islamize America*.<sup>61</sup>

The press release for the Mapping Sharia campaign stated the initiative would "test the proposition that Shari'a amounts to a criminal conspiracy to overthrow the U.S. government."<sup>62</sup> But the conclusion was never in doubt, for that same year Yerushalmi proposed legislation to make "adherence to Sharia" a felony punishable by 20 years in prison, falsely claiming that "Islam requires all Muslims to actively and passively support the replacement of America's constitutional republic with a political system based upon Shari'a."<sup>63</sup>

Also that same year, Yerushalmi began developing the template for the current anti-Sharia legislation movement American Laws for American Courts at the behest of the American Public Policy Alliance, a right-wing-funded nonprofit advocacy group that claims "one of the greatest threats to American values and liberties today" comes from "foreign laws and foreign legal doctrines," including "Islamic Shari'ah law," which APPA claims is "infiltrating our court system."<sup>64</sup>

He soon was working with other members of the Islamophobia network to introduce this legislation across the country. The American Bar Association recognized the sweep of Yerushalmi's "anti-Shariah initiative," noting that "many of the legislators sponsoring the anti-Shariah initiatives in other states are using model legislation drafted by the American Public Policy Alliance."<sup>65</sup> As we demonstrate in the graph on page 40, many of the bills were drafted with identical language to Yerushalmi's model legislation. We document that significant articles from the Alaska, South Carolina, and Texas bills appear to be nearly cut and pasted from Yerushalmi's model.

## Promoting the threat of Sharia in American mosques

This year, Yerushalmi turned his attention to raising the threat of Sharia in American mosques to buttress the legislative efforts of the Islamophobia net-

## Cut-and-paste anti-Sharia legislation

Text from David Yerushalmi’s model anti-Sharia law made its way nearly verbatim into legislation in three states—a pattern repeated in many other statehouses

### David Yerushalmi’s American Laws for American Courts model bill

... finds that it shall be the public policy of this state to **protect its citizens from the application of foreign laws** when the application of a **foreign law will result in the violation of a right guaranteed by the constitution** of this state or of the United States ...

American Laws for American Courts Model Bill:

AN ACT to protect rights and privileges granted under the United States Constitution

BE IT ENACTED BY THE [GENERAL ASSEMBLY/LEGISLATURE] OF [STATE]:

The [general assembly/legislature] finds that it shall be the public policy of this state to protect its citizens from the application of foreign laws when the application of a foreign law will result in the violation of a right guaranteed by the constitution of this state or of the United States, including but not limited to due process, freedom of religion, speech, or marriage as specifically defined by the constitution of this state.

The [general assembly/state legislature] fully recognizes the rights of citizens under the laws of this state, and also recognizes that this right may be circumscribed pursuant to the state’s interest to protect and promote the public policy of the United States or [State] Constitution, including but not limited to due process, freedom of religion, speech, or press, and any right of privacy or marriage as specifically defined by the constitution of this state.

[1] As used in this act, “foreign law, legal code, or system” means any law, rule, legal code, or system established and used or applied in or by another jurisdiction outside of the United States, including, but not limited to, international organizations and tribunals, and administrative bodies, or other formal or informal tribunals.

[2] Any court, arbitration, tribunal, or administrative agency ruling or decision in the matter at issue in whole or in part on any law, legal code or system that would not grant the parties affected by the ruling or decision the same fundamental liberties, rights, and privileges granted under the U.S. and [State] Constitutions, including but not limited to due process, freedom of religion, speech, or press, and any right of privacy or marriage as specifically defined by the constitution of this state.

[3] A contract or contractual provision (if capable of segregation) that purports to govern the choice of a law, legal code or system to govern some or all of the disputes between the parties adjudicated by a court of law or by an arbitration panel arising from the contract mutually agreed upon shall violate the public policy of this State and be void and unenforceable if the law, legal code or system chosen includes or incorporates as part of the law, legal code or system that would not grant the parties affected by the ruling or decision the same fundamental liberties, rights, and privileges granted under the U.S. and [State] Constitutions, including but not limited to due process, freedom of religion, speech, or press, and any right of privacy or marriage as specifically defined by the constitution of this state.

