

# **Saudi government foments religious hatred in U.S.**

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What is happening in some American mosques, including a few in the Chicago area, is deeply disturbing. In certain Islamic schools, textbooks spit vitriol against Jews, Christians and other non-Muslims: "Be disassociated from the infidels, hate them for their religion." In mosque publications, America is the "Abode of the Infidel." The idea of human and civil rights is heresy. Working women are immoral.

These views are extreme, they promote violence and they are being espoused right under our noses. We knew this was happening in France, Germany and England but we didn't know the extent of the problem here. It is not happening in all mosques or Islamic schools, by any means, but in those select ones funded by the Saudi government to disseminate the fanatic Wahhabi-style Islam that has its demagogic roots in Saudi Arabia.

The Center for Religious Freedom just issued a discomfiting report looking at the spread of hate propaganda in America by Saudi Arabia. The center collected 200 books and other publications from mosques across the country and spent the past two years analyzing them.

"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," writes Nina Shea, the Center's director. In addition, they "instill contempt for America because the United States is ruled by legislated civil law rather than by totalitarian Wahhabi-style Islamic law." Woe to Christians who should be actively hated because they stir up images of crusaders and colonists and because they are "enemies to Allah, his Prophet and believers." Woe to Muslims who advance tolerance and human rights -- they, too, are infidels. Woe to homosexuals or heterosexuals who have sex outside marriage -- it is considered "lawful" to kill them.

Fifteen of the 19 hijackers on 9/11 were Saudis who were indoctrinated by this vicious Wahhabi ideology. Lest you think the Center for Religious Freedom is a partisan group opposed to Islam, you should know it was founded by Eleanor Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie during World War II to fight religious persecution and promote democracy.

The U.S. government has deported some radical imams and the Saudi government claims the noxious ideology has been deleted from textbooks. But the Center found that, as of December 2004, books promoting hatred and violence remain "common reading" in some American mosques. In his State of the Union speech, President Bush exhorted the Saudis to encourage democracy in the Middle East. He should also put intense pressure on them to stop fomenting hate within our borders. It jeopardizes our security and is an insult to our tradition of freedom of religious expression. It flies in the face of everything we hold true.

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