

# Flirting With Fascism on CNN Headline News: Host Glenn Beck threatens Muslims with concentration camps

By [Thomas Paine](#)

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The New York Times ([12/4/06](#)), profiling new CNN Headline News host Glenn Beck, called him “brash” and “opinionated,” with an “unfiltered approach.” The conservative talk-radio host-turned-cable news announcer, the paper reported, “take[s] credit for saying what others are feeling but are afraid to say.”

The Times mentioned one of the things Beck has said recently, to newly elected U.S. Rep. Keith Ellison (D-Minn.), a Muslim: “Sir, prove to me that you are not working with our enemies.” But as press critic Eric Alterman pointed out (Altercation, [12/4/06](#)), as offensive as that question is, it doesn’t begin to suggest the poisonousness of Beck’s rhetoric about Muslims.

On his [August 10](#) radio show, distributed by Clear Channel’s Premiere Radio Networks, Beck told listeners, “The world is on the brink of World War III,” then issued this warning:

*All you Muslims who have sat on your frickin’ hands the whole time and have not been marching in the streets and have not been saying, ‘Hey, you know what? There are good Muslims and bad Muslims. We need to be the first ones in the recruitment office lining up to shoot the bad Muslims in the head.’ I’m telling you, with God as my witness... human beings are not strong enough, unfortunately, to restrain themselves from putting up razor wire and putting you on one side of it. When things—when people become hungry, when people see that their way of life is on the edge of being over, they will put razor wire up and just based on the way you look or just based on your religion, they will round you up. Is that wrong? Oh my gosh, it is Nazi, World War II wrong, but society has proved it time and time again: It will happen.*

On [September 5](#), Beck took the same message to his CNN Headline News audience, declaring, “In 10 years, Muslims and Arabs will be looking through a razor wire fence at the West.” He explained:

*Since 9/11, Americans have gotten so fed up with the “yes, but” Muslims. The “yes, but” Muslims are the ones who show up on talkshows and in the media and say, “Yes, terrorism is bad, but”—and then they go through a list of reasons on why we should try and sympathize with people who fly planes into buildings.... If, God forbid, there’s another attack, we won’t have anymore patience for the “yes, buts.” The Muslim community better find a spokesman who isn’t a “yes, but” Muslim. They shouldn’t even understand the word “but,” because if they don’t, when things heat up, the profiling will only get worse, and the razor wire will be coming.*

Beck went on to say:

*You want the profiling to stop? Then, here's an idea. Stop murdering innocent people. Stop excusing the people who do. You do that for a while, and I guarantee you won't have any more problems at the airports. Stop blowing stuff up and the world just might be your oyster. Otherwise, it's going to be like that movie, The Siege. You remember that movie? The Muslims will see the West through razor wire if things don't change.*

He concluded:

*Look, I'm not saying all Arabs and Muslims are anti-American. Far from it. We should get to know these people and embrace the good Muslims, and eliminate the bad ones. Here's what I don't know. I don't know if the Muslim community will ever step to the plate like the Japanese-American community did during World War II. You know, it was absolutely disgraceful how we rounded innocent people up then and, sadly, history has a way of repeating itself no matter how grotesque that history might be. The Muslim community can prevent this if they act now.*

When Beck is talking about “razor wire,” he’s talking about concentration camps—in the original sense of the word, places where masses of people are imprisoned “just based on the way you look or just based on your religion.” Despite his (perfectly accurate) observation that such camps are “Nazi, World War II wrong,” comparable to the “absolutely disgraceful” wartime interment of Japanese-Americans, Beck is clearly using the threat of such camps to coerce Muslims into behavior he approves of, like volunteering “to shoot the bad Muslims in the head.”

Since the overwhelming majority of U.S. Muslims are neither “murdering innocent people” nor “excusing the people who do,” there’s really nothing that they can do to avert Beck’s threat that “the razor wire will be coming.” And Beck is explicit that there’s nothing non-Muslims can do to avoid locking Muslims up en masse.

The New York Times, in its profile about Beck, refers to his criticism of the animated film Happy Feet, but fails to mention that he uses his Headline News slot to issue threats that he himself compares to Nazi behavior. For the Times, CNN’s decision to give Beck a TV show is a “success,” because he “has increased the ratings in his 7 p.m. time period 60 percent among all viewers, and 84 percent among viewers aged 25 to 54.”

The Times article quoted CNN executive Kenneth Jautz as saying that the network did not take Beck’s politics into account when it hired him. “We did not set out to have anyone from any particular view fronting these shows,” he said. In fact, CNN hired Beck knowing that the host’s repertoire included hateful attacks—the Hurricane Katrina refugees seen on TV and the father of a terrorism victim were both “scumbags” (Mediamatters.org, [5/17/04](#), [9/9/05](#))-as well as a disturbing preoccupation with violence: Beck has told his listeners that he was praying for a gruesome death for Democratic presidential candidate Dennis Kucinich ([3/6/03](#)), and that he was fantasizing about strangling filmmaker Michael Moore to death ([5/17/05](#)). As FAIR predicted (FAIR Action Alert, [1/18/06](#)), Beck has not changed his repellent tune simply because he’s been hired by a major media outlet.

Contrary to Beck’s suggestion, there are things that the people of the U.S. can do to avoid repeating the “grotesque” history of Japanese-American internment. One of these things is to take people seriously when they start threatening people with concentration

camp—rather than looking the other way because of their ratings “success.”

**ACTION:** Please contact CNN/U.S. president Jonathan Klein and urge him to condemn Glenn Beck’s chilling threats against Muslims.

**CONTACT:** CNN/U.S. President Jonathan Klein Phone: 404-827-1500

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