

**TRANSCRIPT OF PHONE CALL BETWEEN FRANK GAFFNEY AND MATTHEW
ROSENBERG OF THE *NEW YORK TIMES***

February 2, 2017

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: Matt Rosenberg.

FRANK GAFFNEY: Hey Matt, it's Frank Gaffney. Is this a good time to talk?

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: Hey! How are you? Yeah, yeah, hold one second.

FRANK GAFFNEY: Well, not great. But let me just say I'd like to record this conversation.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: Sure. I'll do the same, give me one second.

FRANK GAFFNEY: Good. Yep.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: You're probably going to hear me go on hold for a second, don't be alarmed.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: Sorry, there you are.

[Back and forth to establish communications deleted.]

FRANK GAFFNEY: That's rather better.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: I thought I was routing the audio through the wrong thing. I had not put on my headphones, alright. Here we are, we sorted it out. How's it going?

FRANK GAFFNEY: Well it's not going very well, Matt, as you may have figured out by my earlier email to you about your piece in the paper today [email exchange attached]. I must tell you I was, not surprised, but disappointed at what I think was a rather fundamental message that I imparted to you in whatever it was, two hours worth of conversation [that] was seemingly gratuitously ignored – and it appears in two different places, one in the body of the article that I guess you wrote and the caption I don't know who wrote that. Maybe that was you, maybe that was somebody else and the picture that accompanied it.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: That wasn't me.

FRANK GAFFNEY: In both places the same very important mistake was made. I think it has to be corrected.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: Well, I actually haven't seen the caption. First I'm hearing about it. Yeah, I'm going to have the caption word changed to "there are multiple groups that are engaged in."

FRANK GAFFNEY: Well, I don't know why you wouldn't [use] what I said to you. Which is "Muslim Brotherhood." that's exactly what I was talking about, the Muslim Brotherhood. I didn't say "Islam," I didn't say "Muslims," I didn't in any way suggest that it was *everybody*.

That was a point that I made to you repeatedly, including in the very paragraph leading up to the one that you cited.

It's just, it's certainly reinforces a sense that you guys are intent on promoting, I don't whether it's "fake news" – I think of it as a "fake narrative" about me and about people like, well, for that matter Steve Bannon and Donald Trump and others that you've gone after in this article.

It's just not right. And you are misleading the public. And frankly, what you're doing is creating this sense that the Southern Poverty Law Center and its false narrative is right. And I have to tell you that it is inviting a violent attack on me in ways that I think is unwarranted and I'm sure you would feel bad if it happened in part because people seem to have been goaded into defending their faith against me.

Now, I take it as an occupational hazard when I'm talking about the Muslim Brotherhood or when I'm talking about the Islamic State. But you're inviting by this false representation of my views, attacks on me by all kinds of other Muslims. And I think it's outrageous and it really requires not just in the caption but in the body of your text, where you talk about my "view of Islam" in a way that was clearly not what I was talking about in that particular passage. I was talking about the Muslim Brotherhood.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: Throughout the interview, and I'll go through the interview again but throughout it and for that point and after that point discuss how if you believe Sharia and you adhere [to] any part of it, you therefore believe the rest. And any observant Muslim is somebody who adheres to some portion of Sharia it's through the way it is – it's the same if you're an observant Jew or an observant Christian you believe and adhere to be some parts of your sacred text.

FRANK GAFFNEY: That may be your view; that is not my experience of Muslims.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: Sharia is kind of the foundational text of Islam.

Frank: No, that is not correct, Matt. It is a foundational text of Islam that is not generally adhered to by lots of Muslims. They may speak of "the path" as their guiding light, but most of them don't practice – not most of them, I don't know, many, many, millions of them – don't practice their faith in accordance with Sharia.

So what we're talking about, as I made clear in those places where I described it to you was the political, military, legal, totalitarian code that is not universally held by all Muslims. And it's a distinction that I made repeatedly.

But the main point is here is I want to be clear with you when I was talking about "termites" hollowing out the structures of our government, when I talked about people who were involved in these various organizations and so on, [I] wasn't talking about all Muslims or all of Islam. That's just wrong if you're going to tell me that that's what you took away from the conversation.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: We didn't say you were. What we said was that, you said many of the Mosques in America you believed are under the sway of the Brotherhood, that Muslim student groups are under the sway of the Brotherhood, that Muslim rights groups you gave me a long list of them and in that preceding sentence that's exactly what we said and we set up that quote fairly, I do believe that.

FRANK GAFFNEY: Let me just go over with this with you, a textual analysis. The third paragraph he-

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: Let's not. Frank, Frank.

FRANK GAFFNEY: No, but please, Matt. Just indulge me because I'm telling you what you put in there is both wrong and out of context and potentially harmful. And I don't know whether you meant it to be, but if you did mean it to be I want to make sure both you understand I'm going to say you misrepresented

what I said and that what I'm saying is of relevance directly to the Muslim Brotherhood. That was the context as well. My view of Islam is not what you characterized, my view of the Muslim Brotherhood is pretty much what you characterized and that's clearly what I was talking about in the section you've quoted.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: Look, in your words you've connected the Muslim Brotherhood to almost every single significant Muslim group in America.