As used in this act, “**foreign law, legal code, or system**” means any law, legal code, or system of a jurisdiction outside of any state or territory of the United States, including, but not limited to, international organizations and tribunals, and applied by that jurisdiction’s courts, administrative bodies, or other formal or informal tribunals.

**Any court, arbitration, tribunal, or administrative agency ruling or decision shall violate the public policy of this State** and be void and unenforceable if the court, arbitration, tribunal, or administrative agency bases its rulings or decisions in in the matter at issue in whole or in part on any law, legal code or system that would not grant the parties affected by the ruling or decision the same fundamental liberties, rights, and privileges granted under the U.S. and [State] Constitutions, including but not limited to...

### Excerpts from state anti-Sharia bills

“The legislature finds that **citizens of the state should be protected from the application of a foreign law** if application of the **foreign law would violate an individual’s right guaranteed by the Constitution** of the State of Alaska or the United States Constitution.”

– Alaska House Bill #88

“As used in this section, the term ‘**foreign law**’ means any law, rule, or legal code or system established and used or applied in or by another jurisdiction outside of the United States or its territories.”

– South Carolina Senate Bill #444

“In this chapter, “**foreign law**” means a law, rule, or legal code of a jurisdiction outside of the states and territories of the United States.”

– Texas House Bill #911

“**A court, arbitrator, administrative agency, or other adjudicative, mediation, or enforcement authority may not enforce a foreign law** if it would violate a constitutionally guaranteed right of this State or of the United States.”

– South Carolina Senate Bill #444

“**A court, arbitrator, mediator, administrative agency, or enforcement agency may not apply a foreign law** if application of the foreign law would violate an individual’s right guaranteed by the Constitution of the State of Alaska or the United States Constitution.”

– Alaska House Bill #88

“... to prevent a court or other enforcement authority from **enforcing foreign law in this state** from a forum outside of the United States or its territories under certain circumstances.”

– South Carolina Senate Bill #444

work at the state level. In June he released “Shari’a and Violence in American Mosques,” which speciously claims that more than 80 percent of U.S. mosques feature texts that promote or support violence. The report was published in June 2011 by *Middle East Forum Quarterly*, which is published by Daniel Pipes’ think tank Middle East Forum.<sup>66</sup> Almost immediately, CSP’s Gaffney endorsed and promoted the report’s findings in his *Washington Times* column, claiming, “This paper describes an ominous jihadist footprint being put into place across the nation.”<sup>67</sup> He referred to the report as proof that American mosques are “jihad incubators.”<sup>68</sup>

In fact, a two-year study on American Muslims titled “Anti-Terror Lessons of Muslim-Americans” by academics David Schanzer and Charles Kurzman, with Duke’s Sanford School of Public Policy and the University of North Carolina respectively, concluded that contemporary mosques are actually a deterrent to the spread of militant Islam and terrorism.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, this claim has been categorically rejected by actual law enforcement experts<sup>70</sup> and counterterrorism officials, too, including FBI Director Robert Mueller,<sup>71</sup> U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder,<sup>72</sup> and National Counterterrorism Center Director Michael Leiter, who testified at a February 9 hearing before the House Homeland Security Committee, saying, “Many of our tips to uncover active terrorist plots in the United States have come from the Muslim community.”<sup>73</sup>

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### Daniel Pipes, founder of the Middle East Forum

Daniel Pipes received his bachelor of arts degree (1971) and doctorate (1978) from Harvard University, both in history, and spent six years studying abroad, including three years in Egypt. Pipes, 61, speaks French and reads Arabic and German. He has also served in government roles, including two presidentially appointed positions: vice chairman of the Fulbright Board of Foreign Scholarships and board member of the U.S. Institute of Peace (2003-2005). Pipes sits on five editorial boards, has testified before many congressional committees, and worked on five presidential campaigns. Universities in the United States and Switzerland have conferred honorary degrees on him.<sup>74</sup>

In 1990, Pipes founded the Middle East Forum, an independent non-profit organization. The Forum had more than \$3 million in revenue in 2009. Its mission is “promoting American interests” through publications, research, media outreach, and public education. It publishes the *Middle East Quarterly* and sponsors Campus Watch, Islamist Watch, the Legal Project, and the Washington Project.<sup>75</sup>

Pipes and his think tank have become increasingly strident about the supposed threat posed by Islam and Muslims in America. Anders Breivik cited Pipes and the Middle East Forum 18 times in his manifesto.<sup>76</sup> At the same time, more and more money pours into his coffers. His think tank received millions of dollars in funds over the past decade, thanks to generous donors such as Donors Capital Fund, which gave \$2,300,000; the Bradley Foundation (\$305,000); the Russell Berrie Foundation (\$273,000); the Becker Foundation (\$355,000); the Anchorage Fund and William Rosenwald Family Fund (\$2,320,299).

