

SAUDI PUBLICATIONS ON
HATE IDEOLOGY
INVADE AMERICAN MOSQUES



**Center for Religious Freedom
Freedom House**

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ABOUT THE CENTER FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

The CENTER FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM is a division of Freedom House. Founded more than sixty years ago by Eleanor Roosevelt, Wendell Willkie, and other Americans concerned with the mounting threats to peace and democracy, Freedom House has been a vigorous proponent of democratic values and a steadfast opponent of dictatorship of the far left and the far right. Its Center for Religious Freedom defends against religious persecution of all groups throughout the world. It insists that U.S foreign policy defend those persecuted for their religion or beliefs around the world, and advocates the right to religious freedom for every individual.

Since its inception in 1986, the Center, under the leadership of human rights lawyer Nina Shea, has reported on the religious persecution of individuals and groups abroad and undertaken advocacy on their behalf in the media, Congress, State Department, and the White House. It also sponsors investigative field missions.

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CONTENTS

Acknowledgements		1
Methodology		2
Foreword		7
	R. James Woolsey	
Introduction		11
	Nina Shea	
One	Christians, Jews and Other “Infidels”	19
Two	Jews	29
Three	Other Muslims	34
Four	Anti-American	39
Five	Infidel Conspiracies	48
Six	Jihad Ideology	57
Seven	Suppression of Women	63
	Notes	68
	Bibliography	72
	List of Sources	78
	Appendices	80

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Freedom House is deeply appreciative of the volunteers and expert consultants who helped in the preparation of this report. The research, translation and principal analysis of the materials for the report were carried out by both Muslims and non-Muslims who wish to remain anonymous for reasons of security. In light of the recent targeted assassination and death threats for speaking out against Islamic extremism in the Netherlands, such concerns appear especially valid. All involved did so out of a conviction that the Saudi Arabian publications in this study, which espouse an ideology of hate and purport to be the authoritative interpretation of Islam, continue to be in plentiful supply at some of our nation's main mosques and continue to be used as a principal educational resource on Islam for Muslims in America. We also wish to acknowledge the many Muslims who have requested our help in exposing Saudi extremism in the hope of freeing their communities from ideological strangulation; they have done so in the firm belief that public awareness of this problem will prompt the moderate majority of American Muslims to take steps to remedy it.

Freedom House's Center for Religious Freedom Director Nina Shea edited the report. Center Senior Fellow Paul Marshall provided research and editorial advice and Center Program Director Elyse Bauer worked extensively on the materials.

METHODOLOGY

Freedom House's Center for Religious Freedom decided to undertake this project after a number of Muslims and other experts publicly raised concerns about Saudi state influence on American religious life.¹ This report complements a May 2003 recommendation of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, an independent government agency, that the U.S. government conduct a study on Saudi involvement in propagating internationally a "religious ideology that explicitly promotes hate, intolerance, and other human rights violations, and in some cases violence, toward members of other religious groups, both Muslims and non-Muslims."² In releasing this report, the Center is also mindful of one of the key findings of the 9/11 Commission Report: "Education that teaches tolerance, the dignity and value of each individual, and respect for different beliefs is a key element in any global strategy to eliminate Islamist terrorism."

The phenomenon of Saudi hate ideology is worldwide, but its occurrence in the United States has received scant attention. This report begins to probe in detail the content of the Wahhabi ideology that the Saudi government has worked to propagate through books and other publications within our borders.³ While substantial analysis has been previously published on Saudi Wahhabism in other countries, few specifics have been reported on the content of Wahhabi indoctrination within the United States.⁴ Part of the reason may be that the vast majority of the written materials are in Arabic. Also, U.S. security investigations have focused on stopping money flows and curbing the activities of individual extremists resulting in, among other actions, the recent expulsions of dozens of religious teachers with Saudi diplomatic passports.⁵ Saudi officials argue that they have changed their textbooks at home, something we have not sought to confirm. We have ascertained that as of December 2004, Saudi-connected resources and publications on extremist ideology remain common reading and educational material in some of America's main mosques.

In undertaking this study, we did not attempt a general survey of American mosques. In order to document Saudi influence, the material for this report was gathered from a selection of more than a dozen mosques and Islamic centers in American cities, including Los Angeles, Oakland, Dallas, Houston, Chicago, Washington, and New York. In most cases, these sources are the most prominent and well-established mosques in their areas. They have libraries and publication racks for mosque-goers. Some have full-or part-time schools and, as the 9/11 Commission Report observed, such "Saudi-funded Wahhabi schools are often the only Islamic schools."⁶

The material collected consists of over 200 books and other publications, many of which titles were available in several mosques. Some 90 percent of the publications are in Arabic, though some are in English, Urdu, Chinese and Tagalog. With one exception,

an Urdu-language document, the materials for this study were in Arabic and English. The Center had two independent translators review each Arabic document.

All the documents analyzed here have some connection to the government of Saudi Arabia. In some instances, they have five connections. The publications under study each have at least two of the following links to Saudi Arabia. They are:

- official publications of a government ministry;
- distributed by the Saudi embassy;
- comprised of religious pronouncements and commentary by religious authorities appointed to state positions by the Saudi crown;
- representative of the established Wahhabi ideology of Saudi Arabia; and/or
- disseminated through a mosque or center supported by the Saudi crown.

In many examples, the Saudi link is readily apparent from the seal or name appearing on the cover of the publications of the Saudi Embassy in Washington, or of the Saudi cultural, educational or religious affairs ministries, or of the Saudi Air Force. While not all the mosques in the study may receive Saudi support, some of the mosques and centers, such as the King Fahd Mosque in Los Angeles and the Islamic Center in Washington, are openly acknowledged to receive official support by the Saudi king as recorded on his website.⁷ While some observers distinguish between funding from the Saudi state and donations made by individual members of the Saudi royal family, it should be noted that King Fahd makes no such distinction. His website asserts, “King Fahd gave his support, either personally or through his Government...” The website also asserts that “the cost of King Fahd’s efforts in this field has been astronomical, amounting to many billions of Saudi Riyals,” resulting in “some 210 Centers wholly or partly financed by Saudi Arabia, more than 1,500 Mosques and 202 colleges and almost 2,000 schools for educating Muslim children.” The King and his son donated millions of dollars to the King Fahd mosque.⁸

Furthermore, the Saudi government has directly staffed some of these institutions. The King Fahd mosque, the main mosque in Los Angeles, from which several of these publications were gathered, employed an imam, Fahad al Thumairy, who was an accredited diplomat of the Saudi Arabian consulate from 1996 until 2003, when he was barred from reentering the United States because of terrorist connections. The 9/11 Commission Report describes the imam as a “well-known figure at the King Fahd mosque and within the Los Angeles Muslim community,” who was reputed to be an “Islamic fundamentalist and a strict adherent to orthodox Wahhabi doctrine” and observed that he “may have played a role in helping the [9/11] hijackers establish themselves on their arrival in Los Angeles.”⁹

Several hate-filled publications in this study were also gathered from the Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences in Fairfax, Virginia. According to investigative reports in the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Washington Post*, Prince Bandar bin Sultan, the Saudi Ambassador to the U.S., served as chairman of this school’s Board of Trustees, and some

16 other personnel there held Saudi diplomatic visas until they were expelled for extremism by the State Department in 2004.¹⁰ Until late 2003, the institute was an official adjunct campus of the Imam Mohammed Ibn-Saud Islamic University in Riyadh, part of Saudi Arabia's state-run university system, funded and controlled by the Saudi Ministry of Education.¹¹ Although Saudi Arabia claims to have severed official links with it, the Institute the Saudis established continues to operate in northern Virginia.

Some of the works were published by the Al-Haramain Foundation, run from Saudi Arabia with branch offices in the United States until the FBI blocked its assets in February 2004, finding that it was directly funding al Qaeda. In October 2004, the Saudi government's Ministry for Islamic Affairs dissolved the foundation, and, according to a senior Saudi official, its assets will be folded into a new Saudi National Commission for Charitable Work Abroad.

Some of the Wahhabi materials in this study were printed by publishers and libraries functioning as publishing houses in Saudi Arabia. Some of these are directly government-supported and-controlled, such as the King Fahd National Library and the General Presidency of the Administration of Scientific Research, Ifta', Da'wa and Guidance (General Administration for Printing and Translation). Others, which may be privately run, are monitored closely by the state, which does not grant the free right to expression, and, according to the State Department, the government's Ministry of Information has the authority to appoint and remove all editors-in-chief.¹²

A prolific source of *fatwas* condemning "infidels" in this collection was Sheik 'Abd al-'Aziz Bin 'Abdillah Bin Baz (died 1999), who was appointed by King Fahd in 1993 to the official post of Grand Mufti. As Grand Mufti, he was upheld by the government of Saudi Arabia as its highest religious authority. Bin Baz was a government appointee who received a regular government salary, served at the pleasure of the King and presided over the Saudi Permanent Committee for Scientific Research and the Issuing of *Fatwas*, an office of the Saudi government. His radically dichotomous mode of thinking, coupled with his persistent demonizing of non-Muslims and tolerant Muslims, runs through the *fatwas* in these publications.

Bin Baz is famously remembered by many Saudis for a ruling he issued in 1966 declaring the world flat. He was also responsible for the *fatwa*, unique in Islam, barring Saudi women from driving.¹³ Perhaps as a way of atoning for a *fatwa* he reluctantly issued in 1991 at the time of the Gulf War accepting the presence of non-Muslim troops in Saudi Arabia, in subsequent years Bin Baz seemed to go out of his way to pronounce against Christians, Jews, and "infidel" Westerners. His *fatwas*, which carry considerable weight, have been circulated through official Saudi diplomatic channels to mosques and schools throughout the world, including some in the United States, and have been particularly influential in radicalizing Muslim youth at home and abroad. The extremist views proclaimed in these official *fatwas* belie what Adel al-Jubeir, the articulate Saudi spokesman and special advisor to Crown Prince Abdullah, asserts during televised press conferences about fanatical sheiks in the Kingdom being mainly "underground," and the *fatwas* they issue being merely expressions of "their personal opinions." Though Bin Baz

is now dead, his fanatical *fatwas* continue to be treated as authoritative by the Saudi government.

The bulk of the material was collected in November and December 2003. In December 2004, additional samples were collected from mosques in Washington, Falls Church, Los Angeles, Orange County and Chicago showing that the problem continues as this report goes to press. One of the documents from Saudi Arabia's Islamic Affairs Ministry bears the post-9/11 publication date of 2002, while most of the other titles were published in the 1980s and 1990s. Notwithstanding the fact that some of the titles were published by groups and entities that in the last two years have been shut down or have broken ties with the Saudi government following U.S. government terrorism investigations, and despite the Saudi government advertising campaign that their textbooks are being revised, the offensive titles and similar publications remain widely available in America, and in some cases dominate mosque library shelves, and continue to be used to educate American Muslims.

Copies of the documents and their translations are kept on file at Freedom House. A listing of the mosques and centers where these publications were found and a bibliography of the documents analyzed in this report follow.

FOREWORD

R. James Woolsey*

(This foreword is adapted from testimony delivered on May 22, 2002, before the House Committee on International Relations Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia.)

Since the Saudi conquest of the Hejaz from the Hashemites in 1924 and the formal establishment of the state of Saudi Arabia in 1932 – more or less simultaneously with the discovery of huge oil deposits in the kingdom – Saudi Arabia has been of substantial importance in the world. So although the Saudis have existed as a tribe and a family in control of a small portion of Arabia for centuries, their influence, even their existence as a nation, has come about within the life span of many now living, including the kingdom's effective ruler today, Crown Prince Abdullah.

Until less than thirty years ago, our relations with the Saudis were generally smooth. We were on the same side in the cold war, and the Saudis valued our support (and we theirs) against Soviet influence in the Mideast. Of course the oil embargo of 1973 created major stress, but the watershed year was 1979, when Khomeini came to power in Iran and extremists took over the holiest of Islam's shrines, the Mosque in Mecca, which was under the protection of the Saudi King; it was reclaimed by the Saudis only after substantial loss of both life and face.

As recently as the late 70's before these two events occurred the world of US-Saudi relations was a reasonably close and relaxed one. A number of Saudis prominent in government, the military, and the oil business had been educated in the West and were on quite easy terms, at least privately, with Western values and ways. If you will permit me one personal but I think useful vignette, I was in the Kingdom on Navy-related matters (I was Under Secretary of the Navy at the time) in 1978 and through a friend of a friend I was invited to a Saudi home for dinner. There were several Saudi men there, all of whom had been educated in the West; they were accompanied by their wives, who had also spent substantial time in the West, wearing modest but lovely Western dresses; everyone had an aperitif before dinner; the conversation about world events was informed, sophisticated, and urbane. It was very much like an evening I spent shortly thereafter in Israel.

I dare say that sort of evening would not occur in today's Saudi Arabia. Not only would the dinner be all-male (and certainly no aperitifs) but I would imagine that the Saudi participants would be far less likely to have either studied in the West or be familiar with many issues from a Western perspective.

A major part of the reason for this and other important changes in the Kingdom was the Saudi royal family's reaction to the tumultuous year of 1979. We are still feeling

the after-shocks today. The Saudis chose after the twin shocks of that year to strike a Faustian bargain with the Wahhabi sect and not only to accommodate their views about propriety, pious behavior, and Islamic law, but effectively to turn over education in the Kingdom to them and later to fund the expansion into Pakistan and elsewhere of their extreme, hostile, anti-modern, and anti-infidel form of Islam. The other side of the bargain was that if the Wahhabis would concentrate their attacks on, essentially, the U.S. and Israel, the Saudi elite would get a more-or-less free ride from the Wahhabis and the corruption within the Kingdom would be overlooked.

As a result, this Wahhabi sect, which would have been regarded as recently as fifty years ago as an austere, fringe group by a large majority of Muslims, is now extremely powerful and influential in the Muslim world due to Saudi government support and the oil wealth of the Arabian peninsula. Former Secretary of State George Shultz, not known for either a propensity for overstatement or for hostility to the Saudis, calls this deflection of Wahhabi anger toward us "a grotesque protection racket."

This Faustian bargain has had a huge effect on opinion in the Kingdom. Bernard Lewis points out that throughout most of the history of Islam in most parts of the Muslim world, Muslims have generally been more tolerant than many other religions – Jews and Christians, as "People of the Book", were dealt with especially tolerantly. Today in the Kingdom, however, young people are systematically infused with hostility for "infidels." Moreover, most young Saudis are not equipped when they graduate from school to perform the jobs necessary to operate a modern economy. Instead many are employed, if that is the right word, as, e.g., religious police – walking the streets to harass women whose veils may not fully cover their faces, for example. Young Saudis' anger based on their lack of useful work and their indoctrination is palpable. It is not an accident that 15 of the 19 terrorists who attacked us on September 11 were Saudis. The *New York Times* (January 27, 2002) cited a poll conducted by Saudi Intelligence, and shared with the U.S. government, that over 95% of Saudis between the ages of 25 and 41 have sympathy for Osama bin Laden. Whether this report from the Saudi government of their young adults' views is accurate or distorted, it makes an important point about hostility to us, either by the government, the people, or both.

The Saudi-funded, Wahhabi-operated export of hatred for us reaches around the globe. It is well known that the religious schools of Pakistan that educated a large share of the Taliban and al Qaeda are Wahhabi. But Pakistan is not the sole target. I had in my office recently a moderate Muslim leader from an Asian country. He was in the U.S., seeking to obtain funds from foundations, so that he could have printed elementary school textbooks to compete with the Wahhabi-funded textbooks that are flooding his country and that are being made available to schools at little or no cost. The Wahhabi textbooks in his country, like textbooks in Saudi Arabia, teach that it is the obligation of all Muslims to consider all infidels the enemy. As an illustration of the consequences of such teaching, I have heard that in some cases during the fighting in Bosnia in the early nineties, American churches and synagogues that were raising funds for food and other aid for the Bosnian Muslims would approach local mosques and suggest a cooperative effort. On a number of occasions they were turned down and didn't understand why. The

reason was that for a Wahhabi Imam (and Sheikh Kabbani, perhaps the U.S.'s leading moderate Muslim leader, says that a substantial percentage of American mosques have Wahhabi-funded Imams), it is normally not believed to be permissible for Muslims to work with infidels, even if the purpose is to help Muslims. I don't believe at all that this attitude reflects the views of a substantial number of American Muslims, but it may indicate one way that the Wahhabi reach extends into this country as well.

Americans are not normally comfortable distinguishing between what is acceptable and what is not acceptable within a religion, unless they are, say, debating views within their own church. Because of the First Amendment and American culture, most Americans tend not to make judgments about others' religions. But the Wahhabis and the Islamists whom they work with and support have a long political reach and their views have substantial political effect. Some of the consequences of this "grotesque protection racket" have been quite lethal: American deaths and the failure to apprehend the terrorists who killed them.

One analogue for Wahhabism's political influence today might be the extremely angry form taken by much of German nationalism in the period after WW I. Not all angry and extreme German nationalists (or their sympathizers in the U.S.) in that period were or became Nazis. But just as angry and extreme German nationalism of that period was the soil in which Nazism grew, Wahhabi and Islamist extremism today is the soil in which al Qaeda and its sister terrorist organizations are growing. We need to recognize the problem posed by the international spread of this hate ideology, including within the American homeland.

This report is a first step in an effort to contain the destructive ideology being proliferated by the Wahhabis within the American homeland. Hopefully it will lead to the removal of tracts spreading hatred within American mosques, libraries and Islamic centers. The publications analyzed in this Report and others like them that advocate an ideology of hatred have no place in a nation founded on religious freedom and toleration.

*Chairman of the Board of Directors of Freedom House, and former Director of Central Intelligence in 1993-95

INTRODUCTION

On December 3, 2004, Ahmed, an Arab exchange student, walks down a palm-lined boulevard in a working class neighborhood of Los Angeles. Since it is Friday, he bypasses the Hispanic restaurants, the 7/11, and the sporting goods store, and enters the King Fahd mosque – an elegant building of white marble etched with gold, adorned by a blue minaret, that is named after its benefactor, the King of Saudi Arabia. Later he will join 500 other California Muslims in prayer but, because it is early, he visits the mosque library where he picks up several books on religious guidance, written in Arabic, that are offered free to Muslims like him, newly arrived and uncertain on how to fit into this modern, diverse land.

The tracts he opens are in the voice of a senior religious authority. They tell him that America, his adoptive home, is the “Abode of the Infidel,” the Christian and the Jew. He reads:

“Be dissociated from the infidels, hate them for their religion, leave them, never rely on them for support, do not admire them, and always oppose them in every way according to Islamic law.”

The advice is emphatic: *“There is consensus on this matter, that whoever helps unbelievers against Muslims, regardless of what type of support he lends to them, he is an unbeliever himself.”*

As he reads this warning, Ahmed thinks back to the U.S. government’s request to the American Muslim community for their voluntary cooperation in the fight against terrorism and he is afraid. He knows that the tracts’ author views such officials as “unbelievers,” so that, if he helped them, he would be an unbeliever himself, a renegade, an apostate from Islam who should therefore be put to death. He begins to worry too about his cousin, an American citizen who recently enlisted in the U.S. military.

The books give him detailed instructions on how to build a “wall of resentment” between himself and the infidel: *Never greet the Christian or Jew first. Never congratulate the infidel on his holiday. Never befriend an infidel unless it is to convert him. Never imitate the infidel. Never work for an infidel. Do not wear a graduation gown because this imitates the infidel.*

Ahmed looks carefully at the book’s cover. It says *“Greetings from the Cultural Department”* of the Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Washington, D.C. The book is published by the government of Saudi Arabia. The other books are textbooks from the Saudi Education Ministry, and collections of *fatwas*, religious edicts, issued by the government’s religious office, published by other organizations based in Riyadh.

In another book he reads that, if relations between Muslims and non-Muslims were harmonious, there would be “*no loyalty and enmity, no more jihad and fighting to raise Allah’s work on earth.*”

Ahmed’s experience is repeated, not only in Saudi Arabia and the notorious *madrassas* of Pakistan, but throughout America: the texts he read have been spread from coast to coast and now fill the libraries and study halls of some of America’s main mosques. To be sure, not all the books in such mosques espouse extremism and not all extremist works are Saudi. Saudi Arabia, however, is overwhelmingly the state most responsible for the publications on the ideology of hate in America.

The Center for Religious Freedom has gathered samples of over 200 such texts over the last twelve months -- all from American mosques and all spread, sponsored or otherwise generated by Saudi Arabia. They demonstrate the ongoing indoctrination of Muslims in the United States in the hostility and belligerence of Saudi Arabia’s hardline *Wahhabi* sect of Islam.

