The Islamophobia Industry: How the Right Manufactures Fear of Muslims

By Nathan Lean

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WITH THE RISE OF "stealth jihad," "creeping Sharia," "Islamofascism," and "terror babies" in places like "The United States of Islamica," "Eurabia," and "Londonistan," who wouldn't be scared?

Fear sells and the Islamophobia Industry — a right-wing cadre of intellectual hucksters, bloggers, politicians, pundits, and religious leaders — knows that all too well. For years they have labored behind the scenes to convince their compatriots that Muslims are the enemy, exhuming the ghosts of 9/11 and dangling them before the eyes of horrified populations for great fortune and fame.

Their plan has worked.

The tide of Islamophobia that is sweeping through Europe and the United States is not a naturally occurring phenomenon. It is their design.

In recent years, Muslim-led terrorist attacks have declined yet anti-Muslim prejudice has soared to new peaks. The fear that the Islamophobia Industry has manufactured is so fierce in its grip on some populations that it drives them to do the unthinkable.

This powerful and provocative book explores the dark world of monster making, examining in detail an interconnected, and highly organized cottage industry of fear merchants. Uncovering their scare tactics, revealing their motives, and exposing the interests that drive them, Nathan Lean casts a bright and damning light on this dangerous and influential network.

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Editorial Review

Review
PRAISE FOR THE ISLAMOPHOBIA INDUSTRY:

"Nathan Lean's meticulous study of the Islamophobia industry is a convincing demonstration of the threat this form of extremism poses to a harmonious pluralistic society and democratic values. Rationalizing hatred of Muslims, well-funded ideologues have also negatively impacted civic discourse and pushed conservative politics into the orbit of right-wing extremism. Lean's book is an important resource for all people who wish to understand the forces that are manipulating our political process and discourse." - Ingrid Mattson, Chair in Islamic Studies, Huron University College

"This concise, accessible and illuminating book meets one of the most urgent needs of our time. Nathan Lean has provided us with a compelling counter-narrative that reveals the vested interests and highly-organized networks of those who preach the virulent Islamophobia that is not only endangering world peace but is also corroding the tolerance and egalitarian ethos that should characterize Western society. This book should be required reading." - Karen Armstrong, author of *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life*

"Nathan Lean has written a book of immense importance for our times. By lifting the veil on the multi-million-dollar Islamophobia Industry, Lean shines a light on the network of business, political, and religious organizations and individuals who employ rank bigotry to promote their interests. A must-read." - Reza Aslan, author of *No god But God.*

"In this provocative and engaging book, Nathan Lean meticulously untangles the dense web of fear merchants who have made Muslim-bashing a cottage industry. He reveals the connections between them and the motives that animate their machine of propaganda. Lean's is a battle against Islamophobia, one that he wages with a seamless and compelling narrative." - Juan Cole, author of *Engaging the Muslim World.*

"Nathan Lean skillfully narrates an alternative history of the contemporary relationship between the Muslim world and the West, reminding his readers of the effects of Islamophobia in a moving and powerful way. This book is absolutely indispensable for building the more positive and shared future that still alludes us a decade into the War on Terror. Any journalist, pundit, policy-maker or intelligence analyst who doesn't read The Islamophobia Industry and take its message to heart is committing professional malpractice. Any citizen concerned about the future of this country and the world at large owes it to themselves to read this book lest the processes Lean describes reach a tipping point and poison relations between the West and the Muslim world for generations to come." - Mark LeVine, author of *Heavy Metal Islam*

"Nathan Lean has written an eye-opener — the most comprehensive book to date on a new and dangerous cycle of minority persecution in American society. Lean's book exposes the key players, funders and enablers of Islamophobia in America and the destructive effect of their politics on our national fabric. Worth every minute of reading." - Nihad Awad, National Executive Director, Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR)

"The spike in anti-Muslim sentiment didn't fall from the sky or rise from the ground - it was manufactured by a shadowy network of bloggers, funders, pundits, preachers and politicians. In a tightly-written, fast-paced narrative that feels like a thriller backed by the research of a doctoral thesis, Nathan Lean shows us just how

deep the rabbit hole goes. Essential reading for anyone who wants a window into the origins of contemporary Islamophobia." - Eboo Patel, author of *Acts of Faith and Sacred Ground*

"In the months after 9/11, Americans took pride in defending Muslim neighbors in their own communities. Political leaders boasted about liberating Muslims overseas. So why are the politics of fear more intense a decade after the murders at the twin towers? Lean pins the blame on an Islamophobia industry in a lucid and detailed examination of the dark side of our politics." – Richard Wolffe, MSNBC political analyst and author of *Renegade: The Making of a President*

"Islamophobia is not only about ignorance and fear. Some people purposefully nurture it and use it as a political strategy. Nathan Lean's The Islamophobia Industry shows what is happening behind the scenes. It is an essential book for anyone who wants to understand the rationale and objectives behind those who foster this new racism against Muslims." – Tariq Ramadan, Professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies at Oxford University and author of *The Quest for Meaning*

"So many of America's mistakes and bad acts over the past decade are due to Islamophobia, and Nathan Lean's new book traces the phenomenon's genesis and its culprits. Those who have been spawning this all-too-familiar demonization campaign have been hiding in the dark for too long. This book is so valuable because it drags them out into the light and thus performs a true service for the nation." – Glenn Greenwald, columnist for Salon and author of *Liberty and Justice For Some*

"Nathan Lean's The Islamophobia Industry could not be more timely or critical. This is an extraordinarily important and groundbreaking study. It exposes the multi-million-dollar cottage industry of fear mongers and the network of funders and organizations that support and perpetuate bigotry, xenophobia, racism, and produce a climate of fear that sustains a threatening social cancer." – John L. Esposito (from the foreword)

About the Author

Nathan Lean is a writer and scholar of Middle East studies. He has written extensively about Islam, American foreign policy, national politics, and global affairs. He is co-author of *Iran, Israel, and the United States: Regime Security vs. Political Legitimacy* and is a contributing writer at *PolicyMic*. He is the Editor-in-Chief of Aslan Media and currently resides in Washington, D.C.

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