



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on January 9, 2011

Politicizing Ariz. Mass Shooting to Demonize Guns, Conservatives

According to news reports, Rep. Giffords' office was vandalized in connection with her vote for ObamaCare. She was also one of the politicians targeted for defeat by former Vice Presidential nominee Sarah Palin on a website using an image of crosshairs, a fact which has been repeated in countless news reports about the attack. Tea Party efforts to replace the Congresswoman have also received a great deal of publicity, as if those were somehow related to the shooting.



An Associated Press story [claimed](#) that the shooting had “left Americans questioning whether divisive politics had pushed the suspect [Jared Loughner] over the edge.” Later on in the same story, the AP alleged: “It is not clear whether the gunman had the health care debate in mind.” The piece also referenced a narrow electoral battle between the Congresswoman and a Tea Party candidate who raised campaign funds with — gasp! — target-shooting events.

In a report on Fox News, the Washington correspondent made sure to [demonize](#) allegedly lax gun-control laws. He also claimed the tragedy would revive the debate on gun control in America. Leftist MSNBC personality Keith Olbermann also [hysterically attacked](#) guns and rhetoric in a “special comment” segment.

Speaking of threats against Arizona's top federal judge, who was among those killed in Saturday's attack, popular leftist website *DailyKos* [wrote](#) that “his story is instructive of the increasingly — and obviously — dangerous and violent rhetoric of the far right, fueled by hate radio and rightwing media.” The founder of the website, Markos Moulitsas, sent out a [message](#) reading “Mission accomplished, Sarah Palin” shortly after the attack.

Ironically, the same website had also placed Rep. Giffords on a “[target list](#)” — in bold letters — for supposedly being a “blue dog” democrat, exemplified by her support for gun rights and tougher border control. The day before the shooting, a *DailyKos* writer even published an article about Giffords headlined: “[My CongressWOMAN voted against Nancy Pelosi! And is now DEAD to me!](#)” Commentators have [suggested](#) the piece might be “evidence” in the shooting case, but what is certain is that the leftist site's hysterical blaming of conservatives for the tragedy is at least misplaced and hypocritical.

But even some law enforcers joined in, too. Pima County Sherriff Clarence Dupnik — responsible for Tucson — for example, tried to link “anti-government” rhetoric to the tragedy. “When you look at



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unbalanced people, how they respond to the vitriol that comes out of certain mouths about tearing down the government — the anger, the hatred, the bigotry that goes on in this country is getting to be outrageous," he was quoted as saying. "And unfortunately, Arizona, I think, has become the capital. We have become the mecca for prejudice and bigotry."

Politicians from all over the political spectrum condemned the attack and offered condolences and prayers for the victims. But at least some were already making the rounds trying to politicize the murders before anything was even known. State Senator Linda Lopez, for example, went on Fox News to [point blame](#) at the Tea Party. She said the Congresswoman had been threatened by right-wing activists and that the shooter was an Afghanistan veteran, an allegation disputed by the army.

But while establishment news organs and opportunists attempt to paint the shooter as a Tea Party-type ideologue — criticizing Sarah Palin and others for their "rhetoric" — the truth appears to be more complex. A [YouTube account](#) believed to belong to Loughner, for example, lists his favorite books as the *Communist Manifesto* and Nazi (National Socialist) leader Adolph Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, among others. At least one of the victims, Congresswoman Giffords, was Jewish.

A [cryptic video](#) that was uploaded before the shooting regarding Loughner's "Final Thoughts" is hard to make sense of. But it is also revealing. In it, the alleged shooter discusses the creation of new languages and currencies, government mind control enforced through grammar rules, sleepwalking, dreaming, the definition of terrorism, and more. He appeared to have an obsession with mind control and brainwashing.

"All conscience dreaming at this moment is asleep," read the white letters against a black background in the video he supposedly posted. "Jared Loughner is conscience dreaming at this moment. Thus, Jared Loughner is asleep."

After offering a fairly standard definition of terrorism, Loughner disputes the notion that he should be classified as such. "If you call me a terrorist then the argument to call me a terrorist is Ad hominem," noted the text. "You call me a terrorist. Thus, the argument to call me a terrorist is Ad hominem."