All Saudis must be Muslim, and the Saudi government, in collaboration with the country’s religious establishment, enforces and imposes Wahhabism as the official state doctrine.¹⁴ In 2004, the United States State Department designated Saudi Arabia as a “Country of Particular Concern” under the International Religious Freedom Act after finding for many years that “religious freedom did not exist” in the Kingdom.¹⁵ The Saudi policy of denying religious freedom is explained in one of the tracts in this study: “*Freedom of thinking requires permitting the denial of faith and attacking what is sacred, glorifying falsehood and defending the heretics, finding fault in religion and letting loose the ideas and pens to write of disbelief as one likes, and to put ornaments on sin as one likes.*”

The Wahhabism that the Saudi monarchy enforces, and on which it bases its legitimacy, is shown in these documents as a fanatically bigoted, xenophobic and sometimes violent ideology.¹⁶ These publications articulate its wrathful dogma, rejecting the coexistence of different religions and explicitly condemning Christians, Jews, all other non-Muslims, as well as non-Wahhabi Muslims. The various Saudi publications gathered for this study state that it is a religious obligation for Muslims to hate Christians and Jews and warn against imitating, befriending, or helping such “infidels” in any way, or taking part in their festivities and celebrations. They instill contempt for America because the United States is ruled by legislated civil law rather than by totalitarian Wahhabi-style Islamic law. Some of the publications collected for this study direct Muslims not to take American citizenship as long as the country is ruled by infidels and tells them, while abroad, above all, to work for the creation of an Islamic state. The Saudi textbooks and documents spread throughout American mosques preach a Nazi-like hatred for Jews, treat the forged *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* as historical fact, and avow that the Muslim’s duty is to eliminate the state of Israel. Regarding women, the Saudi state publications in America instruct that they should be veiled, segregated from men and barred from certain employment and roles.

In these documents, other Muslims, especially those who advocate tolerance, are condemned as infidels. The opening *fatwa* in one Saudi embassy-distributed booklet responds to a question about a Muslim preacher in a European mosque who taught that it is not right to condemn Jews and Christians as infidels. The Saudi state cleric's reply rebukes the Muslim cleric: "*He who casts doubts about their infidelity leaves no doubt about his.*" Since, under Saudi law, "apostates" from Islam can be sentenced to death, this is an implied death threat against the tolerant Muslim imam, as well as an incitement to vigilante violence. Other Saudi *fatwas* in the collection declare that Muslims who engage in genuine interfaith dialogue are also "unbelievers." As for a Muslim who fails to uphold Wahhabi sexual mores through homosexual activity or heterosexual activity outside of marriage, the edicts found in American mosques advise, "*it would be lawful for Muslims to spill his blood and to take his money.*" Sufi and Shiite Muslims are also viciously condemned. Regarding those who convert out of Islam, it is explicitly asserted, they "*should be killed.*"

Much of the commentary in the West on Wahhabi hate ideology is restricted to shallow statements that it is "strict" or "puritanical." The Saudi publications in this study show that there is much more of concern to Americans in this ideology than rigid sexual codes. They show that it stresses a dualistic worldview in which there exist two antagonistic realms or abodes that can never be reconciled -- *Dar al-Islam* and *Dar al-Har*, or Abode of War (also called *Dar al-Kufr*, Abode of the Infidel) -- and that when Muslims are in the latter, they must behave as if on a mission behind enemy lines. Either they are there to acquire new knowledge and make money to be later employed in the *jihad* against the infidels, or they are there to proselytize the infidels until at least some convert to Islam. Any other reason for lingering among the unbelievers in their lands is illegitimate, and unless a Muslim leaves as quickly as possible, he or she is not a true Muslim and so too must be condemned.

One insidious aspect of this propaganda is its aim to replace traditional and moderate interpretations of Islam with Wahhabi extremism. Wahhabism began only 250 years ago with the movement created by fanatical preacher Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab. Once a fringe sect in a remote part of the Arabian peninsula, Wahhabi extremism has been given global reach through Saudi government sponsorship and money, particularly over the past quarter century as it has competed with Iran in spreading its version of the faith.¹⁷ With its vast oil wealth and its position as guardian of Islam's two holiest sites, Saudi Arabia now claims to be the leading power within Islam and the protector of the faith, a belief stated in the Saudi Basic Law. Saudi Foreign Policy Adviser Adel al-Jubeir publicly states that "the role of Saudi Arabia in the Muslim world is similar to the role of the Vatican."¹⁸ Even as the Saudi state asserts that it strives to keep the faith "pure" and free of innovation, it invents a new role for itself as the only legitimate authority on Islam.¹⁹

One example of how Saudi Arabia asserts its self-appointed role as the authoritative interpreter of Islam within the Muslim world is provided in a collection of *fatwas* published by the Saudi Embassy's Cultural Department in Washington. Its one-page introduction laments the dearth of competent Islamic scholars among Muslim

emigrant communities abroad, and the confusion this has caused about Islamic beliefs and worship. The opening line reads, “The emigrant Muslim communities suffer in these countries from a lack of religious scholars (*ulema*).” It states that this deplorable situation has led the highest committee of Islamic scholars in the Kingdom to offer authoritative replies to questions frequently asked by Muslims living in the non-Muslim world. These replies are given in authoritative pronouncements that the introduction urges should be official guides for preachers, mosque imams, and students living far from the Kingdom.

Saudi Wahhabism is dominant in many American mosques. Singapore’s main newspaper recently published an interview with Sheik Muhammad Hisham Kabbani, the Lebanese-American chairman of the Islamic Supreme Council of America, based in Washington, D.C.: “Back in 1990, arriving for his first Friday prayers in an American mosque in Jersey City, he was shocked to hear Wahhabism being preached. ‘What I heard there, I had never heard in my native Lebanon. I asked myself: Is Wahhabism active in America? So I started my research. Whichever mosque I went to, it was Wahhabi, Wahhabi, Wahhabi, Wahhabi.’”²⁰

Within worldwide Sunni Islam, followers of Wahhabism and other hardline or *salafist* (literally translated as venerable predecessors) movements are a distinct minority. This is evident from the millions of Muslims who have chosen to make America their home and are upstanding, law-abiding citizens and neighbors. In fact it was just such concerned Muslims who first brought these publications to our attention. They decry the Wahhabi interpretation as being foreign to the toleration expressed in Islam and its injunction against coercion in religion. They believe they would be forbidden to practice the faith of their ancestors in today’s Saudi Arabia, and are grateful to the United States and other Western nations for granting them religious freedom. They also affirm the importance of respecting non-Muslims, pointing to verses in the Koran that speak with kindness about non-Muslims. They raise examples of Islam’s Prophet Mohammed visiting his sick Jewish neighbor, standing in deference at a Jew’s funeral procession, settling a dispute in favor of a truthful Jew over a dishonest person who was Muslim, and forming alliances with Jews and polytheists, among others. They criticize the Wahhabis for distorting and even altering the text of the Koran in support of their bigotry. They say that in their tradition *jihad* is applicable only in the defense of Islam and Muslims, and that it is commendable, not an act of “infidelity,” for Muslims, Jews, and Christians to engage in genuine dialogue.

The publications in this study, found in some of America’s most important mosques, pose a grave threat to non-Muslims and to the Muslim community itself. They now have become a matter of national security since 15 of the 19 September 11 hijackers were Saudi subjects indoctrinated from young ages in just such Wahhabi ideology, possibly from the very same textbooks and *fatwa* collections. Saudi state curriculum for many years has taught children to hate “the other” and support *jihad*, a malleable term that is used by terrorists to describe and justify their atrocities. For example, a book for third-year high school students published by the Saudi Ministry of Education that was collected from the Islamic Center of Oakland in California, teaches students, including

even now some American Muslims, to prepare for *jihad* in the sense of war against Islam's enemies, and to strive to attain military self-sufficiency: "*To be true Muslims, we must prepare and be ready for jihad in Allah's way. It is the duty of the citizen and the government. The military education is glued to faith and its meaning, and the duty to follow it.*"

The same hostility toward "infidels" propagated in official Saudi Islamic publications and *fatwas* surfaces repeatedly in statements by Muslim terrorists.²¹ A prime example occurred on May 29 and 30, 2004, when a terrorist squad went through the compound of foreigners in Khobar, Saudi Arabia, segregating the Muslims from the non-Muslims (mainly Christians and Hindus) before slitting the throats of the latter, and in some cases, beheading them. To the remaining terrified Muslims the slaughterers calmly explained how certain verses in the Koran should be read and understood to preach hatred of "unbelievers." Their explicit aim was to cleanse the land of Mohammad of Christians and polytheists.²² While Saudi officials were quick to denounce this ruthless act of terror, it followed logically from the state's relentless indoctrination in hate ideology.

The Saudis' totalitarian doctrine of religious hatred -- now planted in many America mosques -- is inimical to our tolerant culture, and undermines the war on terrorism by providing the intellectual foundation for a new generation of Islamic extremists.²³ Several of the Saudi embassy titles in this study are expressly aimed at the immigrant and traveler. It should be remembered that the leaders of the 9/11 hijackers were themselves immigrants and became radicalized in the West.²⁴ And while our Los Angeles mosque-goer Ahmed is fictitious, Saudi hijackers Nawaf al Hazmi and Khalid al Mihdhar are not. Upon their arrival in America, they promptly made the King Fahd mosque the center of their lives, the base from which they received assistance, made friends, and no doubt could find moral reinforcement -- perhaps including from the mosque reading material -- to justify their planned terror mission against New York's twin towers. Fahad al Thumairy, a King Fahd mosque imam at that time, was a well-known Wahhabi extremist and Saudi diplomat whom the U.S. expelled for suspected terrorism in 2003.²⁵

Recent converts with limited experience of Islam can be particularly susceptible to the Saudi publications' toxic message.²⁶ Adam Gadahn, thought to be the "American *jihadi*" who appeared in a mask on a videotape just before the 2004 elections threatening that America's street would "run with blood," had converted to Islam and became radicalized after spending hours studying Islam with seven or eight other young men at the Islamic Society of Orange County in California, the mosque chairman is quoted telling the *Washington Post*. We cannot tell precisely what he and his group were reading, but the mosque chairman told the *Post*: "'They were very rigid, cruel in talking to people....' They criticized [the chair] for wearing Western clothes, for not wearing a beard, for trying to reach out to the local Jewish communities. Seizing on his American nickname, Danny, they circulated fliers around the mosque calling him 'Danny the Jew.'"²⁷ This attitude reflects perfectly the teachings given by the Saudi embassy in

several of the documents in our collection, copies of which were gathered from, among other places, the very Orange County Islamic Society where Gadhan studied.

Saudi commentators, themselves, have drawn the link between, on one hand, the large number of Saudis involved on September 11 and among the al Qaeda prisoners in Guantanamo Bay, and, on the other, the culture of religious rage and violence that is part of Saudi religious education. A study presented to a Saudi forum of 60 intellectuals, researchers, clerics and public figures, convened by Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah in December 2003 as part of a “National Dialogue” series, found “grave defects” in the religious curricula of the state’s boys’ schools, particularly with regard to “others,” that is, non-Muslims and non-Wahhabi Muslims.²⁸ The researchers concluded that this approach “encourages violence toward others, and misguides the pupils into believing that in order to safeguard their own religion, they must violently repress and even physically eliminate the ‘other,’” according to a summary of the study by MEMRI.²⁹ The Saudi forum concluded with recommendations for reforming the religious curriculum. The Saudi government is currently waging a multi-million dollar public relations campaign³⁰ in the United States, which among other activities advertised in American journals that the Kingdom’s textbooks are being “updated.” We have not attempted to investigate this claim but we remain skeptical based on our own recent interviews of Saudi official religious scholars who denied that reform was necessary and said that textbook reform would have to “evolve slowly over many years,”³¹ as well as other reports.³² We have confirmed that, as of December 2004, the retrograde, unreformed editions of Saudi textbooks and state-sponsored, hate-filled *fatwa* collections remain widespread and plentiful in many important American mosques.

The spread of Islamic extremism, such as Wahhabism, is the most serious ideological challenge of our times. Senator Jon Kyl, chairman of the Judiciary Committee’s Subcommittee on Terrorism, who held hearings on Wahhabism, asserted: “A growing body of accepted evidence and expert research demonstrates that the Wahhabi ideology that dominates, finances and animates many groups here in the United States, indeed is antithetical to the values of tolerance, individualism and freedom as we conceive these things.”³³

Wahhabi extremism is more than hate speech; it is a totalitarian ideology of hatred that can incite to violence.³⁴ The fact that this hate ideology is being mainstreamed within our borders through the efforts of a foreign government, namely Saudi Arabia, demands our urgent attention. The press has previously written of the extremist infiltration of the prison and military chaplain programs in the United States.³⁵ The Saudi publications described in this report could also pose a serious threat to American security and to the traditional American culture of religious toleration and freedom.

Not only does the government of Saudi Arabia not have a right – under the First Amendment or any other legal document – to spread hate ideology within U.S. borders, it is committing a human rights violation by doing so. A government that advocates religious intolerance and hatred violates the religious freedom and tolerance provisions of Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Planted as authoritative reading

materials in some of America's most prominent mosques (many of which also receive Saudi state support) these state-backed publications, in effect, represent a continuing breach of international law.

We need more rigorously to defend American ideals of equality and freedom against the Saudi government's spread of Islamic extremism. The 9/11 Commission 2004 Report concluded that our efforts in this regard should be as strong as they were in "combating closed societies during the Cold War." As the United States formulates foreign policy, it must take into consideration the high-stakes struggle over ideology within Islam and the central role Saudi Arabia continues to play in it. Security probes over the past two years have resulted in the United States expelling dozens of Saudi diplomats, some having served here as mosque imams and religious teachers; one result is that the Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences in America, one source of Wahhabi extremist publications, is now a shadow of its former self and Saudi Ambassador Bandar has resigned from the chairmanship of its board.³⁶ They have shut down Saudi charities linked to terrorism within the United States.³⁷ They have also prompted the Saudi embassy to close its radical Islamic Affairs office and reform its website.³⁸ These actions have curbed the flow of new Wahhabi publications but they do not address the threat posed by the materials these personnel and other Saudi government officials have left behind.

Freedom House wholeheartedly endorses the recommendation made by the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom for an official study of the Saudi export of hate ideology around the world. We also believe, based on our own study, that the United States should not delay in making an official protest at the highest levels to the Saudi government about its publications and *fatwas* lining the shelves of some of our most important mosques, mosques whose operations and personnel in some cases the Saudi government continues to support. It is ironic that Saudi Arabia itself has publicly announced the security need to update religious educational materials at home (albeit it remains to be verified whether such reform is carried out and to what extent) yet the unreformed textbooks and Wahhabi publications remain among the main religious resources for American Muslims. The problem is compounded when some American public libraries and schools rely on Wahhabi Islamic centers and institutions for their own acquisitions and course curriculum, and Wahhabism, still a minority sect, becomes seen as the norm within Islam by non-Muslims.³⁹ As it engages in the battle of ideas, the United States should assert American principles of religious freedom and human rights against Saudi Wahhabism and confront directly the teachings of Saudi hate ideology. We urge mosque leaders to remove these hateful publications and materials. We also encourage private sources of financing to come forward to fill the need for educational materials in American mosques with textbooks and tracts that emphasize religious toleration and the principles of individual religious freedom and other basic human rights.

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I. CHRISTIANS, JEWS AND OTHER “INFIDELS”

Wahhabis, the followers of Saudi Arabia’s established and extreme version of Sunni Islam, condemn as “infidels” all non-Muslims. The Saudi state denies them rights to practice their religions within the country. In the Saudi Wahhabi literature found in the United States Christians and Jews are often paired together for attack. They are portrayed as infidels *par excellence*: not to be greeted first, not to be taken as friends, and not to be imitated.

To Wahhabis, Christianity is considered polytheistic and its doctrine of the Trinity represents an ultimate expression of blasphemy: deifying Jesus and associating other created entities with the one God (*shirk*). Moreover, Christianity stirs up images of crusaders and colonialists and is the dominant religion throughout the “Abode of Unbelief,” in particular America.

The Wahhabi literature published and distributed by Saudi Arabia is replete with condemnations of Christians and their beliefs, and directs Muslims to actively hate them. The Saudi state’s religious authorities promote an us-versus-them mentality among Muslims that extends to social, cultural and political matters, far beyond the realm of religious doctrine. One Saudi government document [Document No. 2], collected from a San Diego mosque, expresses the need to maintain a “wall of resentment” between Muslims and non-Muslims. If the “wall” were to come down through amity, *jihad* (holy war) would end, as that particular tract makes explicit. San Diego mosque-goers are instructed by this Saudi publication that:

“[I]t is basic Islam to believe that everyone who does not embrace Islam is an unbeliever, and must be called an unbeliever, and that they are enemies to Allah, his Prophet and believers.” [Document No. 2]

In a book entitled *Reality of Monotheism and Polytheism*, [Document No. 40] published by the Saudi Ministry of Islamic Affairs, copies of which were found at the Al-Farouq Mosque in Brooklyn, New York, the late Saudi official, Grand Mufti Bin Baz, wrote that Islam since the time of Adam and through successive prophets has preached belief in Allah’s unity (*tawheed*). The Jews and Christians, however, became misguided unbelievers when they rejected Mohammed, despite the presence among them of some who proclaim God’s unity.

According to the Wahhabi view, it is a Muslim’s religious duty to cultivate enmity between oneself and unbelievers. Hatred of unbelievers is the proof that the believer has completely dissociated from them. A work entitled *Loyalty and Dissociation in Islam* [Document No. 45], compiled by the Ibn Taymiya Library in Riyadh and

distributed by the King Fahd-supported Islamic Center of Washington, D.C., states emphatically:

“To be dissociated from the infidels is to hate them for their religion, to leave them, never to rely on them for support, not to admire them, to be on one’s guard against them, never to imitate them, and to always oppose them in every way according to Islamic law.” [Document No. 45]

The Saudi Air Force publishing house has issued a series of hate-filled *fatwas* pronounced by Bin Baz and another of Saudi Arabia’s most prominent writers on religious questions, Sheik Mohammad al-Salih Ibn al-‘Athimein (died in 2000), aimed at Muslim travelers and emigrants. The Cultural Department of the Saudi Arabian Embassy in Washington distributed this 140-page book [Document No. 52] in the United States. Copies were collected from a number of different sources. It contains virulent denunciations of Christians and of the infidelity of their beliefs and practices. It offers intricate guidelines concerning the proper relations Muslims should have with non-Muslims while they reside in the latter’s “lands of *shirk* and *kufr*” (i.e. lands of idolatry and infidelity).

The opening question in the embassy-distributed booklet, entitled “Rulings for Travelers and Emigrants” captures the extreme intolerance of the Saudi ideology. The *fatwa* responds to a question that seeks clarity regarding a Muslim preacher in an unspecified mosque in Europe who “claims in a study of his that declaring Jews and Christians infidels is not allowed.” The Saudi state cleric’s reply rebukes the unnamed European cleric: “He who casts doubts about their infidelity leaves no doubt about his own infidelity” [Document No. 52]. This condemnation of tolerant Muslims also appears in the religious edicts of Saudi Arabia’s Permanent Committee for Scientific Research and the Issuing of *Fatwas*, collected from the Masjid Abu Bakr mosque in San Diego: “[T]he one who does not call the Jews and the Christians unbelievers is himself an unbeliever” [Document No. 2].

This raises the issue of *takfir*, accusing individuals or groups of blasphemy and condemning them for infidelity; included are other Muslims regarded by the fanatics as apostates. This is the most serious denunciation that could be made of another Muslim because Wahhabis believe apostates should be put to death, and it could be interpreted by fanatics as justification for murder. At a minimum, Wahhabi hardliners delegitimize and intimidate their Muslim opponents by labeling them as “infidels” or “apostates.”

The first *fatwa* in the Saudi Embassy book [Document No. 52], condemning tolerant Muslims, is followed by selective Koranic verses that spell out the infidelity of Jews and Christians and condemn them to the eternal fires of hell. One quotation from Ibn Taymiya, also known as Sheik al-Islam, a medieval extremist frequently invoked by Osama bin Laden, offers support for the charge of infidelity made against Christians and Jews:

“Whoever believes that churches are houses of God and that God is worshipped therein, or that what Jews and Christians do constitutes the worship of God and obedience to Him and His Prophet, or that God likes such practices and approves of them; and whoever assists them to keep their churches open and to establish their religion, and does so out of a feeling of kinship or out of a sense of obedience—whoever does all these things is an infidel.” [Document No. 52]

Another Ibn Taymiya pronouncement is given as a warning: “Whoever believes that visiting *dhimmis* [Christians and Jews] in their churches brings him closer to God is an apostate.” According to the Saudi interpretation of Islamic law, apostasy is punishable by death [Document No. 52].⁴⁰

Is a Muslim allowed to read the Gospels? Only if he is so well versed in his own Islamic faith and aims solely to point out the internal contradictions therein by exposing the tampering to which these Christian texts have been subjected [Document No. 52].

