

“IT’S THE CULTURE STUPID!”

The American Narrative v. the Islamic Narrative

By Peter M. Friedman

In spite of the Liberal’s mantra about “multi-culturalism” being morally equivalent, not all cultures are historically equal. The two at opposite ends of the cultural spectrum are the American culture and the Islamic culture. Their cultural narratives are contradictory. Nobody stated this better than the late Samuel Huntington in his monumental work, “*Clash of Civilizations*” published back in 1998. In his book he chronicled the fact that, of the existing conflicts in the world, over 75% involved Muslims who refused to play nice with their neighbors. In the past fourteen years the only change is that these conflicts have become worse and more widespread throughout the world.

Since the election of Barack Hussein Obama in 2008 the cultural divide between America and the Islamic world has greatly widened. Obama has attempted, by his own admission, to “reset” the relationship between America and the Islamic world. This resetting began by Obama “putting daylight” between America and Israel to use his words. It was further reset with Obama’s pandering to the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt on June 4, 2009, where his speech specifically encouraged the Islamic countries in the Middle East to throw out their dictatorial governments and replace them with “democratic” governments. This immediately led to the overthrow of not only the Egyptian government, but the murder of Gaddafi in Libya, and new governments in Tunisia, and other countries. The result we now see is that, in each case, radical Islamists, mostly connected to the Muslim Brotherhood, Al-Qaeda, and others, have seized control.

In the past two and one half years since Obama spoke in Egypt, the Islamic world has turned decidedly more radical and more strident toward America. The latest display has been the planned attack on our Consulate in Libya and the murder of our Ambassador and three other Americans. This attack was inevitable based upon the liberal American “narrative” espoused specifically by Barack Obama toward Islam. It remains to be determined whether Obama’s fantasy narrative of Islam, much learned during his childhood in Indonesia undoubtedly, is his reality, or just a political narrative for some other purpose or agenda. In any case, this fantasy narrative directly caused the indescribable murder of four Americans in Libya. This fantasy narrative continues to foment the killing of Americans in Afghanistan under the supposition that the radical Taliban Islamists can somehow be passivated.

As a result of Obama’s Islamic fantasy narrative there is now afoot in America groups of Muslims who are making the case that offending Islam and Mohammad incites Muslims to violence and should therefore be prohibited as a national security issue. It is pure and simple blackmail by the Islamic community – don’t offend us or we will get violent! They say they believe in freedom of speech, except where Islam and Mohammad are concerned. One of the most prominent purveyors of this constitutional blackmail is Mohammad Qatanani, the cleric at

the second largest mosque in America, in Passaic, New Jersey. Qatanani specifically states that, "We, as Americans, have to put limits and borders [on] freedom of speech." Further, while Americans have freedom of speech, they "...have no right to [talk about] holy issues..." if it will incite "...hatred or war among people." Qatanani believes that people who criticize Islam and Mohammad pose a national security risk threatening the safety of Americans in America and abroad. Qatanani believes that Americans should comply with Sharia Law prohibiting such criticism for the ultimate good of society. The problem here is that elected officials in America are actually listening to this radical Islamist. So who exactly is Mohammad Qatanani?

Mohammad Qatanani was born in Askar in the Palestinian Territory, in 1964. Qatanani's Brother-in-Law was a Senior Hamas leader, ultimately killed by the Israelis. He lived in a refugee camp until 1982. He then attended college in Jordan. He studied Sharia Law and received a Bachelor's degree in Islamic Law in 1985, a Masters in 1989, and a PhD in 1996. He was employed as the Imam for several mosques in Jordan between 1989 and 1996.

In 1993 Qatanani was accused by Israel of being a member of Hamas. He plead guilty to not only being a Hamas member, but also a member of the Muslim Brotherhood. In 1996 Qatanani and his family emigrated to the United States on a religious work visa. He was employed as the Imam of the Passaic mosque, the second largest in America. In 1999 Qatanani applied for a US Green Card, but he failed to disclose that he had been convicted in Israel in 1993. Between 1999 and 2005 no action had been taken on his application. Frustrated, Qatanani contacted the FBI to assist with the application. It was this contact that began the government's process of denying his application and instituted deportation proceedings against him and his family.

In 2008 a US Immigration judge declined to deport Qatanani and his family, granting them permanent residency. The case is still on appeal in the New Jersey Immigration Court of Appeals. But this is not the end of the story. During his time as Imam in Passaic Qatanani participated in various "interfaith" discussions and dialogues with churches and synagogues. Many of the clerics and rabbis from these churches and synagogues acted as character witnesses for Qatanani when he was being investigated. The judge disregarded the records from Israel that were submitted by Homeland Security. But there is another element not to be disregarded.

One of the character witnesses for Mohammad Qatanani was none other than the US Attorney Chris Christie. Another was Governor Jon Corzine. At a dinner just before the judge granted permanent residency, Christie exclaimed, "My view is he's always had a very good relationship with us, and he's a man of great goodwill." It got worse after the judgment. Steven Emerson, a respected critic of radical Islamists, stated, "I think it's a disgrace and an act of pure political corruption." He went on to cite that Corzine, Christie, and Congressman Bill Pascrell "intervened to help Qatanani during the legal process of the deportation proceedings. I know for a fact that Christie had access to information about Qatanani's background, involvement with and support of Hamas." This was all back in 2008. Now it is four years later and the ball has moved forward.