Pipes has parlayed his prestigious academic credentials to great effect, but along with the source of his funding, he's become increasingly out of touch with the realities of the Muslim world at home and abroad, making more extreme and unfounded observations about Islam in the United States. Let's trace his journey from a respected academic to one of the linchpins of the Islamophobia network.

### The academic turned anti-Muslim propagandist

Pipes boasts authentic scholarly credentials in Islam, having obtained his doctoral degree in medieval Islamic history from Harvard in 1973. But there are serious problems with his work, especially in the wake of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington.<sup>77</sup> As journalist Christopher Hitchens, a notorious critic of Islam, noted, "Daniel Pipes is not a man of Peace." Hitchens observes that Pipes is so consumed by dislike that he will not recognize good news from the Islamic world even when it arrives.<sup>78</sup>

In 2002, Pipes launched Campus Watch to monitor professors and academics that deviate from Pipes' political ideologies.<sup>79</sup> This website inspired the creation of David Horowitz's Discover the Networks, established in 2003 to track the political left, and both sites have subsequently shared content.<sup>80</sup>

Pipes' 2003 book, *Militant Islam Reaches America*, was one of the earliest to hype the threat of "militant Islam" infiltrating America.<sup>81</sup> He observed that "all immigrants bring exotic customs and attitudes, but Muslim customs are more troublesome than most."<sup>82</sup> A 2007 Pew Research Center report found just the opposite, concluding that "a comprehensive nationwide survey of American Muslims finds them to be largely assimilated, happy with their lives, and moderate with respect to many of the issues that have divided Muslims and Westerners around the world."<sup>83</sup>

In 2006, Pipes launched Islamist Watch, which “combats the ideas and institutions of lawful Islamism in the United States and throughout the West.”<sup>84</sup> It then attempted to document the threats. His Middle East Forum published *CAIR: Islamist Fooling the Establishment*, in which he argues that a stealth movement of “the Wahhabi Lobby”<sup>85</sup> will take over our nation. Without corroborating evidence, Pipes smeared the Council on American-Islamic Relations, or CAIR, whose sole purpose as an organization is to “challenge the stereotypes of Islam and Muslims” and to “provide an Islamic perspective on issues of importance to the American public.”<sup>86</sup>

Then, in 2007, he created the Legal Project as a subsidiary of the Middle East Forum, in response to a “suit brought by the Islamic Society of Boston against 17 defendants, including Steven Emerson” (the founder and executive director of the Investigative Project on Terrorism, whom we profile later in this chapter), and it now functions as a resource to limit defamation lawsuits brought by other aggrieved Muslim organizations.<sup>87</sup> Pipes refers to these Muslim American advocacy organizations, such as the Muslim Public Affairs Council—which is “a public service agency that has built a reputation as a consistent and reliable resource for government and media and is trusted by American Muslims as an authentic, experienced voice”<sup>88</sup>—as “Islamists,” and describes their constitutionally protected right of using the legal system for redress as a “threat.”<sup>89</sup>

His Islamophobia took a further turn when in 2008 he recommended increased racial profiling of Muslims and Arabs to cope with this impending exaggerated threat.<sup>90</sup> Then, in 2009, he relaunched the Legal Project website to function as “a source of information on ‘Islamist lawfare’—that is, attempts by supporters of radical Islam to suppress free discourse on Islam and terrorism by (1) exploiting Western legal systems and traditions and (2) recruiting state actors and international organizations such as the United Nations.”<sup>91</sup>