One questioner inquired about whether to accept an invitation from Protestant acquaintances to attend a church service with them. He stressed that, being Protestant, they had no statues or pictures in their church, and there would be no genuflecting before images and crosses or during rituals. The Saudi reply is that this is permissible only if accompanying them to their church can be used as a prelude to *da'wa*, or calling them to embrace Islam, and provided one does not share any of their beliefs and remains immune to their influences in every way [Document No. 52].

However, according to the Saudi state cleric, it is forbidden for infidels to enter mosques, and Muslims ought not to facilitate this violation. Nor are infidels allowed to deliver speeches in mosques or other special Islamic venues because this may enhance their standing in the eyes of other Muslims and allow them to spread their false doctrines, thus causing much confusion [Document No. 52].

From a Saudi publication [Document No. 45] gathered from the crown-supported Islamic Center of Washington, Muslims are warned that those who choose to reside in the lands of unbelief will be considered infidels and “enemies” of Allah if they either compliment non-Muslims or are critical of Muslims:

“Those who reside in the land of unbelief out of their own choice and desire to be with the people of that land, accepting the way they are regarding their faith, or giving compliments to them, or pleasing them by pointing out something wrong with the Muslims, they become unbelievers and enemies to Allah and his messenger.” [Document No. 45]

This document invokes the two-Abodes motif in order to underscore the utter incompatibility between the lands of Islam and those of infidelity. Similarly, believers

are exhorted to depart from infidel lands (*hijra*) if they cannot establish Islamic beliefs and practices in those lands and are able to immigrate back to the Abode of Islam.

The Saudi literature is bent on instilling in its followers the conviction that whenever they are not in Saudi Arabia or other Islamic countries, they are in enemy territory and accordingly should struggle to establish Islam, or else return to the Islamic world.

A Saudi-government text [Document No. 32] for tenth-grade students entitled *Science of Tawheed*, copies of which were obtained at the Al-Farouq Mosque in Houston, Texas, teaches the impropriety of mixing with, or imitating, the unbelievers.

“Residing among the unbelievers continuously is also forbidden because it is dangerous for the belief of the Muslim. That is why Allah made it obligatory to emigrate from the land of disbelief to the land of Islam.” [Document No. 32]

The message is that the peaceful coexistence of Muslim and non-Muslim in a multi-cultural state is not simply unachievable, but is undesirable and even punishable: If a Muslim “thinks it is permissible to be under their control, and he is pleased with the way they are, then there is no doubt that he is no longer a Muslim” [Document No. 32]. Muslims content to live in the West are therefore delegitimized, and, in fact, declared apostate. Anything positive they may say about the West is thereby discredited.

The interdiction against imitating the “People of the Book” (Christians and Jews) looms large in Saudi government documents and state-sanctioned writings and rulings. This high school text [Document No. 32] teaches Houston Muslims that it is strictly forbidden to imitate the unbelievers since it suggests an affinity with them. It defines three types of imitation, including copying their dress, shaving, and walking and talking like them. Imitating them in appearance suggests liking them on the inside.

Mohammad Jamil Zainu, a Saudi government-sanctioned teacher of Islamic jurisprudence in Mecca, in a work entitled *Islamic Guidelines to Reform the Individual and Society* [Document No. 25], writes that among the things that nullify one’s Islamic faith, is “supporting Jews, Christians, and communists against Muslims.” A copy of this publication was found at the Islamic Society of Greater Houston in Houston, Texas. Echoing these teachings is *Loyalty and Dissociation in Islam* [Document No. 45], which states,

“There is consensus on this matter, that whoever helps unbelievers against Muslims, regardless of what type of support he lends to them, he is an unbeliever himself.”
[Document No. 45]

This Saudi religious interpretation would have profound implications, therefore, for Muslims serving in the U.S. military and government, and for Saudi Arabia and other

Muslim governments in foreign policy dealings with the United States and other non-Muslim states.

The *fatwa* of former Saudi religious authority Bin Baz is explicit. Published by Saudi Arabia's General Presidency for Managing Research and Religious *Fatwas*, and collected from the Richardson mosque in Dallas, it states:

“It is not right for a Muslim to support the unbelievers, or to ask them to support him against his enemies, they are the enemy, do not trust them.... Muslims should not be recruited into their Army, whether they are Arabs or non-Arabs, because the unbeliever is the enemy of the believer.” [Document No. 20]

Similarly, the Saudi publications state that Muslims are not to work for the infidel. For example, the Saudi government high school textbook collected from the Al-Farouq mosque in Houston states:

“For a Muslim to be employed in the service of an unbeliever is something forbidden. The reason is because it gives authority to control and demean the believer to the unbeliever.” [Document No. 32]

The Saudi publications also instruct Muslims that it is preferable not to hire non-Muslims, especially within the Arabian Peninsula, but, if they do, they have to hate them. In *fatwas* on the “Treatment of Servants,” published [Document No. 36] by the Saudi Embassy to Washington and collected from the Islamic Center in East Orange, N.J., the late Saudi Grand Mufti Bin Baz states the following about how to handle an infidel domestic worker:

“The women in your household do not have to stay away from her, but they should not treat her as they would treat a Muslim woman. They have to hate her for Allah's sake....” [Document No. 36]

The Saudi government's Permanent Committee for Scientific Research and the Issuing of *Fatwas*, prepared a collection of *fatwas*, [Document No. 44] published by the Saudi Embassy's Cultural Department in Washington, D.C. They state that Muslims ought not to attend the religious festivals of the unbelievers nor congratulate them on such occasions since this would suggest acceptance of them and complicity in their infidel ways. Again Ibn Taymiya is the source to which the Grand Mufti and the government's Permanent Committee refer on this matter [Document No. 44]. They rule that it is specifically forbidden for a Muslim to show any sign of pleasure during the festivities of the unbelievers, or to take any days off from work since all this risks “resembling the enemies of God.”

The prominent Saudi religious leader Sheik al-‘Athimein, in a *fatwa* found distributed in several cities in the United States [Document No. 52], refers to Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, another fanatic medieval source and disciple of Ibn Taymiya. Using these rulings, the Saudi embassy instructs Muslims not to congratulate Christians at Christmas time, by for example uttering the words “Happy Holiday.” In fact, this abominable activity is “a practice more loathsome to God...than imbibing liquor, or murder, or fornication.” This implies that a Muslim wishing a Christian “Happy Holidays” on Christmas is an apostate and should be put to death. If Christians, continues the Saudi embassy source, greet Muslims on the occasion of Christian holy days, Muslims are to remain silent since all such festivities are either fabrications abhorrent to God, or have been superceded by the coming of Islam. No holiday banquets, no exchange of gifts, and none of the traditions of Western culture are permitted to Muslims living among unbelievers according to the Saudi publications. Such behavior on the part of Muslims has the added danger of instilling greater self-confidence in the hearts of the infidels and making them proud of their false religion [Document No. 52].

The apparent intent of the Saudi embassy document is to frighten Muslims in America into living lives aloof and alienated from the rest of society. Again the implication is that common politeness shown by the Muslim to a non-Muslim could be tantamount to infidelity or apostasy and deserve death.

One curious tract [Document No. 2] discusses the preparations for celebrating the then imminent new millennium. Published by the Saudi government’s Permanent Committee for Scientific Research and the Issuing of *Fatwas*, and found at the Abu Bakr Mosque in San Diego, it provides official rulings regarding questions from Muslims relating to the world media’s extensive coverage of the approaching event. The message is that if Muslims indulged in new millennium preparations or celebrations they would be flirting with apostasy. Specifically the document reads,

“The occasion and other like it must carry with it making truth and falsehood ambiguous, calling to disbelief, misguidance, pornography, atheism, and the appearance of that which is legally false....” [Document No. 2]

Again, the great peril is imitation of unbelievers. According to the document of the Saudi government’s Permanent Committee, outward imitation is bound to lead to inward imitation, namely accepting infidel tenets of faith. A Muslim merchant is not even permitted to advertise or promote sales on the occasion of the year 2000. It is strictly forbidden to close one’s business, or get married, or offer prizes, not to mention congratulate Christians on the second millennium. The document instructs San Diego mosque-goers that the important thing is never to show any sign of intimacy, admiration, or love for Christians and other “polytheists” [Document No. 2]:

“The holidays of disbelievers are forbidden for other consideration: Imitating them in some of their holidays would require pleasing their hearts, and expanding their chests in

whatever falsehood they're on; Imitating them in things that are outward, would require imitating them in things that are inward like false beliefs....The greatest corruption is that imitating them in things that are outward will bring some love and closeness inwardly, and loving them and supporting them is against faith....

“It is impermissible for a Muslim to help the unbelievers in any way during their holidays, like promoting their holidays and advertising it...through the media, or erecting clocks...or printing cards, or school books, or to hold sales, or to give away prizes or to play sports.

“It is impermissible for a Muslim to congratulate the unbelievers in their holidays, because it means you are pleased with that which they believe, and makes them happy.”

Loyalty and Dissociation in Islam, [Document No. 45] compiled by the Ibn Taymiya Library in Riyadh and distributed by the King Fahd-supported Islamic Center of Washington, D.C., also stresses that a highly dangerous form of imitating the unbelievers is sharing their celebrations. Specifically it cautions, “The most dangerous form of imitating the unbelievers, the most destructive and the most prevalent among the Muslims, is sharing with the unbelievers their celebrations....” The reader is reminded that the *salaf* (the venerable predecessors) declared that all holidays of the polytheists are anathema.

A Saudi government high school text instructs Houston mosque-goers that even celebrating their own birthdays, as unbelievers do, is forbidden:

“Imitating them in what they innovated in their religion, like their false holidays, the celebrations of birthdays, designating certain days of the week for activities in some jobs, and glorifying national days, this is forbidden and lewd.”
[Document No. 32]

In response to questions from Muslims living in the West about how they should interact with non-Muslims, the Saudi government experts on the Permanent Committee, including Grand Mufti Bin Baz and al-‘Athimein, offer a range of replies largely advising a mixture of suspicion, hostility, and aggressive proselytism. Their *fatwas* have been found in mosques throughout the United States. Specific instructions are given by Saudi state religious authorities on how Muslims can demonstrate hostility.

On the matter of whether or not to commence greetings with Christians and Jews, the Saudi publication imposes a strict prohibition. Replying to a salutation by an unbeliever, on the other hand, should consist of no more than a terse “and upon you” [Document No. 52]. This directive is also contained in the tract published by the Saudi

Embassy's Cultural Department in Washington and collected from the Islamic Center in Washington.

“It is forbidden for a Muslim to be first in greeting an unbeliever, even if he has a prestigious position.” [Document No. 44]

Regarding infidels, the first obligation for a Muslim residing in their midst is *da'wa*, or calling them to accept Islam, according to Saudi *fatwas*. If the infidels are *dhimmis*, that is Christians and Jews submissive to Muslim rule, they are not to be violated physically or their possessions taken from them. A Muslim is allowed to conduct commercial transactions with infidels. A Saudi *fatwa* distributed in the United States says that while the Muslim must not participate in infidel religious festivals, he or she can convey their condolences to an infidel who has suffered a loss; however, the Muslim should not say about the deceased: “May God have mercy on his soul,” or “May God forgive him his sins,” but rather to ask that God lead the living Christian to the right path, or compensate him the loss [Document No. 52]. Should a Muslim address Christians as “my brothers”? This is improper because they are not brothers in faith; however, it is acceptable if blood ties exist [Document No. 52].

Many Muslims come to the West to conduct business or to study. Saudi religious authorities would allow such forays into the Abode of Unbelief only if those undertaking them were solid in their Islamic faith and could be counted on to proselytize, were accruing earnings that would be used to benefit the Muslims, or were acquiring knowledge that would eventually strengthen the cause of Islam. Still, the Saudi documents [Documents Nos. 44 & 52] assert, dangers lurk everywhere, and the Muslim must anticipate the enmity of the unbelievers by being wary of their wiles and tricks. Take, for instance, the situation where a Muslim student is expected to be the first to greet a Christian of a prominent rank such as a university professor. A Saudi document gathered from the American mosque warns that under no circumstances is such a violation allowed [Documents No. 52].

A Muslim student at an American university wanted to know whether wearing the traditional graduation gown and cap was acceptable given that it is said their origins go back to the vestments of monks and priests. The answer from the Saudi Embassy Cultural Department in Washington, found in the King Fahd-supported Islamic Center in Washington, was an emphatic negative. The prohibition is doubly emphasized if it is established that the standard graduation garb in the West indeed hails from priestly robes [Document No. 44].

Other everyday concerns include whether or not to dress like Christians, meaning to wear Western clothes. The Saudi government collection of rulings stresses the need to eschew overt exposure of body curves and “shameful” parts in both men and women. Loose rather than body-hugging garments are to be preferred, and both sexes should not dress in attire that makes them resemble one another—men in silk, women in trousers [Documents Nos. 44 & 52].

Cordial relations with Christians, Jews and other non-Muslims must have the sole purpose of leading them to Islam. The Wahhabis prohibit friendships with infidels exceeding those with other Muslims, or giving these infidels preference in employment and the like. On the other hand, accepting invitations to Christian homes and sharing meals with them is acceptable for certain purposes and provided one is sure that the Islamic dietary laws are kept. The Saudi government *fatwa* publication [Document No. 52] that was collected from an American mosque gives instruction on interactions with Christians, Jews, and other infidels in the West where Muslims live in minority communities. Can we enter their homes? Yes, in order to advise them and point out the right path to them, not with the intention of friendship or loyalty. Similarly, infidels can visit Muslims in their homes as long as the women of the household are covered and segregated, and only in order to preach Islam to them [Document No. 52].

What about the burial of Muslims in the West? The Saudi government instruction is that this is not allowed unless it is temporary, and the remains of deceased Muslims must as soon as possible be returned for proper burial in the Abode of Islam [Document No. 52].

One Muslim residing in the West inquires whether an infidel can be given a copy of the holy Koran. Since this is part of the *da'wa*, or call to Islam, that Muslims ought to be engaged in while in the lands of unbelief, it is permissible to give the infidel a copy of the Koran. The Saudis have their own, unique Wahhabi translation of the Koran. This translation adds some harsh condemnations of Christians and Jews not found in the original language of the Koran.⁴¹ Analyst Stephen Schwartz notes that there is nothing to indicate to the uninformed reader that the Wahhabi additions are not present in the original Arabic. In the opening chapter, or *surah*, which is recited in Muslim daily prayer (among non-Wahhabis), the four final lines in the Arabic original read “Guide us to the straight path,/ The path of those whom You have favored,/ Not of those who have incurred your wrath,/ Nor of those who have gone astray.” The Wahhabi Koran says the following, “Guide us to the Straight Way./ The Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, not (the way) of those who have earned Your Anger (such as the Jews), nor those who went astray (such as the Christians).” The sectarian accretions of the Saudi Koran can be found in the Saudi state publications collected from American mosques.

The Wahhabi ideologues minimize the verses in the Koran referring kindly and positively to Christians. Saudi exegetes are quick to point out that such verses are not intended to include the vast majority of Christians. One such example [Document No. 24] is an article in the official publication of the Saudi government’s Presidency of Scientific Research and Rulings in Riyadh, which is being distributed in mosques in America, a copy of which was obtained at the Islamic Society of Greater Houston in Houston, Texas. It cites Imam Baghawi’s work *Ma’alim al-Tanzeel* (the essence of what God has revealed) as authoritative support for the view that only a handful of Christians—those who have actually accepted Islam—are singled out by the favorable Koranic verses. The rest, like the Jews, are implacable in their enmity towards Muslims.

Regarding Christians, the Saudi scholars instruct Houston Muslims: “They kill Muslims, imprison them, destroy their lands, tear down their mosques, burn their holy book—no, no they have no dignity....” Therefore, the article sums up, cursing Christians is not only permissible, but also required for believers. Only those few Christians who have accepted the truth of Islam and “were not too proud to follow it” are the ones referred to in the agreeable verses of the Koran. Regarding the pro-Christian verses in the Koran, the Saudi state’s religious scholars state:

“These verses do not pertain to all Christians; they only pertain to a group of Christians who believed in the truth after knowing it and did not become arrogant, and that the cursing of the Christians is permissible, same as the cursing of the Jews.”
[Document No. 24]

Western churches have increasingly called for greater unity among world religions and interfaith dialogue, but the Saudi Arabian authoritative religious office is adamant. The government’s Permanent Committee finds no common ground. Islam is the final and most perfect religion and by its coming all previous religions, including Judaism and Christianity, have been nullified. The Saudi text asserts that the Koran has rendered both the Torah and the Gospels obsolete because they were tampered with and altered by wicked or wayward men. The call to greater unity among religions is therefore sinful since it erases the radical differences between Islam and systems of unbelief. The Saudi text, distributed in the San Diego mosque declares,

“It is basic to the belief of Islam that everyone who does not embrace Islam is an unbeliever and must be called an unbeliever and that they are enemies to Allah, his Prophet and the believers....That is why the one who does not call the Jews and the Christian unbelievers is himself an unbeliever....”
[Document No. 2]

Worst of all is for a Muslim to call for such unity and promote this sinful idea at meetings or conferences with unbelievers. Thus, participating in the building of inter-denominational places of worship where religious rites other than those of Islam are practiced is a serious instance of misguided behavior meriting severe reprimand
[Document No. 2].

The Saudi government text makes clear the reason interfaith harmony is to be feared is that it will lead to the end of *jihad*.

“The effect of this sinful call is that it erases the differences between Islam and disbelief, between truth and falsehood, good and bad, and it breaks the wall of resentment between the Muslims and the unbelievers, so that there is no loyalty and enmity, no more *jihad* and fighting to raise Allah’s word on earth....” [Document No. 2]

II. JEWS

A special place is reserved for the Jews in the annals of Saudi religious demonology. Even apart from the issue of Israel and the Palestinians or any Arab-Israeli conflict, Wahhabi hatred for Jews as Jews is primordial.

Wahhabi writers and preachers repeatedly tell their audiences that at the very beginning of the Koran the phrase “those who have incurred Your wrath” refers to the Jews, and “those who have gone astray” refers to the Christians. Similar teachings are contained in two documents from the collection, one from the Saudi Presidency of Scientific Research and Rulings collected from a Houston mosque, and the other from a *fatwa* aimed at Muslim travelers and emigrants, distributed by the Cultural Department of the Saudi Arabian Embassy, and collected from other American mosques [Documents Nos. 24 & 52]. Wahhabis invariably present Jews as falling permanently under God’s curse, and often as less than human.⁴²

A book [Document No. 38] published in English by the King Fahd National Library in Riyadh for the benefit of Muslim emigrant communities abroad, copies of which were found at the Al-Farouq Mosque in Brooklyn, New York, describes Jewish iniquities as follows:

“They broke their Covenant; they rejected Allah’s guidance as conveyed by His messengers; they killed Allah’s messengers and incurred a double guilt which included murder and deliberate defiance of Allah’s Law; and they imagined themselves arrogantly self-sufficient, which means a blasphemous closing of their hearts forever against the admission of Allah’s grace.” [Document No. 38]

It continues,

“They rejected faith; they made false charges against godly women like Mary, who was chosen by Allah to be the mother of Jesus; they boasted of having killed Jesus when they were victims of their self-hallucination; they hindered people from Allah’s way; and by means of usury and fraud they oppressed their fellow men.” [Document No. 38]

It should be noted that these condemnations are directed at Jewish beliefs and religion, not objections to Israel. This type of anti-Semitism is the fastest growing form of organized hate in Europe today, particularly among immigrant Muslim youth in places such as France, Germany, and Britain.

Christians and Jews are not always seen as working together. In fact, the Jews are seen as scheming constantly to corrupt and undo their old enemy, Christianity. For example a Saudi government textbook [Document No. 43] for eleventh grade students, copies of which were collected at the King Fahd-supported Islamic Center of Washington, D.C., tackles the issue of atheism. It analyzes atheism's causes and motives, and describes what the author, Mohammad Qutub, terms "the role of the Jews in the corruption of the European way of life." He writes that the Jews have seized every available opportunity to attack Christianity, and have done so from every conceivable angle, including by such innocuous-sounding themes as "progress and civilization" or "individual freedom." First, there is Karl Marx, "and he is a Jew," who called people to embrace communism and atheism. It adds that he is the one who wrote the famous statement "religion is the opiate of the masses." Second, there is Freud, "and he is a Jew," whose theories about sex call people "to free themselves from religion, from morality, and from traditions, claiming that these cause psychological and nervous-system problems." Third, the Jews guided and controlled the industrial-capitalist movement in Europe and invested their money in usury and so were able to dominate all aspects of European life, thereby causing great corruption.

