

Terrorism Expert Brian Levin: U.S. 'Will Be Hit Again'; Calls for Moderating Political Rhetoric

Former Stockton Faculty Member and Professor at Cal State Speaks at William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy Event

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Galloway, NJ - "We are going to be hit again," Brian Levin, a nationally known expert on hate crimes and terrorism from California State University San Bernardino, told the audience at Stockton University in a speech Monday night sponsored by the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy.

Speaking on what turned out to be the eve of terrorist attacks that left at least 34 dead and 170 or more injured in Brussels, Belgium, Levin spoke about the risks the United States faces from terrorism and hate crime, both home-grown and international.

ISIS is the newest and most dangerous terrorist group in the world, he noted, and it regards the United States, the Vatican and the United Kingdom as its "most widely held enemies."

But terrorism and hate crimes are both on the rise, with hate crimes against Muslims and anyone who looks as though they might be Muslim spiking after a terrorist attack, he said. Levin noted that a poll showed 43 percent of Americans say they are prejudiced against Muslims and Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump has been quoted as saying, "I think Islam hates us."

"We have to maintain good relations with the overwhelming majority of our Muslim population that is horrified" by these attacks, Levin said.

He criticized the political climate in which leaders are promoting division with

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While he declined to make a prediction about the upcoming presidential election, he said in answer to a question from the audience that if there is another terrorist attack here during the campaign, "I think the pool of people who would want an authoritarian candidate, even if the policies are opaque or downright silly," would increase.

"There will be a tolerance for intolerance, and that will be a scary situation."

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Levin is a court-certified expert on extremism in both the United States and the United Kingdom. He has testified before Congress and consulted for state and federal agencies including the FBI and Department of Homeland Security, as well as for universities and civil rights groups.

He is the author, co-author and editor of various books, scholarly articles, training manuals and studies on extremism and hate crime. He has written various "friend of the court" briefs for U.S. Supreme Court cases, including in the landmark case of *Wisconsin v. Mitchell*, where he presented criminological data establishing the severity and characteristics of hate crime.

"The Hughes Center is proud to provide this opportunity to the Stockton community and the public-ater