In August, now Governor Chris Christie sponsored an “Iftar” dinner in the Governor’s mansion, a formal meal taking place to celebrate the end of Ramadan, the holiest month in Islam. Christie stated at the dinner that there is a “gaze of intolerance that’s going around our country that is disturbing.” He went on to respond to those who feel he is getting too close to radical Islamists by stating, “These are the kind of red herrings that people put up who are bigots, who want to judge people by their religious beliefs.” Attending this Iftar dinner, of course, was Mohammad Qatanani. Christie referred to him as “my friend”. Christie also referred to Sohail Mohammad as his “friend”. Christie had recently appointed Sohail to a judgeship on the New Jersey Superior Court in Passaic. Sohail was Qatanani’s lawyer when he plead guilty to membership in Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood. In 2011 Christie referred to opposition to Sharia Law in America by stating, “This Sharia law business is just crap...and I’m tired of dealing with the crazies. Again, these statements were made by Christie just prior to the attack on the Libyan Consulate and the murder of our Ambassador. Now we have his good “friend” Mohammad Qatanani recommending that freedom of speech under the US Constitution be prohibited when it is directed at Islam as a “national security” issue! More than the camel’s nose is now under our tent! There is a rumor now that Romney will appoint Christie Attorney General if he becomes President!

At this juncture it becomes interesting to note how the government defines “Extremism”. One only has to refer to the Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-15 to find the answer. 600-15 is the directive to provide “Guidance and procedures for handling extremist activities in the U.S. Army.” Ironically, this directive was approved on June 1, 2000, in effect years before Major Hassan murdered thirteen American soldiers at Fort Hood, an event that Obama has classified as “workplace violence”, in direct violation of this directive. What’s worse is that it was approved by General Eric K. Shinseki, Chief of Staff, who was appointed by Obama as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Reading from Figure B-3 of 600-15, we find the following definitions:

- a. *Supremacist.* Any person maintaining the ideology, quality, state of being, or position of being superior to all others in something.
- b. *Extremist.* Any person who advocates racial, gender, or ethnic hatred or intolerance; advocates, creates, or engages in illegal discrimination based on race, color, gender, religion, or national origin; advocates the use of or uses force, violence, or unlawful means to deprive individuals of their rights under the U.S. Constitution.
- c. *Extremist Organization.* A group which advocates racial, gender, or ethnic hatred or intolerance; advocates, creates, or engages in illegal discrimination based on race, color, gender, religion, or national origin; advocates the use of or uses force, violence, or unlawful means to deprive individuals of their rights under the U.S. Constitution or the laws of the United States or any State.

- d. *Ideology*. A systematic body of concepts especially about human life or culture; a way of thinking used by a group or individual to express their beliefs and social values.

Then we need to look at Section 1-5 entitled Extremist activities overview, paragraph c which states:

- e. “Extremist groups follow ideologies, which are considered extreme by societal norms. An ideology is a systematic body of concepts especially about human life or culture; a way of thinking used by a group or individual to express their beliefs and social values. Ideology provides social order and control within any organization. Major issues are reduced to basic ideological concepts, which, in turn, influence the behavior and attitudes of group members and individuals. This can give rise to views that are extreme based on the prevailing societal norms which may or may not be punished by institutions. Ideologies justify, legitimize, and rationalize one particular version of reality despite other explanations and ideas.”

Each of these definitions mirrors the religious obligations found in Islam! Cultures are not the same nor are they morally equivalent. Cultures rooted in 7th Century religious obligations of violence, intolerance, and hatred toward those of other cultures are not equal. Cultures that espouse ideologies that meet the definitions cited herein are not equal to the American culture of tolerance, fairness, and justice equally applied. Directive 600-15 was promulgated specifically to discern and deal with extremist ideologies and those extremists who actively embrace those ideologies in the United States Army. Today there are over 15,000 practicing Muslims in the United States Army. There is an active Muslim Chaplaincy in the United States Army. Major Hassan is a product of this attempt at cultural equivalency.

The culture of America is embodied in our Declaration of Independence, our Constitution, and our Bill of Rights. The American culture embraces everyone and protects everyone within its jurisdiction. Muslims are the first immigrants to America engaged in changing America, not embracing the freedoms Americans enjoy by law. When Muslims such as Mohammad Qatanani attempt to circumvent our Bill of Rights using the blackmail of violence, an alarm should be sounded! When we have a President who states that freedom of speech enshrined in our First Amendment to the Bill of Rights should not extend to offending Muslims by criticizing Islam or Mohammad, an alarm should be sounded! When the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) in the United Nations attempts to push through an international law prohibiting criticism of Islam, an alarm should be sounded!

If the Supreme Court ever upholds any law that prohibits criticism of Islam based upon an affect on national security as described by Mohammad Qatanani, America will have succumbed to Sharia Law and the “extremists” will have prevailed. America will cease to exist as the superior culture it has been for over two hundred years.

It’s the culture, stupid!