"They lured women to go to work in the factories, and when the number of working women increased they lured them into wearing makeup and revealing clothes, to corrupt their morals, and to corrupt young men with them." [Document No. 43]

The Saudi textbook also teaches that Jews destroyed the family when they enticed women away from the duties of motherhood and raising children by convincing them that these imposed "silly restrictions limiting their freedom and growth." Generations of children have been raised "without families, because the mother is busy at her job," and the result has been the proliferation of groups "like the hippies, punks, and others." Lastly, under the banner of "freedom, brotherhood, and equality" the Jews spread atheism and moral corruption by using "individual freedom" as a blanket protection for every form of vice [Document No. 43].

Usury is a sensitive issue for Muslims, and Saudi Wahhabis routinely condemn it and link it to the Jews. Muslims abroad, including in the United States, have often sought guidance on dealing with interest and with foreign banks. Wahhabi Sheiks have been quick to issue *fatwas* on the matter, one of which [Document No. 44] was collected from the Islamic Center, Washington, D.C. They insist, as a general rule, Muslims should not place their money in banks that offer interest. However there is an exception; if banks offer interest without prior agreement or knowledge on the Muslim depositor's part, it is proper to take the money provided it is spent on helping the poor or *those engaged in Jihad against the infidels* (emphasis added). On the other hand, a Muslim should not have dealings with companies that practice usury, or work for banks that do the same [Document No. 44].

The documents stress instances of cooperation between Israel's supporters in the United States and other parts of American society. Writing in 1984 in English as a

member of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), Steve A. Johnson, also using the name of Faruq Abdullah, describes what he sees as an “unholy alliance” between “Zionists” on one side and “liberal and fundamentalist Protestants” on the other. Copies of this book [Document No. 14] were collected at Darul-Islah Mosque in Teaneck, New Jersey.

“The liberal Protestant-Jewish alliance has been sought for many years. In the past four years the Jews have had immense success enlisting fundamentalists as allies. For example, Jerry Falwell, the leader of Moral Majority, received the Jabotinsky Foundation award presented by Menachem Begin ‘in recognition of many years of service to Israel and the Jewish people everywhere.’ A new fundamentalist-action group called the TAV Action Committee has been established in Portland, Oregon to politically lobby for Jewish concerns. In June 1982, the ‘Evangelical Christian Declaration of Support for Israel and the American Jewish Community’ was drawn up affirming that the evangelicals are committed to the security of ‘Israel’, believe that Jews are the ‘Chosen People of God’, and call for Arab leaders to unequivocally embrace the legitimacy of the ‘Israeli’ State.” [Document No. 14]

In the face of such gathering perils, Johnson calls on Muslims to mobilize and “develop an extensive, well-organized campaign to inform liberal Protestant and fundamentalist Protestant ministers about the history of Palestine and the truth about Islam.” This, he concludes, must become a priority “both at the national level and the individual *masjid* (mosque) level” [Document No. 14].

A Saudi government text for seventh-graders [Document No. 42], copies of which were collected at the King Fahd-supported Islamic Center in Washington, D.C., maintains that the Jews only memorized the Torah without understanding it, and did not live by its teachings. For this reason, Washington mosque-goers are told that Jews “are worse than donkeys.” The textbook asserts that only Mohammed and the *sahaba* (his close companions) are Allah’s exclusive friends, not the Jews or anyone else, and that “Allah’s friends prefer the Hereafter to the material world” [Document No. 42].

A Saudi geography textbook [Document No. 41] for sixth graders collected from the King Fahd-supported Islamic Center in Washington, D.C., gives an encapsulated Wahhabi version of the history of Palestine:

“For centuries, the Crusaders and the colonialists were out to take it [Palestine]; they kept up their aggression until Salahu-Din Alayyubi [i.e. Saladin] drove them out...After World War One, the colonialists and Zionists conspired to establish the Zionist country in Palestine. They provided them [the Jews] with weapons, beginning in 1917, until the Jews became able

to occupy, through treachery, part of Palestine in 1948. Since then the Jews have been trying to occupy the rest of Palestine, and through treachery they were able to occupy the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Sinai in Egypt. Later, Egypt regained Sinai.” [Document No. 41]

A more vicious narration can be found in a fourth-grade Saudi state textbook [Document No. 34], copies of which were collected from the Islamic Center of America in East Orange, New Jersey. Titled *For Reading and Memorization*, this Saudi state publication gives a conspiratorial reading of the history of Palestine. Again, it was the “sinful conspiracy” of imperialism that allowed the Jews “to steal this dear Arab land and to establish a large Zionist state big enough for the largest number of Jews in the world.” This state was intended as,

“a thorn in the back of the Muslim nations, and a window through which colonialism can sneak up among the ranks of the Muslims to work, on dividing them and light the fire of hatred between them.” [Document No. 34]

The account ends ominously by vowing that,

“the Muslims will not rest until they cut off this disease and purify the land of Palestine from the plague of Zionism, and until its rightful owners reclaim it....Victory comes from Allah alone.” [Document No. 34]

A tract [Document No. 10] by the Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences in America, formerly an outpost of the Imam Muhammed Ibn Saud Islam University in Riyadh, takes Arab nationalists to task for maligning the Ottomans. It was Sultan Abdul-Hameed who took the honorable Islamic position when he “categorically refused to allow the Jews to establish a country in Palestine.” This “great historic stance” has been distorted by nationalists, who are in league with the Zionists when it comes to falsifying the historical record and trying to cover up “the most glorious pages of the history of the Ottomans.” Abdul-Hameed has been branded a traitor by these so-called “enlightened ones,” who say he offered to sell Palestine to the Jews through Hertzl for two million English pounds, but Hertzl could not pay that amount. The book asserts that these are Zionists [Document No.10]. The enmity between various Arab nationalist ideologies and pan-Islamist fundamentalism runs deep. Among other things, the Islamists yearn for a return of the Caliphate, which died out with the Ottoman Empire, and they resent outlooks that view history only through what to them is the narrow and un-Islamic prism of nationalism, Arab or otherwise.

King Fahd himself is quoted in *Patriotism and Its Requirements in Light of Islamic Teaching*, copies of which were found at the Richardson Mosque in Dallas, Texas, and published by the Saudi Press Ministry:

“[W]e consider ourselves to be in a continuous war against the Zionist enemy in every way until we achieve the hopes of the Arab nation driving the occupier out.” [Document No. 18]

Wahhabis usually describe Zionism in terms of conspiracy. One example comes from a book [Document No. 21] entitled *Writings at the Dawn of the Fifteenth Century*, published by the Riyadh-based House of Science. Copies of this book were collected from Dar Al Hijra Islamic Center in Falls Church, Virginia.

“Zionism, which is the worst racism in history because of its violence, atrocities, selfishness and arrogance, invests all the means available to it, together with the other enemies to destroy this religion [i.e. Islam] and exterminate its followers, weakening and paralyzing them to say the least.” [Document No. 21]

The Riyadh-issued book, *Who Has the Right to Make Judgment* [Document No. 46], published by the Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences in America and collected from the King Fahd-supported Islamic Center of Washington, D.C., asserts confidently that, despite the current impotence of Muslims to expel the Jews from Muslim lands, “generations that will come after us will certainly throw the Jews out as the Prophet (pbuh) informed us.” However, the author, a Sheik from Riyadh explains that,

“if we agree with the Jews in this matter, and we give them a document stating that they have a right to a part of Palestine under the pretense that we are impotent; the presence of the Jews will become a legal presence as they would like it. This will happen simply through the consent of the Muslims, and this means betraying the cause.” [Document No. 46]

“No,” the Sheik responds. “We do not accept this reality as a true one.” He gives the analogy of a thief who enters a house and occupies it. Even though the owner may be unable to evict the stronger thief, he will say,

“my children after me will come and throw you out, or the police will come and throw you out., and the house will not remain yours just because you were a powerful thief supported by the East or the West.” [Document No. 46]

He assures his reader that to acknowledge Israel as an existing reality that cannot be ignored does not imply that *fatwas* rejecting this reality have been changed or superceded or overturned in any way [Document No. 46].

III. OTHER MUSLIMS

Wahhabi authorities condemn as “apostate” Muslims who do not share their uncompromising Sunni interpretation of Islam, as well as those who convert to non-Muslim faiths.⁴³ The Saudi publications collected from American mosques denounce as “unbelievers” Muslims who demonstrate toleration of infidels, embrace basic international human rights norms and greater individual freedom, follow Sufi, Shiite or other interpretations of Islam that are not Sunni and not sufficiently hardline, fail to follow Wahhabi sexual mores and other Wahhabi codes of behavior, or who form governments that do not rule by rigid, Wahhabi-style *shari’a*. In essence, these Muslims who do not follow the Wahhabi or *salafi* interpretations of Islam are condemned in these Saudi publications to a type of “excommunication” from Islam.⁴⁴

Wahhabis view Muslims who support or advocate basic individual rights and freedoms as an urgent internal threat who must be dealt with harshly if the purity of Islam, which Wahhabis claim to represent, is to be safeguarded. Such Muslims are steering their own lives and the lives of those under their care on the wrong path, and must therefore voluntarily relent or be forced to change their views and practices. They are vilified by Wahhabis as apostates deserving the most severe punishment.

Addressing the question of these moderate Muslims is a book [Document No. 11] published by the Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences in America while it was an outpost of the Saudi government-financed and supervised Imam Muhammed Ibn Saud Islamic University in Riyadh, and collected from Al-Islam Mosque in Washington, D.C., and the Muslim Community Center in Chicago. It expresses the Wahhabi critique of moderates as follows:

“They declare their rejection of the legally set limits and punishments, claiming them to be barbaric and monstrous; they openly declare the permissibility of unbelief and leaving Islam, under the call to the freedom of beliefs....They declare the permissibility of the sexually deviant and forbidden, under the name of individual freedom; They march to change what is left of religious civil laws, under the claim of the freedom of women and their equality with men.” [Document No. 11]

Another example is provided by a *fatwa* published for distribution by the Saudi Permanent Committee for Scientific Research and the Issuing of *Fatwas*, and distributed by the Cultural Department of the Saudi Arabian Embassy in Washington and collected from the Islamic Center in Washington and other American mosques. In it, Muslims are told that “innovative imams” are “heretics and their prayers are invalid” [Document No. 44].

The Wahhabis see any form of acceptance of non-Wahhabi ideas as tantamount to “loyalty to unbelievers.” This is expressed in Document No. 45 from the Saudi-supervised Ibn Taymiya Library in Riyadh, copies of which were collected from the King Fahd-supported Islamic Center of Washington, D.C. There are degrees of loyalty to the infidels, the worst leading to apostasy and the abandoning of Islam, the punishment for which under the Wahhabi application of *shari’a* is death:

“There are many different branches of being close and loyal to disbelievers, therefore you cannot have the same verdict for each one. In some cases, the person committing this, leaves Islam and loses his faith completely....” [Document No. 45]

In a tract [Document No. 52] collected from several American mosques, the Saudi Embassy quotes the state religious authority in denouncing a European Muslim preacher who taught that it is not right to condemn Christians and Jews as infidels: “He who casts doubts about their infidelity leaves no doubt about his.” This in effect accuses the tolerant cleric of apostasy, a capital offense in Saudi Arabia.

Muslim converts who fail to abide by strict Wahhabi sexual codes are to be excommunicated and marked for death. In a book published by the Saudi Ministry of Islamic Affairs, and collected from the Al-Farouq Mosque in Brooklyn, New York, Saudi Arabia’s official religious leader, the late Bin Baz, authorizes Muslims to kill converts to Islam who violate sexual mores on adultery and homosexuality. In what can be fairly characterized as an incitement to murder, Bin Baz declares that if a convert professes belief in Allah’s unity and even accepts Mohammed, yet makes an exception regarding sex outside of marriage, he can be killed. The Brooklyn mosque-goers are instructed as follows:

“If a person said: I believe in Allah alone and confirm the truth of everything from Muhammed, except in his forbidding fornication, he becomes a disbeliever. For that, it would be lawful for Muslims to spill his blood and to take his money.” [Document No. 40]

The Saudi publication continues:

“Along the same line, if a person said: I believe in Allah alone, and believe in all the prophets, and Mohammed (pbuh) as their leader, except in forbidding homosexuality; he becomes a disbeliever, his blood would be ok to spill, and his money ok to take by the Muslims, if you can prove that he is such a person.” [Document No. 40]

Bin Baz concludes, “On this matter there is consensus by all the Muslims.” This is an instance of Saudi Arabia setting up Wahhabism as the accepted normative Islamic

interpretation, something that moderate Muslims reject. This is just one component of an overarching ideology of hatred and extreme intolerance.

Imperialism and the various forces of infidelity and unbelief are able to make inroads within the Muslim world largely due to the lethargy and the “napping” of Muslims. According to Document No. 7, published by the International House for Islamic Books in Riyadh and collected from the Saudi-financed King Fahd Mosque in Los Angeles, this failure is seen by Wahhabis as primarily the fault of moderate Muslims, who are either “confused” or under the spell of corrupting Western ideas and influences. One source [Document No. 19], collected from the Richardson Mosque in Dallas, Texas, and published by the Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences in America Research Center, explains that Wahhabi attention to issuing detailed *fatwas* for Muslims living in the West emanates from the fear that Muslims abroad have “strayed from the principles set forth by the Koran” and fallen “prey to foreign ideologies,” becoming victims of “Western colonial power manipulation through the process of education” [Document No. 19].

Wahhabis blame much of the perceived deterioration in the overall conditions of Muslims on secular Muslim governments. This is an old refrain that recurs throughout Wahhabi literature: the ills of Muslim societies are ascribed by and large to the weak, inept, and treacherous governments that rule them. A book [Document No. 9] from the Al-Adab Library in Riyadh gives a classic indictment of those who have ruled over Muslims. Written by a Saudi designated as “the martyr,” it hurls a laundry list of accusations at the authorities and regimes in question, charging that these governments bear the greatest responsibility for the weakness and humiliation that have befallen the Muslims. They “chose for Muslims what Allah forbade for them and governed them with other than Allah’s judgment.” It is these governments that have “pushed millions of Muslims toward European misguidance, and away from their Lord’s guidance, ruling over them through secular laws and not just through religious laws.” They strayed from Islam in every possible manner. The study and practice of Islam were downplayed under these governments, while at the same time they did all in their power to “support the enemies of Islam.” When dealing with their Muslim subjects these governments obey the “enemies of Allah” [Document No. 9].

The founder of modern Turkey, Mustafa Kamal Atatürk, for example, belongs to the category of Muslims enchanted with the West and its ways, according to a document collected from the Abu Bakr Mosque in San Diego, and published by the then Saudi-staffed Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences in America [Document No. 4]. The far-reaching changes he introduced into Turkish politics and society, including the separation of mosque and state, resulted in “ignorance spread throughout the nation, people and leadership, until many of them knew nothing about their religion except its name.”

Wahhabis also condemn as apostate sects and groups within Islam other than the *salafi* or extremist Sunnis. Wahhabi wrath has been expressed openly against Sufis (mystics), Shiites, and a variety of lesser known Islamic strands. From its outset in the eighteenth century Wahhabism began as a violent, purist, and *salafi* reaction to a number of religious groups in Arabia and beyond including remnants of pre-Islamic pagan

practices, all expressions of Sufism, the veneration of saints and tombs of holy men, and Shiism. Wahhabis attacked and physically smashed the places of worship of these groups in a bid to cleanse the Arabian Peninsula of all forms of *shirk* and pagan contamination.⁴⁵ Wahhabi writings continue to denounce these religions in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

The highest Saudi religious official, the late Grand Mufti Bin Baz condemns the Sufis in his book *A Rejoinder to Those Who Seek Help in Other than God or Those Who Believe in Soothsayers and Fortune-Tellers* [Document No. 35], published by the Riyadh-based Presidency of Islamic Researches Ifta' and Propagation Printing and Translation agency, which was collected from the Islamic Center of America in East Orange, New Jersey. Responding to a question about Sufi prayers, he lashes out dismissively:

“They utter phrases such as ‘Oh Lord, grant peace and blessings be on the one whom You have ordained to be instrumental in the unfolding of your mighty secrets and in opening the doors to your sublime lights of Your mercy and who has thus become the vice-regent and who has inherited Your hidden secrets....’ All such utterances are nothing but pedantry and empty talk.... The pedants shall be doomed to destruction.” [Document No. 35]

A pedant in this context, explains Bin Baz, is “one who delves in problems and issues that are beyond his intellectual abilities.”

Questions come up now and then among Muslims living abroad regarding relations between Sunni Islam and other branches of the faith, and these questions require careful rulings from the religious authorities in Riyadh. One such question, replied to in the collection of *fatwas* [Document No. 44] distributed in the United States by the Cultural Department of the Saudi Arabian Embassy, and collected from the King Fahd-supported Islamic Center in Washington, D.C., and from other American mosques, concerned the Ash'aris, or followers of Abi al-Hasan Al-Ash'ari (873-935), an early Muslim theologian who influenced Al-Ghazzali. Ash'arism, among other things, regards reason as subordinate to revelation thereby situating the ultimate truth in the words of the Koran. The Wahhabi response is to say that the Ash'aris are the closest sect to the Sunnis who adhere strictly to the Koran, the Prophet, and his companions. With the exception of certain misinterpretations they put forth related to Allah's attributes, Ash'aris are generally accepted by Sunni orthodoxy which Wahhabism claims to embody [Document No. 44].

The same is not true, however, with respect to the many differences between Sunnis and Shiites (particularly Twelver Shiism), about which another questioner inquires. The unmistakable Wahhabi enmity toward Shiism emerges in the response that appears in a set of Saudi religious rulings [Document No. 52], printed by the Saudi Arabian Air Force publishing house and distributed in the United States by the Cultural Department of the Saudi Arabian Embassy, and collected from several American mosques. The Virginia mosque-goers are told that Shiites slander the *sahaba* (early companions of the prophet)

and by implication the Prophet himself and the *shari'a*, thus casting doubts on Allah's wisdom. This slander, pronounces the Wahhabi ruling, constitutes the most crucial difference between Sunnis and Shiites. Moreover, Shiites claim to be the followers of Imam 'Ali, the fourth of Islam's early Wise Caliphs; however, maintain the Wahhabis, 'Ali and his close associates would dissociate themselves from the beliefs and practices of these misguided ones. Instead, it is the Sunnis—specifically the Wahhabis—who are more worthy of being called the true followers of the Prophet, his family, and his early companions and successors [Document No. 52].⁴⁶ The American mosque-goers are instructed by the Saudi embassy that, like the infidels, Shiites too are “misguided ones,” and should be viewed with suspicion and disdain.

Muslims who convert out of Islam, of course, are apostates too, and, under Saudi law, they are to be put to death. An Urdu-language publication (Document No. 55), published by the Saudi Ministry of Religious Affairs and gathered from the King Fahd Mosque, quotes Sheik Bin Uthaimin preaching this policy:

“[O]ur doctrine states that if you accept any religion other than Islam, like Judaism or Christianity, which are not acceptable, you become an unbeliever. If you do not repent, you are an apostate and you should be killed because you have denied the Koran.” [Document No. 55]

IV. ANTI-AMERICA

All the material surveyed in this report has been distributed in the United States in order to influence a growing audience of Muslims. They are usually either newly arrived immigrants with pressing concerns about the pros and cons of assimilation, or else American Muslim converts and established communities in metropolitan areas. The message of these Saudi government Wahhabi publications and authoritative religious rulings is designed to breed greater aloofness, instill suspicion, and ultimately engender hatred for America and its people.

The Saudi Arabian Embassy in Washington, through its Cultural Department, distributed *fatwas* [Document No. 44] against the taking of American citizenship by Muslims, even when they are stateless. Prepared by the Permanent Committee for Scientific Research and the Issuing of *Fatwas* in Saudi Arabia, the document was found in several American mosques including the King Fahd-supported Islamic Center in Washington, D.C. In it, a person asks whether it is permissible for a Muslim to acquire American citizenship, especially if he or she happens to be stateless. The Saudi state religious overseers reply:

“It is forbidden for a Muslim to become citizen of a country [such as the United States] governed by infidels.” [Document No. 44]

American citizenship for a Muslim means “acquiescing to their infidelity and accepting all their erroneous ways.” The sole justification for remaining in infidel lands, the Saudis stress, is “to preach Islam to them” [Document No. 44]. Saudi Ambassador to the United States, Prince Bandar Bin Sultan, in a June 9, 2004, interview on Al-Arabiyya satellite TV, explained why there are few Saudi Americans as contrasted with Lebanese, Syrian, Egyptian, or Iraqi Americans: “Because Saudis love their country and have to live in it [since it is where they most feel] Saudi, Arab, and Muslim.” The government-sanctioned *fatwa* indicates that it is also forbidden for a Saudi to acquire the nationality of a country ruled by infidels.

