



Stand up against the Muslim ban

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February 9, 2017

With the recent inauguration of a new president and the subsequent transition of power to a new administration, our nation has recently undergone some major changes. The most widespread change, however, has been the piece of legislature effectively nicknamed the “Muslim Ban.”

Here is some background knowledge: an executive order, signed by President Donald Trump on Jan. 27, placed an effective 120-day ban on immigrants of seven Muslim-majority nations: Iraq, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Somalia, Yemen and Syria. On the implementation of the ban, its supporters say it takes measures to protect the United States against terrorism, not against Muslims.

However, there are two issues with this claim. The first is the most crucial evidence against Trump’s ban: not a single nation on that list has committed a terrorist attack on U.S. soil in the past 40 years, as stated by the Cato Institute. This means that even even if the ban were justified, it is directed at the wrong nations.

Let me stress this: in the past 40 years, zero Americans have died on U.S. mainland at the hands of citizens of Iraq, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Somalia, Yemen, or Syria. So there is no factual evidence that this ban will protect anyone by any means because even if the ban had been imposed for the past 40 years, it would have saved exactly zero lives. Conversely, Saudi Arabia’s citizens are responsible for 2,369 deaths, United Arab Emirates’ citizens have taken the lives of 314 Americans, Egypt has killed 162, and Lebanon has killed 159 according to the Cato Institute.

The second issue with the idea that the ban is anti-terrorism and not anti-Muslim is this: While the rhetoric of the order never explicitly states that only Muslims are affected, it includes an exception for “minority religions,” meaning that truly, the majority religion of Islam is targeted.

Even still, some Americans remain unmoved. They have this oversimplified and illogical thought process: if some Muslims are terrorists, then all Muslims are dangerous. In reality, terrorists

come from all religions and all parts of the world. According to the FBI, 94 percent of terrorist attacks between the years of 1980 to 2005 in the United States were carried out by non-Muslims. Even if a majority a group of people so happened to make up a majority of terrorists, we should never contend that the god one worships marks one as exclusively malevolent.

Additionally, some argue that, “The ban is only for 120 days. It’s not that big of a deal.” But since when is prejudice or hatred justified by its brevity or lack thereof? No prejudice over any length of time, from 10 seconds to 10 millennia, is ever justified.

The War on Terrorism is real and alarming, but let us not allow this fear to cause us to categorize religions or classify nationalities.

So, our government is in the wrong. How do we react? We live in a world where negativity can easily run rampant. That fact manifests itself in the form of hatred against political activist groups who express their Constitutional rights by marching for what they believe in. It shows itself when any statement is made that acts to group a people and label them as bad. It is also conversely expressed every time anyone who sees this negativity apathetically sits back and complains. Comments such as “I’m embarrassed of my country,” or “Our country is crumbling,” not only have recently filled my social media feeds, but have also disheartened me with this thought: Have we become a generation that seeks change through negativity?

Do not complain. Stand up. Fight. Take action. Spread the word. Sign a petition. Donate to the American Civil Liberties Union. Let us use this opportunity to say that no, the United States never has been, is not, and never will be a nation that boxes a majority religion or a nationality or a skin and labels it as inherently evil. Rather, it is a nation that was founded by people who were escaping persecution based on their religion and will continue to empathize with such people. Let us be active and caring and never unresponsive to the actions our country and leaders make. But most importantly, let us be constantly striving to make our nation and world a more positive place, void of negativity, filled with action, exhausted of all grouping, and controlled by us, equal Global Citizens, where our rank in society is marked not by who we choose to worship nor the nation we live in nor the color of our skin, but by one simple fact: that we are human, and all humans deserve to be treated equally, cared for well, and given a chance at a fair life.