



Gaffney confronts top Bush official over Shariah

CENTER FOR SECURITY POLICY

October 8, 2008

What the desultory townhall-style debate last night in Nashville between presidential candidates John McCain and Barack Obama lacked in passion and focus on the most important issue of our time - the threat posed by Shariah (Islamic law) to our freedoms, way of life and form of government - was much in evidence in another debate held near Baltimore. Under the sponsorship of The Harbor League, Center for Security Policy President Frank J. Gaffney, Jr. squared off with Suhail Khan, the Bush Administration's Assistant to the Secretary of Transportation for Policy.

As an article by Mr. Gaffney describing the highlights of “the Other Debate” (reproduced below) makes clear, Khan did little to dissipate serious concerns about his past associations with, and affinity for, those who minimize the threat posed by Shariah-adherent Muslims - including many who are prominent supporters of Shariah's largely stealthy insinuation into this country.

Mr. Gaffney's prepared remarks and accompanying slides are available. An audio file of the entire debate is available and a transcript will be made available as soon as it is completed. In addition, a producer from Al Jazeera, which filmed the program in its entirety, announced that it would be broadcast gavel-to-gavel (consult your local listings).

Following “the Other Debate,” Mr. Gaffney observed:

“Americans and other freedom-loving peoples face a grave and growing danger from adherents to Shariah. That danger is greatly exacerbated by those like Suhail Khan who either don't understand Shariah's true nature and the stealthy jihad being used to establish it as a parallel theo-political-legal code inside this country - or are deliberately misrepresenting the facts about both. It is worrying in the extreme that the Bush Administration, in which Khan serves as among its most prominent Muslims, is in a position to influence not only assessments of the threat posed by some among his co-religionists but policy needed to address that threat.”

It is highly regrettable that these issues were not featured in last night's other other debate - the one featuring the presidential contenders. Americans have a need to know about where the candidates stand on Shariah, and what they will do to counter this seditious program and the “soft” jihad being waged to advance its mortal assault on our freedoms and Constitution.



The other debate: Frank Gaffney vs. Suhail Khan

By Frank J. Gaffney, Jr.

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Shortly before John McCain and Barack Obama, as the Car Guys would say, wasted a perfectly good hour-and-a-half of America's time last night in a largely uninformative town hall meeting, a really interesting debate about the most important issue of our time took place near Baltimore. Sponsored by a local educational organization called The Harbor League, I had at last an opportunity to confront publicly and directly one of the most senior and controversial Muslim officials in the Bush Administration: the Assistant to the Secretary of Transportation for Policy, Suhail Khan.

Readers of these pages will recall my previous writings about Suhail Khan and his patron, conservative activist Grover Norquist.

In these articles, I carefully documented Khan's personal ties to Wahhabi mosques in California and a variety of organizations identified by the Department of Justice as Muslim Brotherhood front organizations and, in some cases, as un-indicted co-conspirators in a terrorism financing conspiracy.

I also reported on the role Norquist has played before and during the George W. Bush administration in facilitating Islamist influence operations involving – at key points, with Suhail Khan's help at the White House Office of Public Liaison – the likes of now-convicted terrorist-supporters like Abdurahman Alamoudi and Sami al-Arian. Khan serves on the board of the Islamic Free Market Institute, the organization Alamoudi helped Norquist establish a decade ago in his Americans for Tax Reform offices, apparently for the purpose of credentialing Islamists as conservatives, promoting their agenda in Washington and placing their friends in government jobs.

While Khan and Norquist have used various vehicles to denounce these treatments – notably, accusing me of racism and bigotry – they have yet to disprove any of my findings. Last night's debate addressing the question of whether Islamic law (Shariah) is consistent with a “religion of peace” and the U.S. Constitution was an opportunity for Khan to do so. At the very least, it was a chance for Khan to allay concerns about the attitude of such a highly placed individual towards the Islamists' stealthy efforts to advance the repressive theo-political-legal code they call Shariah and its stated objective of global Islamic rule under a theocratic leader.

Unfortunately, as the audio of the “Other Debate” shows, Suhail Khan chose to do neither. Instead, from his opening remarks to his impassioned conclusion, he extolled America, its people, its culture, even its national pastime. He inveighed against those “hate-mongers” and “racists” whom he accused of knowing nothing of and defaming Islam (Jihad Watch's extraordinary director, Robert Spencer, came in for repeated defamation, as did my esteemed colleague, David Yerushalmi). Perhaps in deference to the moderator, Sinclair Broadcasting's Mark Hyman, who enjoined us from ad hominem attacks, Khan expressed those aimed at me only through oblique references.