Another Muslim living in the United States inquired about marrying an American woman as a quick way to become a naturalized U.S. citizen. This is forbidden not only on the grounds that it is a lie and a deception, but also because it involves “loyalty to their twisted beliefs and evil practices” [Document No. 44]. Taking up residence in America or any other infidel country is a step fraught with dangers for the Muslim. The Saudi-distributed ruling tells of examples of Muslims who returned from prolonged excursions among infidels having fallen into apostasy and renounced their faith, or having blasphemed, or having become morally dissolute, or having adopted infidel ideas and practices.

According to another collection of *fatwas* [Document No. 52], collected from several American mosques, there are, however, special circumstances under which a

Muslim can spend time in infidel domains. These include being a diplomat who represents a Muslim government in an infidel country, conducting commercial transactions, seeking medical care, studying, seeking converts to Islam, and uncovering the infidels' corrupt ways, erroneous beliefs, and plots they may be hatching against the Muslims.

The question of pursuing an education abroad in non-Islamic countries is particularly sensitive since a growing number of Saudis prior to September 11, 2001, had been leaving their homeland to do so, and the United States was a preferred destination. The prospective Muslim student in America, or elsewhere outside the world of Islam, faces several challenges to his faith. By definition he is in a subordinate position with respect to professors and other authority figures who may lead him down false and infidel paths. The *fatwas* make clear that the Cultural Department at the Saudi Embassy in Washington serves as a religious guide to Saudi students ensuring that they adhere to the strict requirements of Islam and avoid the temptations of an infidel society [Document No. 52]. According to these *fatwas*, taking one's family abroad when one intends to study is strongly discouraged since this entails exposing them to moral and spiritual perils. The Saudi embassy discourages travel with families purely for purposes of tourism due to the moral pitfalls invariably resulting from contacts with infidels on their home turf. Thankfully, the *fatwas* conclude, Muslim lands now contain ample resorts and recreational facilities that offer excellent alternatives to tourism among unbelievers [Document No. 52].

These replies are based on the dualistic outlook of the extremist Wahhabi worldview, namely that there exist two antagonistic realms or abodes that can never be reconciled: *Dar al-Islam* and *Dar al-Harb* (also called *Dar al-Kufr*). When a Muslim is in the latter, the realm of war, also called the realm of the infidels, he or she must behave as if on a mission behind enemy lines. Either they are there to acquire new knowledge and make money that can later be employed in the *jihad* against the infidels, or they are there to proselytize the infidels until at least some convert to Islam. Any other reason for lingering among the unbelievers in their lands is illegitimate, and a true Muslim must exit as quickly as possible. This is made abundantly clear in the publication [Document No. 45] found at the King Fahd-funded Islamic Center of Washington, D.C., whose title in translation is *Loyalty and Dissociation in Islam*, which warns against imitating infidels, living among them, helping them in any way, or partaking of their festivities and celebrations. This publication of the Ibn Taymiya Library in Saudi Arabia states,

“[T]he one who leaves the land of the Muslims to live in the land of War (non-Muslims), he has disobeyed Allah, and the leader of the Muslims....” [Document No. 45]

At times, the Saudi publications read like old Soviet propaganda tracts. One Wahhabi writer from Riyadh finds nothing but fault with American rights to free speech and press. The author, whose book [Document No. 5] was published by Riyadh's Book World House and was collected at the Saudi crown-financed King Fahd Mosque in Los Angeles, purports to detect a deliberate bias of news and information in the American

print media that in turn cultivates prepackaged opinions for the ordinary American citizen. He says this is particularly true of a society in which money plays the all-important role in determining the intricate power configurations that influence the media. He points to the leading financial establishments—the “houses of capital”—that supposedly control the largest newspapers, which are in turn regularly imitated by the smaller and less influential ones. The result is a steady diet of bland and misleading information that he deems a form of “elective censorship.” It produces sameness in all that is printed and reported, and conceals the truth from the individual reader, who tends to place blind trust in everything the American media has to offer. The “proof” he presents to clinch his case is the image that Americans have of Israel:

“[T]hose coming from the United States tell us that the conviction of some Americans, who are from the educated class, would make a person feel sorry for them. They believe that Israel is a democratic and civilized country, and that it wants peace and stability; it welcomes the Jewish refugees escaping the hell of communism....As for millions of Palestinians who were driven out by Israel, the American citizen knows nothing about them.” [Document No. 5]

A Saudi Arabian elementary school textbook [Document No. 43], published by the Ministry of Education and collected from the King Fahd-supported Islamic Center in Washington, D.C., misses no opportunity to denounce America for its treatment of African Americans. One example, under the heading “The Assassination of Good Conscience,” asks rhetorically: “Where is good conscience? When in America blacks are treated with harshness and meanness, to the point of being killed openly on the streets?”

Invariably when Saudi writings attack America, they also attack democracy. Wahhabi writers feel particularly outraged by a system premised on the assumption that an entity other than God—the people—can make laws for men and women to live by. In fact, all systems and political ideologies outside the bounds of a strictly Islamist theocracy, whether they are democracy, socialism, capitalism, nationalism, or any other, are rejected as products of infidel minds and therefore against God and his laws. Islamists of all stripes see civil law and the concept of the separation of religion and state, both hallmarks of western democracies, as highly offensive. The Christian dictum of giving to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s, is utterly alien. Wahhabis reject the idea of distinguishing the realms of religion and politics. To them, the two are fused. In the Wahhabi worldview, the human agency in interpreting divine will goes unacknowledged and Islamic rule is equated with God’s reign.

The entire concept of a civil or positive man-made set of laws subject to majority approval by an elected legislature is illegitimate and unacceptable because, to Wahhabis, this infringes on God’s undisputed sovereignty and lordship over creation. The notion of God’s respect for the freedom of the individual human person who bears full responsibility for his or her decisions and actions is utterly missing from this thinking.⁴⁷

The Wahhabis are concerned about how fast-paced political changes around them will impact their world. One book [Document No. 1] published in Riyadh by the Al-Nahawi Printing House with copies collected from the Abu Bakr Mosque in San Diego, focuses specifically on what it sees as the shortcomings of democracy. Entitled *Consultation, not Democracy*, it asserts that the concept of *shura* (consultation) in Islam is the proper, religiously acceptable alternative to western-style democracy.

The book maintains that, following the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, “it seemed to people that America was the only power in control.” Then the virtues of democracy began to be sung openly by America and her allies as if they were the incorruptible truth, and “quite a few of our Muslim speakers started calling people to democracy.” At that point, writes Riyadh-based author Dr. Adnan ‘Ali Reda Al-Nahawi, “we said what we believed in after studying, research and reflection” [Document No. 1].

What they believe in, according to the author, is an uncompromising denunciation of democracy and all associated with it. Democracy is seen as part of the western cultural invasion of the Islamic world, an invasion that included nationalism, socialism, the liberation of women, the separation of mosque and state, science and technology, as well as military aggression and occupation. Al-Nahawi writes that there is little difference between democracy and dictatorship when it comes to what he terms their “scandals.” “The competition between democracy and dictatorship is in the field of scandal and crime, not in that of reform and good deeds.” He writes with passion about crime as a rampant feature of democratic societies:

“Today, crime spreads in the democratic world to such an extent that it is terrifying both the newborn and the very old. Examples encompass sex crimes, homicides, theft, betrayal, entrapment, and conspiracies...! Satan and his soldiers have found a home for themselves there...and anxiety, worry, fear, terror, sickness, and death have become prevalent. Democracy is in need of someone to save it from itself.” [Document No. 1]

He asserts that democracy first entered the lands of Islam with invading enemy armies. Then republics and representative assemblies were established in the name of democracy only to collapse and be replaced by the authoritarian regimes now in control of most Muslim countries. He asserts that democracy served as the tool “for the removal of the power of Islam from society, from people’s chests, their hearts, and their minds. Democracy pushed forth its deadly principles through a thorough plan, under the protection of the democratic system....” The “deadly principles” of democracy used to undermine Islam include the slogan “Religion belongs to God, and the nation is for everyone,” which anchors an infernal separation between religion and everyday life, including politics. The equality preached between men and women leads to the removal of a woman’s veil, then her clothes, and finally her modesty. The resulting intermixing of the sexes, declares the author, has made even animals and inanimate matter ashamed of what the children of Adam have done. “People’s power” and “people’s rule”

guarantee the inevitable loss of those people. Majority opinion leads to ignorance and arrogance in that majority, and hence to its downfall. When civil law and the separation of religion and state is promoted, all religion, knowledge, and values are abandoned.

This Riyadh publication also teaches San Diego mosque-goers:

“[Democracy is] responsible for all the horrible wars....the number of wars it started in the 20th century alone is more than 130 wars with more than 120 million people dead; not counting victims of poverty, hunger and disease.” [Document No. 1]

San Diego mosque-goers are then told how democracy plundered many nations’ wealth, and how it spread “ignorance, moral decadence, and drugs.” Democracy is not vindicated, writes the Saudi author, by “the crumbs” it gives back as aid to those nations whose treasures it has stolen. “It is possible that the number of the victims of democracy exceeds the number of the victims of all previous wars in human history” [Document No. 1].

In a distortion of history, democracy is made responsible for both world wars. It is also blamed for “driving out the people of a whole nation from the land of Palestine and replacing them with people who have no relation to Palestine, neither historical, nor religious, nor by origin.” And worst of all, these fruits of democracy are labeled “justice and international law” [Document No. 1].

Anti-democracy indoctrination is drilled into the minds of young Saudi students and it is propagated among Muslim emigrant communities throughout America. The Saudi Ministry of Education published a text for third-year high school students, collected from the Al-Farouq Mosque in Houston, that asserts straying from Allah’s path is associated with “the political, economic, and social persecutions which are befalling all people on earth under attractive names like democracy, socialism, justice, freedom, brotherhood, and equality” [Document No. 29]. Among the “destructive principles” mentioned in the *Islamic Guidelines to Reform the Individual and the Society*, published by the Saudi-based Jum’ah Electronic Printing House and gathered from the Islamic Society of Greater Houston, are dictatorship and democracy because they give the right of law-making to entities other than Allah. Democracy is particularly reprehensible because it maintains that “government and religion should be separate, and that there is no politics in Islam” [Document No. 25]. According to this Saudi publication, support for democracy is among those things that “nullify one’s Islam” [Document No. 25].

The Wahhabis insist that Muslims are compelled to reject democracy and create Islamic alternatives. This theme runs through a work published in English by the International Islamic Publishing House in Saudi Arabia and apparently intended for Muslims living in the United States. Copies of this book were collected at the Al-Farouq Mosque in Houston, Texas. Chapter 2, of *To Be a Muslim* [Document No. 31], “The Compulsory Nature of Islamic Activism,” asserts that all available political and economic systems and manmade laws are fundamentally anti-Islamic and “operate functionally to

deny the wisdom of Allah on earth.” The book states that the responsibility to change these systems is “binding in principle, in law, in self-defense, in community and as a sacred obligation of *jihad*.” It is compulsory for every Muslim to establish an Islamic society “in every country on earth and to restore the Islamic way of life taught by all the prophets.” This obligation must occur according to Islamic *shari’a* law because “Muslim countries have been ruled by manmade systems with elements borrowed from the Romans, Chinese, French, and many other cultures....This overlay of secular cultures makes it all the more necessary to abolish all traces of such primitive life (*jahiliyya*) and to reinforce the understanding and application of the eternal and universal Islamic *deen* [religion] until it becomes the ruling power throughout the world.” [Document No. 31] This leaves no common ground between this conception of Islam and all other existing political systems and ideologies, including democracy.

Wahhabis and related Islamist strands view life as a perpetual struggle between their beliefs and everything around them. This all-pervading struggle includes politics. As one publication [Document No. 10] by the Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences in America, formerly a unit of the government-supported and financed Imam Muhammed Ibn Saud Islamic University in Riyadh, explains,

“[T]he unavoidable struggle between the ‘wounded’ Islamic current and the other three opposing currents [nationalism, socialism, and democracy] took place, and the temporary victory was on the side of these opposing currents, with victory alternating between all three.” [Document No. 10]

The Islamic *umma* (worldwide community) was consequently “ripped to pieces for a while” and nearly lost its identity:

“Then Allah decreed for this *umma* to awaken from its coma, to wake up from its sleep, the Islamic awakening grew until it became the major power and the dominant current on the Arabic street politically and intellectually.” [Document No. 10]

This awakening routed three opposing currents: “The radicalism of the nationalists evaporated, the leftists withdrew, and the claims of the liberals were exposed.” Most importantly, “the Islamic thought started reclaiming its place in the minds and consciousness of the youth” [Document No. 10].

The Saudi government also gives instructions to Muslims traveling or residing in the open and democratic societies of the West on ways to insulate themselves from contamination by the infidel societies. The Saudi Arabian Embassy in Washington distributed, for example, *fatwas* [Document No. 44], issued by the Saudi Permanent Committee for Scientific Research and the Issuing of *Fatwas*, instructing mosque-goers that the struggle with the enemy is continuous and pervasive, and that they are particularly vulnerable when away from home in lands where systems of unbelief like democracy reign supreme.

In another collection distributed by the Saudi Embassy in Washington, through its Cultural Department, a warning is issued in a publication printed by the Saudi Arabian Air Force Publishing House regarding insurance companies in the West. Since insurance policies seek to maximize the gains of one party at the other's expense, such as imposing penalties on the insured or receiving back more than one initially paid to the company, they are considered a type of gambling and are prohibited by Islam. But, if in certain countries a person cannot avoid insurance, then the Muslim must consider this a repressive imposition for which he or she will be recompensed at the Day of Judgment [Document No 52].

A publication [Document No. 48] by the formerly Saudi government-sponsored Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences in America, collected at a mosque in Washington, D.C., tackles the issue of freedom and purports to show that religious freedom is un-Islamic:

“It is not a secret that independence with that connotation [independence from religion] is disobedience to Allah, and that its ruling is either denial of Allah’s religion if it came from denying his laws and being too proud to accept it, or disobedience if it came from an overpowering desire while maintaining belief and acceptanceThe freedom to which the enemies of the religious laws call us requires a coup against Islam and a revolution against the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh).” [Document No. 48]

Specifically,

“Freedom of thinking, requires permitting the denial of faith, and attacking what is sacred, glorifying falsehood and defending the heretics, finding fault in religion and letting loose the ideas and pens to write of disbelief as one likes, and to put ornaments on sin as one likes.” [Document No. 48]

It continues, whenever a voice protests such practices, the liberals cry out: “You want to take away the freedom of thinking, and arrest the minds of the people and kill in it the potential of innovation?!!”

Free government means to cast aside the law of “the Wisest of the Wise (Allah)” and to permit:

“all kinds of vice and sin, give protection to those who left their religion, adopting systems and laws from east to west, the striving of its media to lure its people into sin from his religion.” [Document No. 48]

Lastly, individual freedom means license to engage in “rebellion against legal responsibilities, being creative in the display of vice, committing what is forbidden, and belittling all sacred values.” If this is the freedom so highly praised in democratic circles, concludes the Saudi author, then,

“I am the first to reject it [freedom] and take it as an enemy, and seek closeness to Allah through denying it and its propagators...we disbelieve in you and enmity and hate is between us, until you believe in Allah alone.” [Document No. 48]

Another document [Document No. 11] by the Institute of Islamic Sciences in America, collected at the Muslim community center in Chicago, expresses furious resentment about infidel leaders coming to Muslim countries and telling them to alter their laws and system of government. Its example is Sudan at the height of its civil war between the Arab and Muslim north and the African and Christian/animist south. Then-U.S. president Jimmy Carter, “a missionary and a priest,” went to Khartoum and asked to meet with the Islamic Front leaders to mediate the dispute over the fate of the south. “And do you know the plan that this man carried with him when he met the representatives of the Islamic Front?” exclaims the author. “He asked them to give up the application of Islamic *shari’a* in Sudan. In return he would commit himself to solving the problem in the south, and convince the rebels to end their rebellion and become law abiding” [Document No. 11].

To Saudi Wahhabis, human rights are merely another weapon in the infidels’ arsenal used to attack and undermine Islam. A tract of the House of Science in Riyadh [Document No. 21], collected from Dar Al Hijra Islamic Center, Falls Church, Virginia, asserts that no one who upholds the banner of human rights has any sympathy or respect for Islam. When people speak of a “world conscience,” they are really referring to the conscience of Christians, Jews, and communists, and “this is a dead conscience when it comes to the Muslim human”:

“If twenty American, British, or French spies were killed or imprisoned, they will make such a big deal about it, the whole world would unite for their human rights, for civility and for civilized international laws...On the other hand you may exterminate a whole Muslim nation...by the hands of the Russian, or a hired ruler, or the Jews and Christians....Here the European conscience goes into deep sleep.” [Document No. 21]

The Saudi text maintains that the West exports everything to the Muslim world, “planes, clothes destructive currents and ideas, pregnancy pills (birth control pills)... everything except things that are useful in a civilized and continuous way.” But they are not prepared to “export to us the principles of freedom they speak so much about....They

are not ready to export advanced technologies....They are not ready to give us the nuclear bomb...to face Israel and India" [Document No. 21].

Instead, they establish military dictatorships through coups and sell Muslims only select products of advanced technologies so that the recipients may remain consumers of their goods:

“In the face of these attempts by the enemy forces to weaken us materially and morally so that we either die as losers, or live humiliated...it is essential for us to look to our material and moral rights...Rights can not be granted; they are established!”
[Document No. 21]

V. INFIDEL CONSPIRACIES

Wahhabi conspiracy theories alternately finger as scheming villains Christians and Jews, Westerners, colonialists, missionaries, Orientalists, and the United States. Muslims are invariably portrayed in these theories as weak or unwitting victims of the dark infidel forces and their wily plots. Undeniably, conspiracies happen with frequency throughout history. But the Wahhabis seem to reduce the entire march of history, along with the intricate relations among nations, peoples and cultures, to a series of sinister designs and intrigues concocted by a cabal of conniving infidels.

Shortly after the Gulf War when Saudi Arabia allowed American soldiers to be based on its soil, writings and eventually movements began to emerge that saw this as an ominous drive to de-Islamize Arabia. Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda fanatics turned against America and the West because of that perceived provocation. What had always been referred to broadly as Christian missionaries aiming to penetrate the Islamic world at large now suddenly became personal for the Wahhabis, and the threat they faced loomed much closer to home.

In a book [Document No. 6] published by the Ascension Printing House in Saudi Arabia and distributed to a number of mosques in the United States including the King Fahd Mosque in Los Angeles, California, which was built with \$8 million in direct donations from Saudi King Fahd and his son⁴⁸, the issue of Christian missionary activity is linked to a continuation of the Crusades. The Wahhabi text reads:

“He is wrong who thinks that the Crusaders’ hate for Islam and the Muslims was over with at the end of the Crusades; it remains with us even today if only in a different form from that which it had before. Converting Muslims into Christians is one of the most obvious faces of this malicious movement, which started spreading in some Muslim countries to finally uproot Islam from its people.”[Document No. 6]

Christian missionaries today, adds the Saudi text, are simply continuing what the Crusades of the medieval period had attempted and failed at, namely a direct assault on the two holiest mosques in Islam. This latest attack being waged by Christian missionaries employs an insidious indirect approach that is both flexible and appealing. The picture painted by this Saudi author is that the forces of unbelief are engaged in a global and concerted effort to target not only the two holy places of Mecca and Medina, but Islamic beliefs, laws, history, language, culture, and thought—indeed the Muslims themselves. This targeting is presumably part of a vast and coordinated plot, according to the book found in the Saudi King’s mosque in Los Angeles:

“It is no secret that all these challenges are working very diligently together under one plan, and with the help of the forces of evil and misguidance. They recruited every vile person who left his religion, every big mouth; they hired even

questionable writers; they supported every sect which split from Islam with money and politics all over the world.”
[Document No. 6]

For an entire century, continues the Wahhabi author, Muslims were subjected to the military aggression of European imperialism “under the direction of international Zionism.” The result was the loss of Palestine, several wars with Israel “in which three Muslim generations perished,” and a host of other wars such as the one in the Western Sahara south of Morocco, the Gulf War, the occupation of Afghanistan, not to mention what went on in the West Bank, Gaza, the Golan Heights, southern Lebanon, Sabra and Shatila, and the Bekaa valley [Document No. 6].

