

Trump: 'We're Gonna Be Looking Into' How We Can Get Rid of All the Muslims

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First published in September 2015. Of extreme relevance to an understanding of the presidential election campaign

Image: Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump is being criticized for his response to a question about Muslim and their "training camps," asked during a town hall event in New Hampshire on Thursday. (Image: Screenshot)

In a week that has already seen collective outrage in [response to the treatment](#) of a Muslim teenager in Texas who was handcuffed and arrested simply for bringing a homemade clock to school, the pervasiveness of Islamophobic sentiment was on display once again overnight after Republican presidential frontrunner Donald Trump fielded a question in New Hampshire about what he planned to do "about getting rid of" all the nation's Muslims.

And though no candidate can be held responsible for the statements made or questions directed at them during an open Q&A session, it is Trump's response that has set off a firestorm of condemnation.

As the *Washington Post* [reports](#):

[The exchange](#) came during a post-debate rally in Rochester, N.H., during which Trump asked the audience for questions rather than giving a speech. To kick things off, Trump pointed at a man in the audience: "Okay, this man. I like this guy."

"We have a problem in this country, it's called Muslims," the man said. "We know our current president is one. You know, he's not even an American. Birth certificate, man."

"Right," Trump said, then adding with a shake of his head: "We need this question? This first question."

"But any way," the man said. "We have training camps... where they want to kill us."

"Uh huh," Trump said.

"That's my question: When can we get rid of them?" the man said.

Trump responded: "We're going to be looking at a lot of different things. You know, a lot of people are saying that, and a lot of people are saying that bad

things are happening out there. We're going to look at that and plenty of other things."

Watch:

In response, Kevin Drum [wondered](#) at *Mother Jones* whether the latest comment would be enough to damage his campaign. "If there's any justice," wrote Drum, "this might finally do him in."

However, Trump has so far seen his poll numbers rise in the wake of derogatory comments made about other groups, including Mexican immigrants and women. By targeting the Muslim community, Trump is contributing to what critics see as a growing and troubling atmosphere of anti-Islamic sentiment that has taken hold of the nation in recent years. Not spoken in a vacuum, wrote journalist Glenn Greenwald of Trump's latest comments, they follow a "continuous, sustained demonization of a small minority group" in this country that has become part of the right-wing ethos in the post-9/11 era. Such demonization, "sooner or later," said Greenwald, has consequences.

Since Trump entered the presidential race many have brushed off his early success as flash-in-the-pan politics that result largely from his celebrity status and flamboyant (if noxious) media persona. However, other observers on these pages ([here](#) and [here](#)) have warned that beneath his bravado lurks a deeply troubling—and quite modern form—of fascism that should trouble the minds of those who care about fundamental principles of tolerance, human rights, and civil decency.

"In every way that matters, [Trump] is a fascist," [wrote](#) Roger White, a senior research analyst for SEIU, at *Common Dreams* last month.

"He reminds one of Mussolini—a corporatist buffoon with a huge ego and a mean streak. He is a first rate demagogue. His brand of racial politics is just vague enough to be popular with enough people to earn him a serious following, but specific enough for us to know the atrocities this type of talk can lead to."

And, White continued, "This is not the phony so called 'liberal' fascism invented by the right. This is the real deal, and its popularity is growing among GOP voters right now. Republicans are standing on the edge of the abyss."

The question is, he asked in conclusion: "Will they jump?"

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