### Supporting the Islamophobia echo chamber

Pipes writes prolifically on his site, [www.danielpipes.org](http://www.danielpipes.org), where he repeats the falsehood that President Obama is a former Muslim who “practiced Islam.”<sup>92</sup> He uses his website to echo the Islamophobia network’s alarmist rhetoric about the creeping Sharia threat posed by radical Islam.<sup>93</sup> Pipes has interviewed CSP’s Gaffney for his website and endorsed Gaffney’s CSP-funded book, *Muslim*

*Mafia: Inside the Secret Underworld That's Conspiring to Islamize America.*<sup>94</sup> Pipes also joined the campaign against the Park51 community center in New York City, writing that the planned building “will spread Islamist ideology”<sup>95</sup> and the endeavor “reeks of Islamic triumphalism,” a talking point that was echoed by Frank Gaffney<sup>96</sup> and Newt Gingrich.<sup>97</sup>

Pipes also is willing to use his alarmist rhetoric when it serves the purpose of promoting Islamophobia. In 2008, for example, Pipes admitted to misleading the public by using the word “madrassa” referring to a New York City public school to “get attention.”<sup>98</sup> Why? Because the “Stop the Madrassa Community Coalition” wanted to shut down a secular New York City public school that taught Arabic and Arab culture. He told *The New York Times* that using the word “madrassa,” which could mean a secular school or religious Islamic school in Arabic, was “a bit of stretch.”<sup>99</sup>

Robert Spencer  
and his blog were  
cited 162 times by  
Anders Breivik, the  
confessed Norway  
terrorist.

Pipes was critical of the school based upon his odd and bigoted belief that “Arabic instruction is inevitably laden with Pan-Arabist and Islamist language.”<sup>100</sup> Pipes posted an article on his website contending that “Arabized students show decidedly greater support for the Islamist movement and greater mistrust of the West” to justify his unsavory actions.<sup>101</sup> Of course, this argument has no empirical foundation; even the U.S. Army encourages soldiers to study the Arabic culture and language in an effort to “help them build relationships” with locals without worrying the practice will lead to radicalization.<sup>102</sup>

Nonetheless, the Islamophobia network’s campaign against the New York City school was successful. The founding principal of the school, Debbie Almontasar, was forced to resign due to the manufactured hate campaign against her. *The New York Times* suggested this controversy “was also the work of a growing and organized movement to stop Muslim citizens who are seeking an expanded role in American public life.”<sup>103</sup>

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Robert Spencer, co-founder of Stop Islamization of America and director of Jihad Watch

Robert Spencer, 49, received his master of arts degree in religious studies from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He says he has been studying Islamic theology, law, and history in depth since 1980.<sup>104</sup> He has led seminars on Islam and jihad for the U.S. Central Command, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, the U.S. Army’s Asymmetric Warfare Group, the FBI, the Joint Terrorism

Task Force, and the U.S. intelligence community. The FBI even listed one of his Islamophobic books, *The Truth About Muhammad*, as “recommended reading” about Islam in its 62-slide PowerPoint presentation used to train new bureau recruits for “successful interviews/interrogations with individuals from the M.E. [Middle East].”<sup>105</sup> The book is no longer on that reading list.

Spencer is the director of the website Jihad Watch, a program of the David Horowitz Freedom Center. The center’s mission is to “defend the principles of individual freedom, the rule of law, private property, and limited government.”<sup>106</sup> As a subsidiary of the Freedom Center, Jihad Watch’s primary purpose is to “track the attempts of radical Islam to subvert Western culture.”<sup>107</sup> Robert Spencer and his blog were cited 162 times in the nearly 1,500-page manifesto of Anders Breivik, the confessed Norway terrorist who claimed responsibility for killing 76 people, mostly youths.<sup>108</sup>

Spencer has written 10 books, including the *New York Times* bestseller *The Truth About Muhammad*.<sup>109</sup> He also popularized fear-mongering claims in *Stealth Jihad: How Radical Islam is Subverting America without Guns or Bombs* and *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam (and the Crusades)*. These texts are heavily promoted by the Islamophobia network. Daniel Pipes praised *Stealth Jihad* as “a pioneering survey of the ‘stealth jihad’ whose ambition and subtlety threaten the continuity of Western civilization.”<sup>110</sup> His next book, *Did Muhammad Exist?*, is scheduled to be published by ISI Books in spring 2012. In addition, he has written 11 monographs and well over 300 articles about jihad and Islamic terrorism.<sup>111</sup>