For Muslims living in countries with a predominantly Christian population, the matter of Christian preaching that aims at conversion is a very urgent one. This too is regarded as part of a well-planned conspiracy. A Muslim living in the Philippines asked the Saudi state religious official, the late Grand Mufti Bin Baz, about ways to confront Christian proselytism including the offering of money and other aid to the Muslim community in return for allowing preachers to address the assembled Muslims once a week. The Cultural Department of the Saudi Arabian Embassy distributed Bin Baz’s answers in the United States in a document [Document No. 52] compiled by the Saudi Arabian Airforce publishing house. He is adamant in warning to stay clear of the enemies of Allah and beware of their tricks “because they are destined for the fires of Hell, while the Muslims are invited to paradise.” Muslims, says Bin Baz in a *fatwa* entitled “*How to Face Christian Conversion,*” copies of which were retrieved from several American mosques, would do well to be patient until assistance comes from safe Muslim sources, not from the enemy. Those who are custodians over the Muslims must do their utmost to help the community in its time of need and not allow it to turn to the enemy for any support. They must write to wealthy Muslims abroad explaining their plight and requesting help. “The enemies of the Muslims are waiting for any opportunity to lead them to the eternal fires.” [Document No. 52]

In a polemic against Arab nationalism compiled by the General Presidency for Managing Research and Religious Edicts in Saudi Arabia and gathered from the Richardson Mosque in Dallas, Texas, Bin Baz labels this call to Arab nationalism a conspiracy “created by westerners and Christians to fight Islam and to destroy it in its own home” [Document No. 20]. He emphasizes that all calls to Arab nationalism or any other kind of nationalism are false and aim to divide Muslims instead of uniting them. He describes them as “an apparent aberration, a flagrant ignorance, and a malicious plan against Islam and its people” [Document No. 20].

For those who pioneered Arab nationalism, namely the Arab Christians, harsh words are reserved. Quoting an Egyptian Islamist named Sahykh Mohammad Al-Ghazzali on the Christian champions of nationalism among the Arabs, the official Saudi religious *fatwa* instructs Texas mosque-goers:

“What are these people? They are neither Arabs nor foreigners, neither Russians nor Americans!! They are clones with strange features and loud screaming, which have sickened this land as the results of colonization and what it did; it left its seeds in their feelings and thoughts. They are as the tradition said, from our skin and speak with our tongues, but they are enemies to our history and civilization, and a burden in our struggle and rise, helpers for the enemies of our religion who do not believe in its right to exist. These people who suddenly showed up and their noise filled the valley like the frogs fill the night with their croaking. We must uncover the mask on their faces, so that this nation can know their reality.” [Document No. 20]

Thus the Christians in Arab countries are vilified as a fifth column lurking in the midst of the Islamic *umma* (community) ever ready to propagate poisonous ideas like nationalism in order to aid the foreign infidels against the Muslims. Islam is the primary enemy of imperialism because “it is the source of fierce resistance and the spirit of selfless struggle which exhausted the attackers and foiled their designs.” For this reason imperialism began,

“weaving its web around it to kill it...they innovated narrow nationalism and brought it forth through many means from the structure of this religion. When colonization fell in the battle they secretly inserted their followers under the garb of Arab nationalism, they provided them with many slogans to recruit the sincere Arabs in this field so that they can win against Islam through a different way....It is better to call those people the followers of Hebrew nationalism, not Arab! Do not they work for the interest of the Israeli colonizer?” [Document No. 20]

As Saudi Arabia’s leading religious authority for many years, Sheik Bin Baz’s penchant for the conspiratorial is deeply disconcerting. His writings, particularly his *fatwas*, which continue to circulate in American mosques in publications by the government of Saudi Arabia, miss no opportunity to cast non-Muslims in the worst possible light, and repeatedly advise Muslims to avoid any dealings with them. The Saudi *fatwa* [Document No.20] distributed in the Texas mosque states that Muslims, for example, “should not be recruited into the army of the *mushrikeen* (polytheists and idolators) whether they are Arabs or non-Arabs, because the unbeliever is the enemy of the believer.” Allah has made clear, writes the Saudi religious authority, “that the believers are each other’s protectors, and the unbelievers are each other’s protectors.” Bin Baz’s world is one in which Islam’s enemies are continuously plotting against it. The *fatwa* continues, “Allah’s enemies know that the Muslims do not need them if they held tight to Allah and were truthful in his worship because victory is in his and not in anyone else’s hands.” The invading imperialists, asserts Bin Baz with alarm, have stationed their armies in several Arab states and brought about their humiliation.

Meanwhile, other infidel armies, warns the Saudi *fatwa*, are poised for attack all around the borders of Islam [Document No. 20].

In the discourse about infidel plots and conspiracies, Jews are singled out for special attention. In one Saudi-Wahhabi tract [Document No. 4] published by the Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences in America, formerly an outpost of the Imam Muhammed Ibn Saud Islamic University in Riyadh, copies of which were gathered from the Abu Bakr Mosque in San Diego, California, mention is made of the anti-Semitic forgery from the nineteenth century by the tsarist secret police, namely *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. This discredited document is seeing a revival in Arab outlets as if it were a reliable historical source. One of contemporary Islamism's pillars, the Egyptian Sayyid Qutb, in his book *Ma'rakatuna ma'a al-Yahud* (Our Battle with the Jews), writes: "With their spite and deceit, the Jews are still misleading this *umma* [Islamic community], and distancing her away from her Koran in order that she may not draw her sharp weapons and her abundant ammunitions from it...[The Jews'] aim is clearly revealed by the *Protocols [of the Elders of Zion]*. The Jews are behind materialism, bestiality, the destruction of the family and the dissolution of society. Principal among them are Marx, Freud, Durkheim and the Jew [*sic*] Jean-Paul Sartre."⁴⁹

The Saudi tract found in San Diego insists the Jews have been conniving and scheming against Islam. The publication then, echoing Qutb, outlines this vast Jewish conspiracy to destroy Islam. Jews and Crusaders cooperated in introducing radical ideas and sects into *Dar Al-Islam*. "Abd Alla bin Saba was a Jew who embraced Islam, so that he could corrupt it, and the callers to atheism and its leaders today are all Jews trying to corrupt the world: The communist Karl Marx is a "Jew", Freud is a "Jew." Durkheim is a "Jew." These are the leaders of deviant thought in economics, morality, and sociology. Their ideas influenced all human societies especially Muslim society." It is "international Jewry" therefore that "instigated in the Islamic world the shredding of Arabism and Islam, to prevent the unity and to deepen the regional divisions." Evidence for this diabolical assault is gleaned from *The Protocols*: "The Jews confess to this in their *Protocols*; their Ninth Protocol says 'we have cheated the upcoming generation of illiterate and made them corrupt and useless with what we knew to be false principles and theories we taught them.'" These "enemies of Allah" spew forth their poison and spread their confusion with the help of "agents from among the Muslims." Jews and imperialists work jointly on several coordinated fronts to wreak havoc in the minds and hearts of unsuspecting Muslims "so that they can maintain their power and control in the land of the Muslims, so that with their satanic soldiers, they can enjoy the wealth of the Muslim countries and work to steal it" [Document No. 4].

Elementary school students in Saudi Arabia are taught that Jews, in association with imperialist forces, painstakingly planned the creation of the state of Israel. One text [Document No. 34] from the Saudi General Presidency for Teaching Girls, which was gathered from the Islamic Center of America in East Orange, New Jersey, explains that this "thorn" in the side of the Muslim nations was established by imperialists using "all the means of treachery and betrayal" when Balfour "gave the Jews a disastrous promise to make Palestine their national country" [Document No. 34].

Conspiracies as imagined by the Wahhabis display a mix of political, material, and religious motives, all designed to subvert Islam and Muslims. A recurrent paradigm for the classic conspiracy is one in which the unbelievers have been working to undo Islam ever since the dawn of that religion. One such account [Document No. 47] from the Saudi-based Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences in America, collected at Al-Islam Mosque in Washington, D.C., narrates as follows:

“This has been occurring since the appearance of Islam until the present time, for the unbelievers differ [among themselves] in faith, belief, religion and passion, and they continuously plot against Islam. Among their schemes is the toppling of the Muslims in matters of belief, worship, festivals and conduct. This is why we find more often than not, division in the nation due to schemes of the unbelievers....They [the unbelievers] had participated either in its propagation, or in distracting the Muslims who were easily tempted and gullible, some Muslims were leaders while other were just followers.” [Document No. 47]

The clearest sign of the alleged conspiracy is the effort expended by the unbelievers to get the Muslims to imitate them.

“Surely the unbelievers and their helpers plot against the Muslims by causing them to imitate them (the unbelievers). This is more the case now than before.” [Document No. 47]

According to another source [Document No. 48] from the Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences and collected from the Al-Islam mosque in Washington, D.C., and the Muslim Community Center in Chicago, Illinois, these anti-Islamic conspiracies are nothing less than “the whisperings of devils”: “The episodes of hate and conspiracy against this religion will not stop as long as there is whispering Satan instigating his supporters among men to listen to him and obey him and take him as their protector in place of Allah.” The Saudi-Wahhabi tract warns believers: “You will hear lots of sayings that are revealed by devils to their loyal followers so that they can use them to argue against you; and if you obey them, then you become polytheists and infidels.” The upshot of what the devils whisper to their servants, explains the source, is that Islam does not enjoy the following of the majority and that its precepts throughout history have proven to be an absolute failure. Applying Islam and the Islamic *shari'a* therefore have led the *umma* [Muslim community] to utter ruin and have taken it back to the Dark Ages. The conclusion of all this is to say to Muslims, renounce your faith and “turn(ing) your faces towards your western masters and your communist comrades, they have what you desire, and in their systems you find what you are looking for.” Not to comply will earn the believers the epithets “backward,” “terrorist,” “extremist,” or “retarded.” The sword of sectarian strife and the fragmentation of the *umma* will hang over the heads of all those who cling to their faith [Document No. 48].

Specific instances of Western connivance against Islam and Muslims are often mentioned in Wahhabi tirades. Favorite gripes are presented in a source [Document No. 21] published by the House of Science in Riyadh and found in Dar Al Hijra Islamic Center in Falls Church, Virginia. They include theories that: Islamic minorities are “stripped of their human rights in Thailand, the Philippines, and Taiwan...The massacre of Muslims in the Philippines and the support of Europe and America to its butcher Marcus is a well known thing.” In Africa also Islamic minorities “have no equal rights, no right of Islamic education, no rights to live in peace, to own Islamic books, or to form boards to defend their stolen human rights...all is guarded by Europe and America.” Four large Islamic countries—Pakistan and Indonesia in Asia and Egypt and Nigeria in Africa—are singled out for scrutiny. After separating from India, Pakistan was “tied to the West through a treaty with America,” and then it was saddled with military dictatorships. “It was threatened openly when it announced that it is about to enter the nuclear field,” while at the same time India and Israel were allowed to acquire that capability “without any resistance.” Indonesia was taken over by the communists under Sukarno, but later when they “became oppressors” they were brought down and “replaced by Christian missionaries who are supported by America, Europe, and the Vatican.” They put a program “to convert this Muslim country to Christianity within fifty years.” They converted “tens of millions of the poor, sick, and ignorant Indonesians...They convert to fulfill their needs, to treat their sick, and teach their children in missionary schools, while the Muslims fill the bank coffers of America, Europe, and the Jews!” In Africa the Christians attempted to tear apart Nigeria, “the biggest African Muslim country.” When this failed, they set upon it with their “armies of Christians” and severed its relations with the Islamic world so that it can be swallowed more easily [Document No. 21].

Another line of conspiratorial reasoning has to do with the area of scholarship, in particular with Orientalism. According to a lecture given at a university in Riyadh by a visiting assistant professor from the University of Cairo and subsequently published [Document No. 22] by the Islamic Awareness Division under the Administration of Religious Affairs of the Saudi government, Christians, Jews, and assorted Orientalists brainstorm together to undermine and distort Islam, and they are often aided by Muslims who studied under these malicious teachers and became their loyal and obedient pupils. This lecture was printed at the expense of the Saudi Ministry of Defense and Aviation with the intent of being “distributed to the cultured and educated among the Saudi Armed Forces so that they can benefit from it if Allah so wills, and Allah is the ultimate objective.” Copies of it were collected at Dar Al Hijra in Falls Church, Virginia. The Wahhabi text asserts that in the past under paganism people used to worship rocks and trees; today, with the coming of materialism and atheism, whether communist or Western, people have taken to the worship of men and ideas. It is a new age of ignorance (*Jahiliyya*) and a new polytheism that are rearing their ugly heads.

The Saudi government-printed and -distributed lecture makes the claim that the leading figures of the European Renaissance copied from the Muslims what he terms “the experimental Islamic method of looking unto material existence, without taking the

beliefs that resulted from that method. On the contrary they fiercely fought the Islamic beliefs and thought. They used the results of applying the experimental method in an attempt to finish Islam as belief and living system....” These supposed European innovating pioneers actually borrowed from the Muslims what they had been exposed to during their contacts with the high Islamic civilization in Andalusia and throughout the Crusades as well as what they learned through commercial transactions. They applied the results of their practical implementation of this Islamic methodology to achieve technological advances and breakthroughs in new inventions that they then used to bolster the imperialist enterprise of dominating and subduing the Muslims. Unfortunately, laments the speaker from Cairo, some misguided Muslims have rationalized their position of subservience to the European West as something acceptable “since these same Europeans at one time were inspired by, and became followers of, the creative achievements of our Muslim forefathers.” They then take the further unwarranted step of regarding their admiration for the West’s ideas and accomplishments as the necessary springboard toward greater progress in their own societies. But Islam, insists the lecturer, never sanctioned these alien ideas and practices as the standards for any such presumed progress. “All the currents, schools, and thought systems that do not belong to Islam, and do not flow from its spirits, you cannot in any way call that Islam” [Document No. 22].

The assault on what are often referred to as “the Orientalists” continues in a text [Document No. 10] from the Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences in America. They are viewed as the latest manifestation of the West’s latent hostility toward Islam. Since Wahhabis and other Islamists read the history of Islam as one prolonged struggle against the scheming forces of infidelity, they also recognize the occasional change of tactics to which the enemy resorts. “Plenty are the battles which Islam fought throughout its long centuries, and is still fighting. As the battles increased, the weapons varied, the fronts of the enemies of this religion changed and their tricks to destroy the building of this religion varied.” In recent times the primary weapon used by the invading Western unbelievers has been that of ideas. “The Orientalists used the weapon of the ‘ideas’ with wickedness and malice. They tried to do so by discrediting Islam historically, politically, and legally.” The external invasion of ideas did not meet with much success initially, and so the unbelievers searched for ways to instigate a similar assault on Islam “from the inside.” “Through some of its children who can’t carry Islamic names and an Arabic identification card, so that they can plant in the youth of this nation the values of the European civilization, its philosophies, beliefs, thoughts, and love for its laws.” This is the so-called “invasion from within” on which Wahhabi writers often dwell. Once the battle was moved to within the walls of *Dar Al-Islam*, “We started hearing things like ‘leftist Islam’ and ‘democratic Islam’....” Then the “enlightened” Muslims began to propagate their thoughts with a view to “containing Islam intellectually, historically and legally.” The outcome was an “intentional falsification of history criticizing thought and history, intentional falsification of Islamic thought, emptying Islamic thought of the contents, while keeping with the form” [Document No. 10].

What the enemies of Islam discovered over the centuries, another Institute source [Document No. 8], gathered from the Saudi King’s mosque in Los Angeles, informs us, is

that the secret weapon of Muslims is their attachment to their holy book, the Koran. So, naturally, “they labored to keep them (Muslims) away from holding on to it and following its guidance.” Both their tongues and their actions have confirmed this, “but what is hidden in their breasts is even greater.”

“They said: ‘As long as this Koran exists, Europe will not be able to control the east, nor will it be safe.’ They also said: ‘When the Koran and Mecca are gone, we will see the Arab on the path of western civilization and away from Muhammed and his book.’ They said: ‘We should use the Koran, which is the best weapon in Islam, against Islam until we finish it completely. We should show the Muslims, that what is true in the Koran is not new, and what is new is not true.’ They said: ‘We should remove the Arabic Koran from their existence, and uproot the Arabic tongue from their tongues, until we have achieved victory over them.’” [Document No. 8]

Self-criticism in Wahhabi writings is rare. When it occurs it is usually in the form of a collective indictment of Muslims for allowing themselves unwittingly to fall prey to the conspiracies of the enemy. This is the message of one Wahhabi work [Document No. 7], published jointly by the Riyadh-based International House for Islamic Books and the International Institute of Islamic Thought, collected from the King Fahd Mosque in Los Angeles. Muslims, it is argued, were caught unawares by the snares of the unbelievers because the *umma* or Islamic community was somehow distracted from attending to its Islamic priorities. “That was the condition of the Muslim nation, which took a nap in the lap of imitation, and fell asleep dreaming of a glorious past.” Factions and divisions resulted and the learned scholars of Islamic jurisprudence busied themselves with their individual quests for what is best for the *umma* as a whole. Anyone gazing upon the heritage of this *umma* would be “shocked to know that such dead offspring can come from such living and enlightened ancestors.” With the arrival of the European enlightenment the Muslim world was discovered to be in a deplorable state: faith was shaken, certainty was replaced by doubt, deviance had become the rule instead of the exception, *bid’a* (innovations) were rampant, sound thinking was absent, the Sunna was in eclipse, and *fiqh* (authoritative jurisprudence and interpretation) was abandoned. This opportunity “attracted those who wanted to harm this nation. The Westerners took advantage of this opportunity: they occupied the land, held the reins of the people, and destroyed what was left of that which makes up this nation’s character, until we reached the state we are in today of weakness and need.”

Matters are now firmly in the hands of the enemies of Islam who decide the *umma*’s fate, and “we have to go to them, to find solutions to problems we created and formed with our own hands.” At this point the full import of the conspiracy comes to light: “the unbelieving colonizer tried to put the Islamic education and the Arabic education in the shadow, clearing the arena for his ideas and principles.” The enemy “painted for the youth of this nation fields of flowers, but this youth reaped only thorns and tasted only bitterness.” After trying every color and stripe of thought—communism,

socialism, nationalism, democracy, etc.—with disastrous consequences, “the youth realized that Islam alone is capable of solving the nation’s problems, to wake it from its slumber, to destroy the cause of its backwardness.” In the end, the proposed solution is not merely a return to any form of Islam according to the Saudi text; it is only the Wahhabi variety that represents the true and pure Islam guaranteed to elevate the *umma* from its lethargy and stagnation [Document No. 7].

Education is viewed by the Wahhabis as the most fertile field for furthering conspiracies against the Islamic community. This thesis is put forward in an article entitled “*Cultural Subversion through Education*,” part of a collection of articles [Document No. 19] gathered from the Richardson Mosque in Dallas, which were published by the Saudi-established Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences Research Center. The article explains how Western educational institutions established African, Asian, and Caribbean studies departments designed to promote new “scholars” and “experts” on these regions, and assisted by former colonial administrators who were described as “experts on the developing nations.” At the same time, a campaign was launched to reinterpret Muslim aspirations “to conform to what came to be known as the Western tradition.” Thus Western culture and values became the standard to follow and the norm to emulate, and most of the newly developing countries “blindly accepted this subordinate position and exposed themselves to some of the world’s worst forms of manipulation.” The Saudi tract adds that students were taught that their countries were underdeveloped because “their social and cultural institutions” were not “conducive to development,” and it was “their own backward forms that resisted the ‘progressive’ influence of colonialism” [Document No.19].

The United States is cited as leading in this conspiracy of ideas against Islam. Ayatollah Khomeini called the U.S. “The Great Satan,” and America is regarded in similar eschatological terms by Wahhabis and other Islamists. America’s dominance in the world rests, among other things as seen earlier in the tract collected from Al-Islam Mosque in Washington, D.C., on the pervasiveness of its reach through education and its ability to influence, if not totally shape, the elites of the developing countries [Document No. 19].

VI. JIHAD IDEOLOGY

The Islamist response to perceived threats has been to advocate some form of *jihād*, or “struggle.” But Wahhabis do not always understand *jihād* as a purely defensive measure. Wahhabis have regarded the early Islamic conquests, by means of which the new religion was disseminated, as a model of obligatory *jihād*, or holy war: It had the ultimate purpose of spreading Islam into the infidel-ruled territory of *Dar Al-Harb*, subjugating them, establishing the rule of Islamic law, *shari’a*, and securing political power and military ascendancy for Muslims.