For my part, I used the occasion to frame the issue as clearly as I could. The problem, I observed, is Shariah, the theo-political-legal program born of the texts, traditions and practices of authoritative Islam. At its core, Shariah's agenda is seditious since it is designed to destroy the constitutional government of the United States and replace it with Islamic rule.

This end-state will be achieved here as elsewhere through violent (or “hard”) jihad, if possible. Where that is not immediately practicable, the Muslim Brotherhood has established scores of organizations to promote what might be called “soft” or “stealth” jihad.

The objective, however, is absolutely the same: In the words of an internal planning document written in 1991, “[The Brotherhood's] work in America is a kind of grand jihad in eliminating and destroying the Western civilization from within.”

I concluded with the following points:

- Every U.S. government official swears a solemn oath to uphold and defend the Constitution. Those officials who are Muslim have a special responsibility to reject Shariah and the Muslim Brotherhood organizations stealthily trying to impose it on all of us.
- To do otherwise is to fail to act in the face of seditious behavior – a felony offense under the U.S. code known as “misprision of treason.”
- We need the help of all patriotic, law-abiding, tolerant Americans who are Muslims in fighting our mutual enemy: Shariah-adherent Islamists in this country and elsewhere.
- A key test of which camp they are in is whether they acknowledge the nature of authoritative Islam's Shariah and the threat it represents to our country and Constitution, and work against – not with – the groups advancing this seditious agenda.

Suhail Khan reacted to this dose of salts in a manner reminiscent of Linda Blair's character in “The Exorcist,” minus the vomit and physical gyrations. He vehemently insisted that my portrayal of Shariah – from its embrace of the law of “abrogation” (whereby the intolerant, violent passages of the Koran that come chronologically after the more moderate, earlier ones) to its absolutely delineated interpretations and the myriad obligations arising therefrom (including to engage in jihad) – was the stuff of a few extremists like Osama bin Laden and “wack-job web sites.”

In response to my repeated observation that the characterization of Shariah is not mine but that of all of the recognized authorities of Islam, Khan asserted again and again that it was not true. When pressed by a member of the audience to name a single Muslim scholar deemed authoritative by the institutions of his faith (like Al Azhar University in Cairo or the senior clerics of Saudi Arabia) who agreed with his view, he could only come up with three Americans who went to school in the Mideast and who have written as-yet unpublished books Khan claims will affirm his position. I noted that even if these books existed and actually did deviate from the traditions and tenets of Shariah, none of his authors had any standing as Islamic scholars. In any event, according to Shariah, there has been no opportunity for new interpretations of settled Islamic law for nearly 1200 years.



Speaking of the audience, the packed room included a couple of car-loads worth of staff and associates of Norquist's Americans for Tax Reform. Several of them asked pointed questions taken straight out of the Islamist play-book: asserting a moral equivalence between the extremists of Islam and those of Christianity and Judaism; insisting that there was no problem with authoritative Shariah, only with a small number of terrorists who falsely claim religious grounds for their criminal conduct; and suggesting that if Jews and various Christian sects can have and observe their own laws, why can't Muslims? The fervor with which these non-Muslim conservative activists parroted the Brotherhood line suggested that more than simple solidarity with their friend, Suhail Khan, is at work in Norquist's Islamist influence operation.

I closed the program with an appeal to those present – and to the larger audience that may see the Other Debate if, as promised Al Jazeera plays it in its entirety: Do your homework. It is your civic duty to find out whether my characterization of Shariah, its inherently seditious nature and its utter incompatibility with our Constitution and freedoms is correct. Or are Suhail Khan's blithe assurances that Shariah is consistent with a “religion of peace” and no danger to America, nothing more than a program that Muslims can interpret however they wish, to be believed?

As one knowledgeable questioner pointed out, these are questions of fact. Even the most superficial examination of the texts, traditions and institutions of Shariah – helpfully and authoritatively translated into English by the Saudis – will establish that I am correct. And the fact that Suhail Khan says otherwise leaves only two possible explanations: Either he is woefully ignorant of the fundamentals of his own faith or he is willfully dissembling about them in the way Muslim Brotherhood operatives and their friends consistently do.

Whichever may be the case, Suhail Khan clearly is not a reliable source for insights into the central challenge of our time – a challenge that went completely unaddressed in the McCain-Obama debate last night, namely the danger of Shariah and the stealth jihad systematically seeking to insinuate it into our country and society. Khan's performance in the evening's Other Debate calls into the question not only his true purposes, but the judgment and wisdom of those who do rely upon him.

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