He also is co-author, with radical right-wing blogger and anti-Islam activist Pamela Geller, of *The Post-American Presidency: The Obama Administration’s War on America*. And along with Geller (see page 89 for details), Spencer is co-founder of the groups American Freedom Defense Initiative and Stop Islamization of America.<sup>112</sup>

Spencer’s activities are funded in large part through the David Horowitz Freedom Center. Spencer’s salary at Jihad Watch was about \$140,000 in 2010, according to an investigative report by Politico’s Kenneth Vogel and Giovanni Russonello.<sup>113</sup> Donations to Stop Islamization of America appear to be collected by Jihad Watch’s PayPal account. In 2005 and 2006, the Fairbrook Foundation contributed a total of \$253,250 to Jihad Watch.

Here’s how Robert Spencer uses these funds to spread his anti-Muslim attacks.

## Misrepresenting Islam

A prolific blogger, author, and commentator, Spencer is “the principal leader... in the new academic field of Islam bashing,” according to Robert Crane, a former deputy director of the U.S. National Security Council and former adviser to President Nixon.<sup>114</sup> Spencer is the primary driver in promoting the myth that peaceful Islam is nonexistent and that violent extremism is inherent within traditional Islam. “Of course, as I have pointed out many times, traditional Islam itself is not moderate or peaceful,” Spencer said in June this year. “It is the only major world religion with a developed doctrine and tradition of warfare against unbelievers.”<sup>115</sup>

Spencer’s views on Islam—and his credibility in discussing Islam at all—are challenged by scholars at his own alma mater. He has “no academic training in Islamic studies whatsoever,” according to Islamic scholar Carl W. Ernst, distinguished professor of religious studies and director of the Carolina Center for the Study of the Middle East and Muslim Civilizations at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.<sup>116</sup> Instead, Professor Ernst says Spencer selectively uses textual, religious evidence to mainstream the claim that “Islam is not a religion of peace.”<sup>117</sup> Indeed, Spencer gives misplaced credence to the “Sharia threat” argument that is then mainstreamed by the Islamophobia network.<sup>118</sup>

In November 2010, Spencer and Gaffney participated in the panel “After the Mosque: Jihad on the Home,” where they parroted each other’s fear-mongering about radical Islam’s infiltration of America.<sup>119</sup> They routinely appear alongside each other on panels and mainstream media outlets, such as the February 2009 Fox News panel discussion on “stealth jihad” titled “Terror From Within.”<sup>120</sup>

In reality, recent statements from moderate, mainstream Muslim religious authorities, such as the 2004 Amman Message, issued by the King of Jordan and reaffirmed in 2005 by Islamic scholars from more than 50 countries, show the dynamic, interpretive tradition of Islam in practice. The Amman Message, and the three-point ruling that followed, was issued by 200 Islamic scholars, a moderate Muslim proclamation aiming to publicize and unify Islamic scholars around a few key points regarding Islam in practice today. Today, more than 200 top Muslim scholars have endorsed the Amman Message,<sup>121</sup> demonstrating a widely shared Sharia-based condemnation of violence from the world’s leading Islamic authorities.<sup>122</sup>

Indeed, in recent years, Spencer's comments criticizing Islam have become so loathsome that fellow conservative Charles Johnson, founder of the popular, right-leaning blog Little Green Footballs, believes he has "crossed the line from simply criticizing radical Islamists to relentlessly demonizing all Muslims."<sup>123</sup>

### Suggesting President Obama endorses Muslim Brotherhood

Spencer supports Gaffney's conspiratorial claims that President Obama's religious identity and his support of Egyptian democracy are endorsement of the Muslim Brotherhood and its alleged "Islamist" agenda.<sup>124</sup> Spencer has posted a video on his blog where he explains why he thinks President Obama may still be a Muslim, claiming, "ultimately only he knows the answer as to what he really believes. But certainly his public policies and his behavior are consistent with his being a committed and convinced Muslim."<sup>125</sup>

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### Steven Emerson, founder and executive director of the Investigative Project on Terrorism