The Saudi state’s religious authorities promote an us-versus-them mentality among Muslims in order to foster *jihād*, including armed struggle. The government’s Permanent Committee for Scientific Research and the Issuing of *Fatwas* has disseminated “Rulings” [Document No. 2] in American mosques that urge maintaining a “wall of resentment” between Muslims and non-Muslims precisely to enable *jihād*. If the “wall” were to come down through amity there would be no more *jihād*, as the tract makes explicit:

“The effect of this sinful call [interfaith dialogue] is that it erases the differences between Islam and disbelief, between truth and falsehood, good and bad, and it breaks the wall of resentment between Muslims and nonbelievers, so that there is no loyalty and enmity, no more *jihād* and fighting to raise Allah’s word on earth...” [Document No. 2]

Saudi state education teaches children from an early age the virtues of *jihād*. State elementary and high school curricula have been replete with examples of *jihād* indoctrination and many of these same writings are now available to an expanding Muslim audience in America. One example [Document No. 28] is a book for third-year high school students published by the Saudi Ministry of Education that was collected from the Islamic Center of Oakland in California. The text, written with the approval of the Saudi Ministry of Education, teaches students to prepare for *jihād* in the sense of war against Islam’s enemies, and to strive to attain military self-sufficiency:

“To be true Muslims, we must prepare and be ready for *jihād* in Allah’s way. It is the duty of the citizen and the government. The military education is glued to faith and its meaning, and the duty to follow it.” [Document No. 28]

Strength is defined in this textbook in physical, spiritual, and material terms, namely men, beliefs, and the latest advances in military technology:

“Preparing the weapons for war and possessing them; even better than that is building special factories for manufacturing military vehicles, tanks, rockets, planes, and other things needed in modern warfare.” [Document No. 28]

The text then assures students that the Kingdom does not concentrate only on defensive capabilities, but also on building an offensive arsenal to face,

“the dangers of communism and the Crusades from the East and the West, and in the first cause for all the Arabs, the Palestinian cause and the liberation of the Al-Aqsa Mosque; the cause of Muslim Afghanistan and the causes of persecuted Muslim minorities around the world.” [Document No. 28]

Wahhabi writings emphasize the obligatory nature of the purification that *jihad* produces, whether it be in overcoming external enemies, or perfecting the inner self. *To Be a Muslim* [Document No. 31], published by Saudi Arabia’s International Islamic Publishing House and gathered from the Al-Farouq Mosque in Houston, Texas, exhorts Muslims to work for the establishment of “functionally Islamic governments” in all nations:

“[Muslims should work] to form a society that is committed to the Islamic way of thinking and Islamic way of life, which means to form a government that implements principles of justice embodied in the *shari’a*....Until the nations of the world have functionally Islamic governments, every individual who is careless or lazy in working for Islam is sinful.” [Document No. 31]

The Houston mosque-goers are then instructed that change – including political change – is connected directly with *jihad*:

“These responsibilities to change both oneself and the world are binding in principle, in law, in self-defense, in community, and as a sacred obligation of *jihad*....” [Document No. 31]

Quoting from the writings of some of the leading militant ideologues of modern Islamic extremism, the tract instructs Houston mosque-goers to form Islamic opposition groups to face “attacks from every materialistic ideology and system that threatens the existence of Islam as a global paradigm of thought and system of life.” Because, it asserts, many Muslim countries are suffering either under “the oppression of non-believing occupiers,” or under the “brutality of an evil minority, which governs through the iron fist” and serves as the infidels’ local puppets, self-defense has become an imperative duty for all Muslims. To underscore the hardships involved in defending and spreading Islam, the Saudi text cites Muslim Brotherhood radical leader Sayyid Qutb, advocating the building of an organized movement “of sufficient size and quality to carry on every level of Islamic work and also to handle unexpected situations and needs.” The Saudi document quotes Qutb urging Muslims to join such movements,

“[Believers] should realize that their self-value derives only from Islam, without which they are like animals or worse. They must know, however, that true honor can never be achieved unless they continue actively to involve themselves in the Islamic Movement. Those who remain in isolation will be in the Hellfire. Those who join in the Islamic Movement are joining themselves with honorable people.” [Document No. 31]

According to the text, the path of Islamic activism—sometimes a euphemism for *jihad*—“purifies and liberates a person and teaches one to be strong. It is a path of blessings and honor.” [Document No. 31]

Successful Islamic movements should liberate oppressed peoples, including of course Muslims, and the Saudi tract uses the term “*taghut*,” familiar among Islamists, to describe any power or system responsible for such oppression. Usually *taghut* is comprised of “those who worship the false gods of modernist and postmodernist cultures,” or those who adopt capitalist, socialist, communist, and other manmade systems, in whole or in part. Again, the tract appeals to an authoritative voice, the fiery Hasan al-Banna, the extremist founder of the Muslim Brotherhood:

“Our task in general is to stand against the flood of modernist civilization overflowing from the swamp of materialistic and sinful desires. This flood has swept the Muslim nation away from the Prophet’s leadership and Koranic guidance and deprived the world of its guiding light. Western secularism moved into a Muslim world already estranged from its Koranic roots, and delayed its advancement for centuries, and will continue to do so until we drive it from our lands. Moreover, we will not stop at this point, but will pursue this evil force to its own lands, invade its Western heartland, and struggle to overcome it until all the world shouts by the name of the Prophet and the teachings of Islam spread throughout the world. Only then will Muslims achieve their fundamental goal, and there will be no more ‘persecution’ and all religion will be exclusively for Allah....” [Document No. 31]

This passage is a distillation of Islamist extremism: an adversarial posture fueled by a conspiratorial outlook, the candid call to *jihad* against the West, and a recipe for open-ended struggle practiced beyond the borders of *Dar Al-Islam* in the heart of enemy territory.

The same Saudi-Wahhabi book [Document No. 31] also contains a detailed point-by-point plan for Texas Muslims to propagate Islam by following al-Banna’s tactics. These include: the incremental approach in thought and action, the maintenance of a low profile with maximum work and minimum publicity, a clear long-range strategy for

ultimate victory, openness in activity but secrecy in organization, and guarding separation and spiritual autonomy in the midst of a hostile world. On the gradualist approach, al-Banna is quoted explaining the steps in preparing to launch *jihad*. First there is dissemination of concepts and ideas “among the people through oratory and writing, civic action, and other practical methods.” Then comes the delicate task of identifying “good and reliable cadre to bear the burden of initiating and sustaining *jihad*.” And finally there is the execution where, “the stage is set for relentless combat and consistent effort to achieve the goals. This stage will weed out all but the most honest and sincere, both in their own commitment and in their obedience to the chain of command.” Sayyid Qutb is quoted explaining how a vanguard of select Muslims must brave the environment of infidelity while remaining uncontaminated by it. This, says Qutb, will invariably have the psychological effect of a “feeling of isolation” as the Islamist pioneers insert themselves in an alien environment, but never become *of* it [Document No. 31].

The text continues that, once the *da'wa* (Islamic mission) becomes known, those bearing its message will be hated by everyone around them. This is the stage of preparation for declaring the *da'wa* and commencing the *jihad*. Al-Banna is quoted as saying even the so-called noted scholars of Islam will “look down upon your understanding of Islam and will not support your *jihad*.” He predicts that many tribulations await the committed Muslims as they prepare to engage in *jihad* for the sake of Allah. Those who are sincere in their faith and strong will endure to the end and succeed with Allah’s help.

This program for *jihad*, and the discipline required for its meticulous organization and execution, is totalitarian in character. It is also universal in its reach: “...it is active everywhere, in every country and throughout every society.” [Document No. 31] In short, this text from Saudi Arabia is a training manual for *jihad* as it is contemplated by the Wahhabis.

The Saudi Embassy, through its Cultural Department has distributed rulings, one of which was collected from several American mosques, stating that preaching Islam to unbelievers while living among them is a form of *jihad*. The Embassy’s text adds, another type of *jihad* is studying infidel conditions to uncover their corrupt ways and practices and warn other Muslims against admiring them. “The more apparent the depravity of infidelity becomes, the more evident will be the correctness of Islam,” concludes the embassy document [Document No. 52].

Many of these texts stress that *jihad*’s purpose is converting unbelievers to Islam. The *jihad* must continue until they have done so. One tract on *jihad* available in English [Document No. 39] published by the Maktaba Dar-us-Salam, in Riyadh, and collected at the Al-Farouq Mosque in Brooklyn, New York, states unequivocally that such a *jihad* is intended to save infidels from certain punishment in hellfire. Another outcome of *jihad* could be to reduce Christians and Jews, the “People of the Book,” to *dhimmi*⁵⁰ status, which subjugates them, strips them of many civil and political rights, and levies a *jizya* tax on them, described as payment to both humiliate them and provide for their protection. Brooklyn mosque-goers are instructed that Muslims are barred from abandoning the fight

against those Christians and Jews who are polytheists and idolaters, as well as against pagans and idolaters [Document No. 39].

Wahhabi writings advocating *jihad* are also found in a book [Document No. 12] published by the previously Saudi-based Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences, an outpost of the government-supported and -financed Imam Muhammed Ibn Saud Islamic University in Riyadh. Copies of the book were collected from the Muslim Community Center in Chicago. Words about the Afghan *jihad* are directed to Muslims in general. The message is the urgent need for unity in *jihad*, and the person addressed is the generic “Muslim Brother,” who is made to feel guilty for any laxity he may have shown in offering full and unconditional support for *jihad*.

“My Muslim brother, who made the mistake of discouraging others from *jihad* in Allah’s way! Who made the mistake of dividing the Muslims! Who spread discord among the Muslims in the name of fearing for Allah’s religion and protecting it...who made these mistakes without knowing!! Do you find any difference between your position and that of the enemies of Islam in this matter?” [Document No. 12]

The text continues by stating that ever since the *jihad* started in Afghanistan, the enemies of Islam tried to foil it without avail. Consequently, these enemies have tried a new tactic:

“It is a strange way, it is the way of using you and using me, it is the way of using Muslims to finish *jihad*...to destroy their religion...to divide them...Finally, what the enemies wanted started materializing!” [Document No. 12]

“The only solution” therefore is to return with full force and conviction to the *jihad* as a rallying battle cry for all Muslims [Document No. 12].

In a *fatwa* prepared by the Saudi government’s Permanent Committee for Scientific Research and the Issuing of *Fatwas* that was collected from the Saudi crown-supported Islamic Center in Washington, a Muslim inquires whether the transfer of *zakat* (alms-giving) from America to Islamic countries is allowed. The Saudi cleric’s reply:

“Transfer of *zakat* from country to country is allowed when legitimate, such as when those to whom it is transferred are in greater need or in legitimate *jihad*.” [Document No. 44]

Jihad in this passage could be interpreted by fanatics as terrorism – its meaning would depend on which cleric or leader is pronouncing what is “legitimate” under sharia law.

The Wahhabi view of *jihad* is part of a long tradition of extremist ideology and activism. In addition to the early authorities on whom they rely, such as Ibn Hanbal, Ibn Taymiya, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, and of course Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab, they also derive inspiration from modern-day radical Islamist figures as Abul ‘Ala’ Maududi, spiritual leader of Jamiat i-Islami in Pakistan, Hasan al-Banna, founder of the Muslim Brotherhood (the Ikhwan) in 1928 in Egypt, and Sayyid Qutb, who took over its leadership in subsequent years until his execution in 1966 under Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser. The links between these extremist ideologues and Islamic terror was noted in the 9/11 Commission Report:

“But the enemy is not just ‘terrorism,’ some generic evil. This vagueness blurs the strategy. The catastrophic threat at this moment in history is more specific. It is the threat posed by Islamist terrorism – especially a Qaeda network, its affiliates and its ideology.

“...Usama Bin Ladin and other Islamist terrorist leaders draw on a long tradition of extreme intolerance within one stream of Islam (a minority tradition), from at least Ibn Taymiya, through the founders of Wahhabism, through the Muslim Brotherhood, to Sayyid Qutb. That stream is motivated by religion and does not distinguish politics from religion, thus distorting both.”⁵¹

VII. SUPPRESSION OF WOMEN

For Wahhabis and other *salafist* interpretations of Islam, women are considered a perpetual source of potential *fitna* or discord in a social and moral sense. This situation requires constant vigilance on the part of men, especially Islamic authorities, to ensure women are properly segregated by being concealed behind closed doors or beneath veils and chadors.⁵²

Much of the work of the *mutawa'a* (religious police) inside Saudi Arabia involves enforcing these strict prohibitions on women. Saudi Arabia is the only Muslim country that bars women from driving on religious grounds. The extremes to which Saudi Arabia goes was demonstrated in a 2002 tragedy when the Saudi religious police caused fifteen Saudi girls to burn to death after their school in Mecca had caught fire. The *mutawa'a* forced the girls to remain in the burning building rather than run outside without the correct “Islamic” covering. The police were then exonerated by the Saudi government. For Wahhabis, women must be kept in check and under careful scrutiny at all times lest they become occasions—deliberate or unintended—for the enticement of men and thus the sowing of confusion and anarchy in society. It is as though in their very nature women are under continuous suspicion of creating the conditions for unraveling familial and social bonds, and must therefore be hemmed in and watched at all times.

The Saudi government works to indoctrinate American Muslims in these views of women. A book [Document No. 47] published by the Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences in America, formerly an outpost of the state-financed and controlled Imam Muhammed Ibn Saud Islamic University in Riyadh, copies of which were collected from Al-Islam Mosque in Washington, D.C., states:

“Among the more significant illustrations of imitating (the unbelievers), and the most dangerous for Muslims, is the enchantment of women. And this is among the traits of the unbelievers. The intent of this is to bring (them) out of their nature, veil, and modesty so that they could use it to tempt men.... Because women desire the glamour of the materialistic life, they are inclined to imitate, accommodate, and exaggerate in all of this, because women were built to seduce and beautify themselves for men. And men were built to desire a woman when she exposes (herself), and not to desire her when she is modest and covering.” [Document No. 47]

The book adds that, if Muslim women unveil themselves, the whole Muslim community will be in peril:

“If they (Muslim women) leave the principle of modesty and cover, this will be the road and the way to discord (*fitna*), and in most cases if the Muslim nation falls into this trend it will lose its religion and worldly life.” [Document No. 47]

In a collection of *fatwas* [Document No. 52] gathered from several American sources, which was intended specifically for distribution in the United States, the Saudi Embassy in Washington through its Cultural Department actively advocates the veiling of American Muslim women. In this collection, Saudi state religious officials Sheiks Bin Baz and al-‘Athimein treat the matter of women’s modesty: A woman inquires whether she can uncover herself while traveling away from her Muslim country and people, and adds that her mother insists she do so when abroad so as not to attract more attention to herself. “Absolutely not,” replies Bin Baz, who explains that the veil (*Hijab*) is necessary at all times when there are men present. In fact, he stresses, it is more important to cover up before infidel men than Muslim men because the former, being unbelievers, “have no inhibitions or moral restraints whatsoever curbing them from what Allah has prohibited.”

In another of the embassy-propagated *fatwas*, a woman asks whether some leniency could be shown certain women who come to Islamic centers to study the tenets of the faith without wearing the veil. Otherwise, she fears, they might not come at all and thereby be lost to Islam and eventually Christianized or secularized. Sheik al-‘Athimein replies that such women should be urged repeatedly and at every occasion to wear the veil. If they do so, this will be good for everyone. If they refuse repeated exhortations to cover up, then they must be barred from attending [Document No. 52].

The Saudi state disapproves of coeducational intermingling because of the danger of *fitna* whenever girls and boys, or students and teachers from opposite sexes, mix together in close quarters. Saudi Arabia’s embassy, through its Cultural Department, has distributed directives against coeducation pronounced by the Saudi government’s Permanent Committee for Scientific Research and the Issuing of *Fatwas*. The embassy’s publication on these prohibitions was collected from several American sources including from the King Fahd-supported Islamic Center in Washington, D.C. [Document No. 44].

In a collection of *fatwas* entitled *Rulings on Women* [Document No. 23], copies of which were collected from Dar Al Hijra in Falls Church, Virginia, Bin Baz, the Saudi government’s official religious authority, categorically rejects the idea of female teachers instructing adolescent boys:

“A ten-year old boy is considered adolescent because he tends to like women and because, at his age, he is able to get married and can do what men do.” [Document No.23]

Bin Baz adds that any disagreement with his position comes straight from “Satan or some of his deputies,” and this “pleases our enemies and the enemies of Islam.” “It is our obligation to keep this door tightly sealed,” he adds, and prescribes complete segregation of the sexes in every year of study: “[T]hat is how we will safeguard our religion, as well as our boys and girls, and how we will block the path of our enemies.” He also asserts that “it is well known that the male teachers are more patient, able and available in teaching elementary school boys than female teachers” [Document No. 23].

Stringent Saudi attitudes towards women are further justified as thwarting an infidel conspiracy to corrupt Muslim women. One work expressing these concerns [Document No. 33] was published by the Al-Haramain Foundation, run from Saudi Arabia and operating branch offices in the United States until the FBI blocked its assets in February 2004 and found that it was directly funding al Qaeda. (In October 2004, the Saudi government's Ministry for Islamic Affairs dissolved the foundation and, according to a senior Saudi official, its assets will be folded into a new Saudi National Commission for Charitable Work Abroad.) The Al-Haramain publication, written by Sheik Al-Fawzan, was obtained from the Islamic Center of America in East Orange, New Jersey, and asserts that unbelievers aim to destroy Muslim men by corrupting their women:

“The enemies of Islam, or the enemies of humanity today, the unbelievers, hypocrites, and those with sick hearts, are angry because of what the Muslim woman has received by way of honor, prestige, and safety in Islam. These enemies want the woman to become a destructive tool, bait they can use, to hunt down those who have weak faith and uncontrollable desires....” [Document No. 33]

The Al-Fawzan document states that Muslims are misguided if they do not oppose “the people of lowly desires and satanic tendencies” who treat a woman as “uncovered merchandise in front of their eyes,” where they can “enjoy her beauty, or do with her what is even worse.” For this reason they made sure that she “left the home to join the men, to be with them side by side in their jobs” [Document No. 33].

It also instructs East Orange mosque-goers that reprehensible occupations for women include “serving men as a nurse in the hospital, as a flight attendant, as a student or a teacher in a coeducational school, as an actress in the theater, or as a singer and announcer in the different media outlets unveiled and seductive through her voice and appearance.” It expresses fear of Muslim women leaving their homes, forcing their husbands to hire foreign servants to raise their children and organize their domestic affairs, and thereby introducing great evil into the household [Document No. 33].

While the Saudi government closed the foundation that produced this document after the United States revealed direct links to Osama bin Laden, it is important to note that the document's author is Sheik Al-Fawzan whom the Saudi government recently entrusted with the task of “reforming” the educational curricula in Saudi Arabia to produce new textbooks free of expressions of hatred and hostility toward non-Muslims. Under Al-Fawzan, authors were recruited with the same xenophobic ideas as those in the former textbooks. It is also known that Al-Fawzan advocates slavery and the subjugation of women, and believes elections are un-Islamic. According to the independent Saudi Information Agency, Al-Fawzan said in a lecture “Slavery is a part of Islam...Slavery is part of *jihad*, and *jihad* will remain as long there is Islam.”⁵³ Al-Fawzan is a member of the Council of Religious Edicts and Research, Saudi Arabia's highest religious body, and a professor at Imam Muhammed Ibn Saud Islamic University, Saudi Arabia's main center of learning for the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam.

These Saudi books and pamphlets collected from American mosques and Islamic Centers single out for attack American society in particular for the freedom women enjoy there. The Saudi Wahhabi message is simple and straightforward: As long as women in America do not stay at home but go out to work alongside men, neither the women nor the men nor the neglected children will be happy.

The Saudi government strives to inculcate the view that any deviance in dress or behavior, no matter how minor, is “descent to the level of animals.” A textbook for 11th grade students, published by the Saudi Ministry of Education and collected at the King Fahd-funded Islamic Center of Washington, D.C., and the Al-Farouq Mosque in Houston, states:

The man who wears his hair long, or wears it loose, who wears high heels and tight clothes and walks like bad women, is he human? The masculine woman who smokes and drinks and wears men’s clothing, and drifts with men in the gathering places of hippies, is she human? These cattle-like groups of boys and girls having sex on the streets, in the woods, the night club and in any place, are they human? These women, they are dressed with clothing that covers nothing of their bodies, wearing lots of makeup, standing on the street showcasing their bodies for every hungry look and sick man, are they human? These men who do not care to protect their honor, their wives, their daughters, their sisters; or other people’s honor...do they still have anything human left in them? [Document No. 43]

One rare instance of an American woman being viewed favorably is the example of Hajar recounted in a tract [Document No. 25] by the Saudi-based Jum’a Electronic Printing House and collected at the Islamic Society of Greater Houston in Houston, Texas. Hajar is the new Muslim name assumed by an American girl formerly known as Pamela before she converted.