FRANK GAFFNEY: I do, they've founded most of them.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: And that's what we're talking about here.

FRANK GAFFNEY: But that's not the same thing as "Islam."

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: I don't think we've been unfair to you.

FRANK GAFFNEY: It's not the same thing as "Islam." It's not the same thing as my "view of Islam."

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: We're getting into semantics here. We're separating the practice from the religion.

FRANK GAFFNEY: No, we're not! We're getting into the substance of my position which you've misrepresented.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: (Inaudible). I mean at some point the two aren't totally separate.

FRANK GAFFNEY: Well, to the extent that they are practicing their faith in accordance with Sharia as the authorities have defined it in *Reliance of the Traveler* as we discussed, defines it. That is problematic, surely. But that is not the case.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: That is literally every single practicing Muslim on the planet.

FRANK GAFFNEY: That is not the case. That is simply not the case, Matt.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: That's just the way it is. That's like separating Judaism from Talmud it doesn't work.

FRANK GAFFNEY: "Some form of Sharia" is kind of the critical point. They may call it Sharia, most of them are illiterate who may not have read the Quran, who may think that it's just "Sharia" but they don't know what it actually entails.

I'm talking about a subset of that larger population and the leading edge of its efforts to impose it's supremacist doctrine on the rest of us is the Muslim Brotherhood. And the Muslims who may not know what Sharia is or may not want to practice it if they do know what Sharia is – I don't mean to suggest that all those who aren't are illiterate – but, I'm just saying that the people who we're talking about, who are *not* with the Sharia supremacist program are a significant number of Muslims.

And I go out of my way as I did with you I believe several times, certainly in the immediate preceding paragraphs [of the cited quote], to make it clear *I'm not talking about them*. I'm talking about the ones who are Sharia-adherent supremacists and are trying to impose it on all of us – in particular the Muslim Brotherhood, which is dominating these various groups in America for that purpose.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: Let's follow the logic here as you just put out. Muslim Brotherhood follows this program, the Muslim Brotherhood had founded almost every major Muslim-American group, also Muslim rights student groups. You also, in the interview you went out on a bent about how they control most of the mosques or other associates of them do. I think giving me all those statements the way we phrased this quote is fair and accurate.

FRANK GAFFNEY: The ones that they own the mortgages of, and the ones that they took over, the ones that they constructed, yes. Not all mosques, I didn't say that. But look, I'm not trying to quibble about the magnitude of the problem here.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: You said most, you did say most mosques in America.

FRANK GAFFNEY: Pardon me? Yeah, I believe it is most mosques in America.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: Most mosques in America, we didn't say they owned all mosques, we didn't say you said they owned all mosques.

FRANK GAFFNEY: You say I said this is my "view of Islam." That's not correct, Matt, it's just not correct. I'm talking about a significant problem within the Muslim-American community. I didn't say all Muslims, I didn't say all of Islam, I just didn't. And I don't believe that.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: We don't say you did.

FRANK GAFFNEY: This is my view of Islam. And in the caption "his perspective on *Muslims*."

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: We don't say you said all of Islam. We said that "they are our enemies, there are people with a problem in our mosques, in Muslim student groups, and in Muslim civil rights groups." Which I don't think is an unfair statement and I don't think you would disagree with me on that.

FRANK GAFFNEY: No, that's not an unfair statement, but that's not what you said in the article, that's not what you said in the article. What I'm trying to correct is what you said in the article not what my views are. I understand what my views are and you've characterized them on the phone and I think we discussed them at length in the interview. When you-

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: I am going to discuss this with my editors and if they think correction is warranted we'll run one. It's obviously a judgement call, I'm going to disagree with you because I wrote it, but I'm going to discuss it with my editors and I absolutely will [inaudible]. We are working on a follow-up that will go into these views at more depth and length because obviously some of them are two or three paragraphs in imperfect form and we both understand that as well.

FRANK GAFFNEY: Well, if this is any guide as to what you're going to do with the longer form I'm going to probably not be happy with that either. My only point is this, and if you are going to fairly represent my views to your editors, I hope you'll say this directly: To say this is my view of "Muslims" or this is my view of "Islam" is not my view of Muslims and it is not my view of Islam. It is my view of *Sharia*, as it is defined by the authorities of the faith and as it is practiced most vociferously by the Muslim Brotherhood. But I just, I would ask you to show them the context of what I said and see if they don't agree that I was actually talking about some subset of that larger population and it's unfair, it's irresponsible to claim it was addressing the whole thing.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: If we were to word the sentence, say hypothetically like the “extended view of the problem within Islam” or the problem, you know something within that.

FRANK GAFFNEY: “Within Islam,” that’s exactly right.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: That’d be fine with you?

FRANK GAFFNEY: That is exactly right and that is what I said.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: Okay.

FRANK GAFFNEY: It’s not the same thing as “the problem with Islam.” It’s just not, that’s a critical difference and I’m sure any decent editor would understand the distinction.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: Alright, we’ll be in touch.

FRANK GAFFNEY: Okay, thank you.

MATTHEW ROSENBERG: Alright, thanks bye.