Steven Emerson's Investigative Project on Terrorism is a nonprofit organization and website dedicated to exposing the dangers of Islamist infiltration in America gleaned through investigative journalism. Emerson, who received a bachelor of arts degree from Brown University in 1976 and a master of arts in sociology from Brown in 1977, worked on staff as an investigator for the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee until 1982, and as an executive assistant to the late Sen. Frank Church of Idaho.<sup>126</sup> He left Capitol Hill in 1986 to become a journalist for *U.S. News & World Report*, where by 1988 he rose to become a senior editor specializing in national security issues.<sup>127</sup> In 1990, he joined CNN as an investigative correspondent and continued to write about terrorism.

In 1991, he published *Terrorist: The Inside Story of the Highest-Ranking Iraqi Terrorist Ever to Defect to the West*, detailing how Iraq spread and increased its terrorist network in the 1980s with U.S. support. In 1994, Emerson left CNN and produced the 1994 documentary film "Jihad in America," which allegedly "exposed clandestine operations of militant Islamic terrorist groups on American soil."<sup>128</sup> Emerson's film received the George Polk Award for best television documentary, a renowned journalism award that puts a "premium on investigative and enterprise

Spencer is "the principal leader... in the new academic field of Islam bashing."

work that is original.”<sup>129</sup> But reviews were mixed. *The Nation*, for example, said Emerson was “creating mass hysteria against American Arabs” in a review of his documentary.<sup>130</sup>

In 1995, Emerson left journalism and founded the Investigative Project on Terrorism, which claims to be “one of the world’s largest storehouses of archival data and intelligence on Islamic and Middle Eastern terrorist groups.”<sup>131</sup> Subsequently he has written six books on terrorism and national security issues. Emerson and his staff frequently provide briefings to U.S. government and law enforcement agencies, members of Congress, and congressional committees.<sup>132</sup>

For funding, Emerson turns to a number of the top seven foundations described in Chapter 1, but with several twists. Emerson’s nonprofit organization IPT received a total of \$400,000 from Donors Capital Fund in 2007 and 2008,<sup>133</sup> as well as \$100,000 from the Becker Foundation, and \$250,000 from Daniel Pipes’ Middle East Forum, according to our research. Emerson’s nonprofit organization, in turn, helps fund his for-profit company, SAE Productions. IPT paid SAE Productions \$3.33 million to enable the company to “study alleged ties between American Muslims and overseas terrorism.” Emerson is SAE’s sole employee.<sup>134</sup>

Even more intriguingly, a review of grants in November 2010 showed large sums of money contributed to the “Investigative Project,” or “IPT,” care of the Counterterrorism & Security Education and Research Foundation. An examination of CTSERF’s 990 forms showed that, much like the Investigative Project, all grant revenue was transferred to a private, for-profit entity, the International Association of Counterterrorism and Security Professionals.

Emerson did not respond to requests for comment by time of publication. The Russell Berrie Foundation has contributed \$2,736,000 to CTSERF, and Richard Scaife foundations contributed \$1,575,000.

While neither the IPT, CTSERF, or IACSP websites make any mention of a link between CTSERF and the IPT, Ray Locker, the Investigative Project’s managing director, told the LobeLog blog that a relationship “exists” and “it’s all above board and passes muster with the IRS.” But in 2008, when Emerson was asked why the IACSP’s Web address was listed at the bottom of an IPT press release on LexisNexis, he told LobeLog, “[I have] no idea how the IACSP website address got listed on the LexisNexis version of our press release. We are not a project of IACSP although we have frequently published material in their magazine.” He

Emerson is the  
sole employee of  
SAE Productions, a  
for-profit company.

went on to say that “as for funding questions, other than what we have stated on our website, that we take no funds from outside the U.S. or from governmental agencies or from religious and political groups, we have a long standing policy since we were founded not to discuss matters of funding (for security reasons).”<sup>135</sup>

Steven Fustero, chief executive of CTSERF, told LobeLog, “The research and education designated funds are [ ... ] transferred to IACSP, which in turn makes the research grants,” but would not discuss the relationship between CTSERF and IPT. An examination of CTSERF tax documents from 1999 to 2008 shows the group receiving \$11,108,332 in grant revenue and transferring \$12,206,900 to IACSP.<sup>136</sup>