“Islam completely changed ‘Hajar’: after she had been living a vain life like any other American girl, she began to abide by the rules and principles of Islam. As she states: ‘my lofty goal is to be a Mujahida [female warrior] in the cause of Islam, to fight capitalism, oppression and evil; after my experience I found out that Islam is the only way out for the salvation of humanity from the danger of wars, hunger, and hardship.’” [Document No. 25]

For Hajar, *jihad* became “the most important thing in Islam, or it is what the Muslims need most at the present time.” Hajar became active in the political field taking up the cause of the “just rights of the Muslim Palestinian people.” She gave lectures and spoke out about oppression befalling the Palestinians. The Wahhabi narrator of Hajar’s story concludes with these words of praise: “This is truly an amazing trend: a white

American girl is calling people to Islam, and defending the cause of the Muslim people in a society that does not listen, but she never gives up or gets tired!" [Document No. 25].

NOTES

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³¹ I recently met with a delegation of Saudi religious officials, including Sulaiman Muhammad al-Jarallah, the former director of the Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences of Fairfax, Virginia, and a current teacher at the government's Imam Ibn Saud Islamic University in Riyadh who serves on a teacher training commission at the University and on the organizing committee for the National Dialogue. Dr. Jarallah replied to my question about the progress of such reform by stating that Saudi Arabia was a "conservative" society whose textbooks properly reflected religiously conservative values. After I raised specific examples of hate ideology expressed in the Saudi government textbooks, he sought to mitigate it by giving an example of a heavily veiled Saudi woman having difficulty getting a taxi in London. He added that "updating" the textbooks would take "many years" and "evolve slowly." Another Saudi participant, Ibrahim Abdullah Al-Sadan, also teaching at the Ibn Saud University and a former member of the Ministry of Education's Islamic Educational Reform project, said that the criticisms of the curriculum were unwarranted because the examples given at the National Dialogue were taken out of context. The meeting took place on December 14, 2004, at the Washington offices of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom as part of an inter-faith dialogue sponsored through the US Institute for Peace. Also see, *World Net Daily*, "Saudi Sheik: 'Slavery is a Part of Islam'" The independent Saudi Information Agency reported that Sheik Saleh Al-Fawzan who was recently taped justifying the enslavement of infidels in a lecture recorded by the Saudi Information Agency, remains a leading figure in the religious establishment that oversees this effort

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⁴⁰ “International Religious Freedom Report for 2004,” U.S. Department of State, 2004.

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⁴³ Alyami, Ali, “Human Rights in Saudi Arabia,” Testimony before the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, 4 June 2002. Also see: Center for Democracy and Human Rights <http://www.cdhr.info/>

⁴⁴ This practice of denouncing as “infidels” moderate or non-Wahhabi Muslims and calling for retribution against them is sometimes called the doctrine of “*takfir*,” literally excommunication. See *The 9/11 Commission Report*; Also see Kepel, Gilles, *The War for the Muslim Minds*, Harvard University Press, 2002; and “Ultra-Radical Muslims Draw Scrutiny,” Associated Press, Brian Murphy, 20 November 2004.

⁴⁵ See *Cradle of Islam: The Hijaz and the Quest for an Arabian Identity*, Mai Yamani, I.B. Tauris Publishers, London, 2004.

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⁴⁷ The un-Islamic nature of democracy as understood and practiced in the West is emphasized in more than one piece of writing. From Jordan comes an Islamist analysis of democracy very much in line with the Wahhabi views surveyed so far. Copies of this tract were gathered on December 15, 2003, from the Al-Farouq Mosque in Houston, Texas: “Democracy is an evil system and we have been ordered to reject evil,” write the authors in *Al-Asala* magazine, an Islamist publication. The main reason given for this is democracy's insistence on governing the people by the people themselves since the people are the source of all power. To these Islamists this is a flagrant violation of Islamic laws and beliefs: “Either belief in Allah, in his laws, and in governing through them, or belief in evil and governing through it—and everything that disagrees with Allah's laws is evil” [Document No. 30]. Pluralism comes in for severe criticism. It is of two types, the authors inform us: ideological and political pluralism. The first means that people living under the democratic system have the freedom to believe in whatever they like. “They can leave Islam for any other religion or sect even if that belief system is Judaism, Christianity, communism, socialism, or secularism, and this is the very embodiment of unbelief.” Political pluralism, on the other hand, entails allowing all political parties without regard to their ideas or beliefs “to rule the Muslims through elections, which makes the Muslims and the non-Muslims equal, and this goes against the sacred injunctions that categorically forbid non-Muslims to govern Muslims.” Elections done the democratic way are *haram* (forbidden) because they do not require the candidate or the voter to display the necessary Islamic credentials needed in order to become a public figure or a voting citizen. Thus democracy brings to power rulers who from an Islamic perspective are not permitted to govern over Muslims. The purpose of elections

is for the candidate to become a member of a chamber of representatives, “an evil institution” that rules by majority decisions, “not by Allah’s Book.” [Document No. 30]

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(We have made no determination that these mosques endorsed any of these materials cited in this report, or were even aware of their presence.)

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215 North Oraton Parkway
East Orange, NJ 07017
School name: Madrasatu Ahlis Sunnah
previously known as The Islamic Day School
2. Daru-Al-Islah
320 Fabry Terrace
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5. Masjid Al-Islam
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6. Dar Al-Hijra Islamic Center
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12. King Fahd Mosque (Los Angeles)
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13. Masjid Abu Bakr (aka Islamic Center of San Diego)
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14. Islamic Society of Orange County
9752 W 13th Street
Garden Grove, CA 92844
15. Islamic Center of Oakland (Oakland Islamic Center)
515 31st Street
Oakland, CA 94609

Appendices*

Document No. 2

Verdict Regarding Celebrating the Year 2000 and the Call for the of Unity Religions. Riyadh: Permanent Committee for Scientific Research and the Issuing of Fatwas, 2000. Collected from Masjid Abu Bakr, San Diego, CA, 12/10/03.

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* Copies of all of the Arabic documents cited in this report and their translations are kept on file at Freedom House.

***Verdict Regarding Celebrating the Year 2000
and the Call for the Unity of Religions***

Book (2):

Permanent Committee for
Scientific Research and the
Issuing of Fatwas
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Collected on 12/10/03
Masjid Abu Bakr
San Diego, CA

Verdict Regarding Celebrating the Year 2000

Page 2:

Question: The questioner said: (We see these days through the media coverage of the preparation for the occasion of the coming of the year 2000 and the beginning of the third millennium. The unbelievers (Jews, Christians and others) are delighted with that, and give lots of importance for this occasion. Honorable Shaykh, the question is: some who claim to be Muslims started giving importance to this occasion, considering it a happy one. They started holding their marriages on that day, or taking advantage of it for a business purpose by advertising for it in their stores and companies, which is bad for the Muslim. What is the religious verdict regarding the glorification of this occasion and celebrating it, congratulating on it either by word or card etc.? ... May Allah reward you on behalf of the Muslims the best reward)

Page 3, 4:

After the Council studied this matter and this is our answer:

The best grant from Allah to his servants is Islam and guidance to the straight path. ... Allah calls this path, the path of those he gave to them of his goodness, not the path of those who strayed from it like the Jews, Christians and others who are unbelieving polytheists. We say that the one looking at the world today, if he was of the people of insight in Allah's religion, he will see how truth and falsehood became ambiguous for a lot of people; he will see the efforts of the enemies of Islam trying to cover its truth, put off its light, pushing the Muslims away from it, and severing their connection with it. Using every possible means This Council, which is hearing and seeing the great preparation, and the great importance given to this occasion by the Jews and the Christians, feels that it must advice and show all the Muslims the reality of this occasion, and the religious verdict in it

Page 5, 6, 7, 8:

We say:

1. The Jews and the Christians have high hopes about the new millennium, predicting its event, pains, wishes, and certain about its manifestation because of their studies and research into it, as they claim. They also hang some of their beliefs on this occasion, claiming that it was mentioned in their altered books A Muslim should not look at this occasion, nor should he accept it.
2. This occasion, and others like it, must carry with it making truth and falsehood ambiguous, calling to disbelief, misguidance, pornography, atheism and the appearance of that which is legally false like: The unification of all religions, making Islam equal to other false religions and sects, seeking blessing through the cross, showing the rituals of the Jews and the Christians and similar things of actions and sayings which include: either that the Jewish and Christian laws, which were changed and altered are leading to Allah, or to like something of what is in them which does not agree with Islam, or other than that which is disbelief in Allah and his Prophet and Islam.
3. The overflow of evidence from the book, the *sunna* (prophetic traditions) and the correct trails, against imitating the unbelievers in anything that belongs to them, like their holidays and celebrations ...
4. The holidays of disbelievers are forbidden for other consideration:
 - Imitating them in some of their holidays would require pleasing their hearts and expanding their chests in whatever falsehood their on.
 - Imitating them in things that are outward would require imitating them in things that are inward like false beliefs ...
 - The greatest corruption is that imitating them in things that are outward will bring some love and closeness inwardly, and loving them and supporting them is against faith
5. Considering what we said, it is impermissible for a Muslim ... to celebrate holidays which has no roots in Islam, like this claimed millennium.
6. It is impermissible for a Muslim to help the unbelievers in any way during their holidays, like promoting their holidays and advertising it ... through the media, or erecting clocks ... or printing cards, or school books, or to hold sales, or to give away prizes or to play sports
7. It is impermissible for a Muslim to consider this holiday a happy occasion or blessed times for which you close your business, you get married, you start a business or you begin a project
8. It is impermissible for a Muslim to congratulate the unbelievers in their holidays because its means you are pleased with that which they believe and makes them happy.

Page 10:
Verdict Regarding the Unity of Religions

The Permanent Committee for Scientific Research and Religious Edicts looked at the questions that were presented to it, and at that which is spread through the media in terms of opinion and articles regarding the call to (the Unity of Religions) the religion of Islam, the religion of the Jews and the religion of the Christians, and what branches from this call like building a mosque, a church and a synagogue all on one property, in colleges, airports and public squares, or to print one book containing the Koran and the Bible, and other things that come with this call.

Page 10:
After reflection and study the Council's decision is:

First, in Islam the basic beliefs which are necessary to know, and on which there is consensus, are that on the face of the earth there is no other religion of truth besides Islam, that it is the seal of religions and that it makes obsolete other religions and laws that preceded it. The only remaining religion on the face of the earth in which people can still truly worship Allah is Islam.

Page 11:
Third, we must believe that the Torah and Bible were rendered obsolete through the Gracious Koran, and that they were changed or altered. ... Therefore what is true in these books is rendered obsolete by the Koran, and the rest is changed and altered.

Page 12, 13:
Fifth, it is basic Islam to believe that everyone who does not embrace Islam is an unbeliever and must be called an unbeliever, and that they are enemies to Allah, his Prophet and the believers That is why the one who does not call the Jews and the Christian unbelievers is himself an unbeliever.

Seventh, the effects of this sinful call is that it erases the differences between Islam and disbelief, between truth and falsehood, good and bad, and it breaks the wall of resentment between the Muslims and the unbelievers, so that there is no more loyalty and enmity, no more jihad and fighting to raise Allah's word on earth

Eighth, the call to the Unity of Religion, if it comes from a Muslim, it means that he has forsake his religion of Islam because it is on collision course with the basics of belief, accepting disbelief in Allah.

Page 14:
Ninth, based on what we presented:

1. It is impermissible for a Muslim believing in Allah as his Lord, in Islam as his religion, and Muhammad (pbuh) as his Prophet, to call to such a sinful idea, to encourage and promote it among Muslims, to answer this call, and to participate in its conferences and meetings.

2. It is impermissible for a Muslim to print the Torah and Bible separately (at all), what then if he prints them with the Koran! Whoever does that, or calls to that, he is in dire misguidance.
3. It is impermissible for a Muslim to answer the call of a building (mosque, church and synagogue) in one place because it means acceptance of a religion in which Allah is worshiped other than Islam.

Science of Tawheed (Unity)
(Text for Tenth Grade Girls)

Book (32):

The General Presidency
For Teaching Girls
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Collected on 12/15/03
Masjid Al-Farouq
Houston, TX

Page 118:

As for sharing with them their celebrations, and sorrows; congratulating them in that which is legally permissible, or to comfort them in their tragedy:

... As for congratulating an unbeliever, during his religious rituals of unbelief, it is forbidden by consensus. For example: to congratulate them on their holidays, or when they are fasting by saying, “*have a blessed holiday,*” or “*congratulations on your holiday,*” and other methods ... anyone who does such things may become an unbeliever, or at least a major sinner. It is the same as congratulating someone for prostrating to the cross, which is a greater transgression for Allah than to congratulate someone for drinking wine, killing someone, fornicating Many who have no regard for their religion fall into this problem without realizing how ugly their deeds are. (See note.)

Page 121:

Preferring to work for unbelievers and to reside among them than to work and reside in the land of Islam:

For a Muslim, to be employed in the service of an unbeliever is something forbidden. The reason is because it gives authority to control and demean the believer to the unbeliever.

Residing among the unbelievers continuously is also forbidden because it is dangerous for the belief of the Muslim. That is why Allah made it obligatory to emigrate from the land of disbelief to the land of Islam. It also threatened those who, without having a legal excuse, do not emigrate. The *Koran* also forbade the Muslim to travel to the land of disbelief except with a legal excuse, and the ability to practice his religion freely. When his business in that land is done, he must go back to the land of Islam.

As for a Muslim, working for an unbeliever in something other than his (personal) service, like sewing clothes, building a wall, and similar honorable work, it is permissible because it is not demeaning

As for the one who prefers to work for unbelievers and to reside amongst them, rather than to work and reside amongst the Muslims? If he does that because he thinks it is permissible to be under their control and he is pleased with the way they are, then there is no doubt that he is no longer a Muslim. On the other hand, if he does that only because of greed, or because of the good life he can attain in that country, while hating their religion, and maintaining his belief, it is still forbidden, and we fear that he will end up liking their religion.

Page 122, 123:

Legal ruling regarding, imitating the unbelievers:

Imitating the unbelievers in their special characteristics and habits is forbidden. It warrants severe punishment because it shows intimacy with them. The Prophet (pbuh) said: “*whoever imitates a people, he is from them.*” The penalty regarding its impermissibility varies according to the amount of corruption it causes and the results it elicits.

Types of imitation:

Regarding their special characteristics, there are three types of imitations: (1) disbelief, or on the way to disbelief, (2) lewdness, (3) disobedience:

1. Imitating them in their false religion: as in building on top of the graves, and worshiping created thing as if there were gods other than Allah, by worshipping their graves, obeying them in what they deem lawful or unlawful, and in their decrees, which Allah did not bring forth, is disbelief in Allah, or is the means to disbelief in Him.
2. Imitating them in what they innovated in their religion: like their false holidays, the celebration of birthdays, designating certain days of the week for activities in some jobs, and glorifying national days, this is forbidden and lewd.
3. Imitating them in their bad habits and bad manners, and in their physical appearance: like when they shave their beards, and other things or in their fashion: like walking, eating, drinking and talking This is a big subject, and it is forbidden, and falls under the saying of the Prophet (pbuh), “*whoever imitates a people, he is from them,*” because imitating them in appearance points to liking them on the inside.

Religious Edicts

Book (36):

Saudi Arabian Embassy,
Washington, D.C.
Shaykh Abdul-Aziz Bin Baz
Collected on 12/14/03
Islamic Center of America
East Orange, NJ
Available from King Fahd Mosque,
Culver City, CA, 12/04/04

Treatment of Servants

Page 199, 200:

Question: In my house, we have a non-Muslim servant. Is it permissible for the woman in my household to interact with her (sit together, sleep together, or eat together)?

Answer: It is not blame worthy to do so. The women in your household do not have to stay away from her, but they should not treat her as they would treat a Muslim woman. They have to hate her for Allah's sake, since Allah said:

"You had a good example in Abraham, and those who were with him; they told their people we are innocent of you and that which you worship, that is other than Allah. We reject you and between us there could only be enmity and hate until you believe in Allah alone."

Shaykh Bin Baz continues: If this servant does not accept Islam, she should be sent back to her country. You cannot allow Christians, Jews and Polytheists to stay in the Arabian Peninsula, regardless of whether they are women or men. This is so because Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) told us to drive them out of this Peninsula, and the Muslims have no need for them. Their presence among the Muslims is dangerous because they can corrupt their Islamic beliefs and their moral character.

Shaykh Bin Baz continues: It is the duty of every Muslim not to employ any non-Muslim. In order to follow our Prophet, Muslims should only employ other Muslims. Bringing non-Muslims here and interacting with them can cause a lot of damage to the beliefs and moral character of Muslim men and woman. I ask Allah to grant success to the Muslims, not to be in need for these people, and to be safe from their evil, he is giving and generous.

***Religious Edicts
For the Immigrant Muslim***

Book (44):

(Back Cover) Greetings from the Cultural Attaché in Washington, DC
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Shaykh Abd Alaziz bin Baz
Collected on 12/12/03
Islamic Center of Washington DC
Washington, DC

Page 5:

Question: Is it permissible for a Muslim to become naturalized as an American Citizen, specifically, if he is a refugee with no country.

Answer: It is forbidden for a Muslim to become a citizen of a country governed by infidels because this is a means of acquiescing to their infidelity and accepting all their erroneous ways. It is forbidden, to even reside amongst them, since Allah said: *"those whom the angels find at the time of their death to be of the ones who have wronged themselves; they will ask them, what happened to you? They said, we were taken to be weak in the land; the Angels replied, was not Allah's land vast enough for you to immigrate,"* or the Prophet's saying: *"I'm innocent of any Muslim who lives among the polytheists,"* besides other examples from the holy traditions. There is consensus amongst the Muslims regarding this question which makes it obligatory for every Muslim who lives in the land of polytheism, to immigrate back to the land of Islam, if he can. However, those who are learned and knowledgeable in religion may remain among the infidels to preach Islam to them and call them to it...

Page 8:

Question: Is it permissible to transfer zakat from America to Muslim countries?

Answer: Transfer of zakat from country to country is allowed when legitimate [Editor's note: 'legitimate,' meaning legal according to sharia law] interest necessitates this such as when those to whom it is transferred are in greater need or in legitimate jihad.

Page 10:

Question: Is it permissible to deposit money in their banks?

Answer: It is not permissible for any Muslim to deposit his wealth (money and similar things) in usurious banks, except if there is a necessity to do so. An example is when he is unable to find any other place to protect his money; at that time, it is not blameworthy. If he was paid interest on what he deposited, without asking for it or due to a precondition, he can take it and spend it in good causes. This way, he can protect his money, and save himself from transgressing against Allah's command (eating from interest money and helping its users)

Question: Is it permissible to work for companies dealing in usury?

Answer: It is not permissible to work for companies that deal in usury, or for usurious banks, because it means that you will be helping aggression and sin, and Allah said: *“help each other in goodness and piety and not in sin and aggression.”*

Page 13:

Question: Is it forbidden to be first in greeting an unbeliever, even if he has a prestigious position, like a university professor?

Answer: It is forbidden for a Muslim to be first in greeting an unbeliever, even if he had prestigious position. This is due to the many established holy traditions, in this matter, like his [Prophet Muhammad] saying (pbuh): *“Do not be first, in greeting the Jews and the Christians.”*

Question: Is it permissible to attend their holiday celebrations?

Answer: No, you can not attend, nor can you congratulate them. Because it means that you are trying to be close with them by showing them that you are pleased with them and with their rituals. You would also be helping them in their sin and aggression, and Allah forbade that being close with them by saying: *“you cannot find a people, who believe in Allah, and the last day; showing love and affection, towards those who are enemies to Allah and his prophet; even if, they were their fathers, brothers or tribes. Those believers are the ones, whom Allah wrote faith in their hearts, and whom He supported with a spirit from Him.”* On the contrary, we must hate them, and be innocent of them. ...

Page 14:

Question: There is a tradition in the American universities that on the day of graduation the students have to wear a graduation robe. This robe looks like an Arabic long dress, along with a head cover, which has a distinct shape. It is said, that this robe used to be the dress of their monks. Is it permissible to wear this robe when the Muslim students graduate?

Answer: No, it is not permissible to wear this robe, if it is their special dress. The Prophet said: *“Who imitates a people, he is from them.”* And its impermissibility is confirmed, especially, if it is the dress of their monks.

Pages 14-15:

Question: Is coeducation permissible?

Answer: Mixing male students and female students, and male teachers and female teachers, at places of education is forbidden since it leads to discord [i.e. *fitna*], arousing physical desire, occurrence of abomination; and it multiplies sin and it increases wrongdoing when female teachers or female pupils expose some area of their private parts [*auwra*], or they wear sheer clothing which exposes what is underneath it, or they wear tight clothing which outlines their limbs, or when they flirt with the male students or male teachers and play around with them, or some other thing which leads to defiling their sanctity and disrupting their honor.