The video also discusses government-issued Bibles to military recruits in the Phoenix area. "Every United States Military recruit at MEPS in Phoenix is receiving one mini bible before the tests," the video claimed. "Jared Loughner is a United States Military recruit at MEPS in Phoenix. Therefore Jared Loughner is receiving one mini bible before the tests." He also noted that he did not identify a "belief" on his Army application, and that "the recruiter wrote on the application: None."

Later on in the same video, Loughner seems to advocate collectivist revolution against property owners and authorities. "If the property owners and government officials are no longer in ownership of their land and laws from a revolution then the revolutionary's from the revolution are in control of the land and laws," he wrote. "The property owners and government officials are no longer in ownership of their land and laws from a revolution. Thus, the revolutionary's from the revolution are in control of the land and laws [sic]."

He also stated that he could not trust the current government "because of the ratifications: The government is implying mind control and brainwash on the people by controlling grammar." He also blasted the idea of trusting in God, writing "No! I won't trust in God!"

A woman [claiming](#) to have gone to school and played in a band with the shooter wrote a series of messages on the social-networking site Twitter that have attracted a great deal of publicity. She claimed that Loughner was a leftist. "As I knew him he was left wing, quite liberal," wrote Caitie Parker,



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noting that the shooter was also “oddly obsessed with the 2012 prophecy.”

Parker described her former schoolmate, who is now 22, as a very philosophical “pot head” loner who enjoyed rock music. She also noted that he was popular until an episode of alcohol poisoning in 2006, after which he dropped out of school.

A MySpace social-networking account linked to the shooter, taken down minutes after Loughner was identified, reportedly featured recent posts reading “Goodbye friends” and “Please don't be mad at me.” It also contained the same list of favorite books including the *Communist Manifesto* and *Mein Kampf*.

But despite the immediate (and disingenuous) efforts to link what appears to be a deranged leftist to the Tea Party movement, local conservative leaders announced they would not change their rhetoric. “I did feel, you know, very like ‘why are they jumping to this conclusion before they even knew the person's name?’ They're jumping to this conclusion that it has to do with the hotly contested Congressional race,” [said](#) Pima County Tea Party Patriots founder Allyson Miller in an interview with Talking Points Memo. “Well, apparently, from what I've seen so far ... it's looking like that's not the case.”

Some analysts suggested Loughner may suffer from a mental illness or even a combination of disorders. “I am a licensed psychologist and from afar, and am not in the position to diagnose Mr. Loughner,” [wrote](#) Jeff Kaye in a piece for a blog called Fire Dog Lake, one of the first leftist outlets to [politicize the tragedy](#). “However, one can make some initial impressionistic comments based upon the video content he posted on YouTube.” Kaye speculated that Loughner could suffer from schizophrenia or a variety of other mental illnesses.

“There are also indications of a sense of multiple internal selves, or a dissociated kind of experience (‘conscience dreaming’) that may also mean he had dissociated personality as well,” Kaye wrote. “I would caution against implying any politics to someone who appears so disturbed, as his interpretation of political symbols and phrases are interpreted in a highly idiosyncratic and irrational way.”

But even the psychologist didn't rule out anti-government rhetoric or stop short of trying to politicize the tragedy. “However, if he were susceptible to violence, then the targets available by the given society, i.e., the rhetoric out there in the society, would have pointed him towards liberals, leftists, Muslims, or other minorities, and that kind of rhetoric has mainly been from the right-wing, as has been copiously commented upon,” Kaye wrote.

According to news reports, police are looking for a possible second suspect connected to the attack. Jared Loughner is already in custody, reportedly refusing to talk. And now, the Federal Bureau of Investigation has reportedly taken over the investigation.

As [noted](#) by commentators, Mexico, which maintains a strict ban on civilian firearm ownership, has a far higher rate than the U.S. of politicians and law-enforcement personnel being targeted for kidnapping, assassinations, and even beheadings. Opportunists' efforts to link the Second Amendment to the shooting, therefore, should clearly be seen as disingenuous.

Attempts to paint a person who shows indications of being a deranged leftist murderer — whose favorite reading included communist propaganda and ideologically similar national-socialist propaganda — as a Tea Party activist are also unreasonable and false. Trying to benefit politically from a tragedy such as this one, especially by distorting the truth, should be strongly condemned by everyone. The facts are not yet all in, but from what is known, neither guns nor the Tea Party were responsible for this tragedy — a sick individual was.



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