This kind of action enrages Ken Berger, president of Charity Navigator, a nonprofit watchdog group. He argued that “basically, you have a nonprofit acting as a front organization, and all that money going to a for-profit.”<sup>137</sup>

The increasing influence of Islamophobia donors to Emerson’s nonprofit and for-profit work has focused more recently on anti-Islam, anti-Muslim expertise.<sup>138</sup> Indeed, according to an investigation by *The Tennessean* newspaper, the Investigative Project now solicits money by telling donors they’re in imminent danger from Muslims.<sup>139</sup>

In this capacity, Emerson frames Islam as an inherently violent and antagonistic religion. “The level of vitriol against Jews and Christianity within contemporary Islam, unfortunately, is something that we are not totally cognizant of, or that we don’t want to accept,” says Emerson. “We don’t want to accept it because to do so would be to acknowledge that one of the world’s great religions, which has more than 1.4 billion adherents, somehow sanctions genocide, planned genocide, as part of its religious doctrine.”<sup>140</sup> Emerson was twice cited in Anders Breivik’s manifesto.<sup>141</sup>

Such wildly over-the-top portraits of Islam as inherently radical require some creativity on Emerson’s part. Proving he’s up to the challenge, Emerson boasts a history of fabricating evidence that perpetuates conspiracies of radical Islam infiltrating America through Muslim civil rights and advocacy organizations. In 1997, Emerson presented the Associated Press with a purported FBI dossier showing ties between Muslim American organizations and radical Islamist groups. The AP reporters concluded the dossier was created by Emerson and “[Emerson] had edited out all phrases, taken out anything that made it look like his.”<sup>142</sup> Another AP reporter stated, “[Emerson] could never back up what he said. We couldn’t believe

that document was from the FBI files.” A ranking AP editor in Washington said, “We would be very, very, very, very leery of using Steve Emerson.”<sup>143</sup>

Emerson early on began to see Muslim extremism in America—even where it didn’t exist. For example, in 1995, without any substantiating evidence, Emerson famously predicted on “The CBS Evening News” that the Oklahoma City bombing—perpetrated by Timothy McVeigh—was done by Muslim, Middle Eastern extremists. “This was done with the attempt to inflict as many casualties as possible. That is a Middle Eastern trait,” he asserted, even before law enforcement officials and the FBI had developed any leads and suspects.<sup>144</sup> Daniel Pipes, founder of the think tank Middle East Forum, publicly endorsed Emerson’s research and repeated Emerson’s incorrect claim that Muslims were responsible for the bombing.<sup>145</sup>

### Pushing misleading statistics on Muslim terrorism

Emerson has a history of peddling questionable facts. Through IPT, Emerson pushed misleading statistics on “Muslim terrorism” meant to hype the domestic Muslim threat leading up to Rep. Peter King’s (R-NY) March 2011 hearing on the alleged radicalization of Muslim American communities.<sup>146</sup> On Fox News, Rep. King agreed with host Sean Hannity that 80 percent of mosques in America were “ruled by the extremists,” citing research by Steven Emerson and Daniel Pipes.<sup>147</sup>

Steven Emerson also bolstered the manufactured hysteria surrounding the construction of the Park51 community center in New York City as a sign of a radical Islamist infiltration. On August 20, 2010, Emerson announced that his “team of investigators had spent the past four weeks going through the newly found material,” allegedly proving the center’s Imam Rauf is a “radical extremist cleric who cloaks himself in sheep’s clothing.”<sup>148</sup> Emerson stated that he had found “thirteen hours of audio tape” that contained information that is “shocking” and “explosive.”<sup>149</sup> In the end, though, the tapes did not offer any new “radical” information against Rauf.<sup>150</sup>

Emerson has also accused both Republican and Democratic administrations of empowering radicals by simply seeking outreach and conciliation with Muslim American communities. In 2007, he lashed out against President Bush’s initia-

tive<sup>151</sup> aimed at mending fences with the Muslim world. Emerson accused New Jersey’s Republican Gov. Chris Christie of having a “strange relationship with radical Islam”<sup>152</sup> after he nominated a Muslim, Sohail Mohammed, for a state judgeship. By simply nominating an American who happens to be Muslim, Emerson believes Gov. Christie has a “tin ear for radical Islam” because of a client Mohammed represented—a New Jersey imam.<sup>153</sup>

He also accused Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL), the Senate Majority Whip, of being “in bed with radical Islam for the last eight years” because Durbin has allegedly “aligned himself with CAIR [Council on American-Islamic Relations], sent them letters of congratulations, [and] agreed to speak to their banquets.”<sup>154</sup> And on MSNBC, Emerson said President Obama’s outreach to Muslim communities is proof that Islamists have been given “free reign for them with influence of the administration. They think that they are going to have influence over the policies of financial constraints over terrorist activities. And, they think that they are going to be included now in policy deliberations.” Norah O’Donnell, the TV anchor, concluded his suggestions were “ridiculous.”<sup>155</sup>

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## The influence of the Islamophobia misinformation experts

The five leading misinformation experts profiled in this chapter boast an outsized influence in American society and politics today. This is not because of the scholastic persuasiveness of their hate-filled research, as we have amply demonstrated, but rather due to the rising amount of funding they receive from seven foundations to propagate their increasingly paranoid, fear-mongering myths about Islam and American Muslims.

The funding and the research work, though, would probably be wasted for the foundations, except for the symbiotic relationships that Gaffney, Yerushalmi, Spencer, Pipes, and Emerson enjoy with other even less reputable validators of their views (See Box on the next page) as well as anti-Islam grassroots groups and religious right organizations. We detail those relationships—and the money that occasionally flows between them—in the next chapter of our report.

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## Endnotes

- 1 Estimates of the number of Muslims vary. We rely on estimates from the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, which puts the global figure at 1.6 billion in 2010 and the U.S. figure at 2.6 million, available at <http://pewforum.org/The-Future-of-the-Global-Muslim-Population.aspx>
- 2 "Q&A: Robert Spencer, Jihad Watch, Director," transcript of C-SPAN interview with Robert Lamb, August 20, 2006, available at <http://www.q-and-a.org/Transcript/?ProgramID=1086>
- 3 William G. "Jerry" Boykin and others, "Shariah: The Threat to America (An Exercise in Competitive Analysis—Report of Team 'B' II) (Washington: Center for Security Policy Press, 2010), available at [http://www.worldsecuritynetwork.com/documents/Shariah\\_The\\_Threat\\_to\\_America\\_\(Team\\_B\\_II\\_Report\)\\_9-14-10.pdf](http://www.worldsecuritynetwork.com/documents/Shariah_The_Threat_to_America_(Team_B_II_Report)_9-14-10.pdf).
- 4 Wajahat Ali and Matthew Duss, "Understanding Sharia Law: Conservatives' Skewed Interpretation Needs Debunking" (Washington: Center for American Progress, March 2011), available at [http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2011/03/pdf/sharia\\_law.pdf](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2011/03/pdf/sharia_law.pdf)
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 "About Us," Coalition to Honor Ground Zero, available at <http://stopthe911mosque.com/about-2>
- 7 Ralph Blumenthal and Sharaf Mowjood, "Muslim Prayers and Renewal Near Ground Zero," *The New York Times*, December 8, 2009, available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/09/nyregion/09mosque.html>.
- 8 Frank Gaffney Jr., "Ground Zero: A Shrine to Shariah," Family Security Matters, June 30, 2010, available at [http://www.familysecuritymatters.org/publications/id.6609/pub\\_detail.asp](http://www.familysecuritymatters.org/publications/id.6609/pub_detail.asp)
- 9 Joseph Klein, "Newt Gingrich Challenges The New Mosque Near Ground Zero As A Symbol of Islamic 'Triumphalism,'" News-Real Blog, July 27, 2010, available at <http://www.newsrealblog.com/2010/07/27/newt-gingrich-challenges-the-new-mosque-near-ground-zero-as-a-symbol-of-islamic-triumphalism/>.
- 10 Daniel Pipes, "Reflections on an Islamic Center in Lower Manhattan," Lion's Den, August 16, 2010, available at <http://www.danielpipes.org/blog/2010/08/islamic-center-lower-manhattan>.
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