

US Republican congressman defends racist diatribe against immigrants

Patrick Martin
15 March 2017

Republican Representative Steve King won praise from Ku Klux Klan, neo-Nazi and white supremacist groups for statements this weekend that openly embraced the superiority of the white race and condemned immigrants as a threat to “Western civilization.”

King made his first comment on Twitter where he voiced his support for the ultra-right Dutch politician Geert Wilders, who has called for banning the Koran and prohibiting Muslim immigration into the Netherlands.

“Wilders understands that culture and demographics are our destiny. We can’t restore our civilization with somebody else’s babies,” King wrote. In a second tweet, King post a photo of himself with Wilders, saying “cultural suicide by demographic transformation must end.”

When some media pundits and fellow Republican congressmen criticized his comments, King began a tour of media outlets to gain greater publicity for his fascistic views. Appearing on CNN Monday, he declared he had not been misinterpreted. “I meant exactly what I said,” he continued. “‘I’m a champion for Western civilization,’ which he called ‘a superior civilization.’”

He said that during a recent visit to western Europe he had spoken repeatedly about the need to increase the white birth rate: “I’ve been to Europe and I’ve spoken on this issue and I’ve said the same thing as far as 10 years ago to the German people and any population of people that is a declining population that isn’t willing to have enough babies to reproduce themselves. I’ve said to them, ‘You can’t rebuild your civilization with somebody else’s babies. You’ve got to keep your birthrate up and you need to teach your children your values.’”

Spelling out his racist view of immigrants, he condemned those who were “living in enclaves, refusing to assimilate into the American culture and civilization.” He added, “I’d like to see an America that’s just so homogenous that we look a lot the same, from that perspective.”

“This is an effort on the left, I think, to break down the American civilization, the American culture, and turn it into something entirely different,” King said Monday. “And, yes, our English language is a big part of it. It’s a carrier of freedom.”

King’s foul views are noteworthy only because he spells out openly and without any political disguise the ideological basis of the Trump administration and Republican Party’s policies on immigration and racial minorities. His views are an expression of the backwardness cultivated by the American ruling class as a whole after decades of unending war and social reaction.

Elected from a northwestern Iowa district that is predominantly rural and agricultural, and heavily dependent on immigrants for both farm labor and work in the many local slaughterhouses and meatpacking plants, King has based his political career from the very beginning on anti-immigrant racism.

He entered electoral politics at the age of 47 as the owner of small construction company, appealing to Christian fundamentalists and chauvinists alarmed by the growing Hispanic population in the district (up from near-zero to 7 percent of the population by 2012). King introduced and pushed through an English-only bill in the state legislature, banning any delivery of government services in Spanish.

He won a closely contested Republican primary to fill a vacancy in the US House of Representatives in 2002, and immediately formed close ties with such ultra-right

mainstays as Michele Bachmann of neighboring Minnesota, and Tom Tancredo, an anti-immigrant demagogue from Colorado.

While most statewide Republican officials and the congressional Republican leadership in Washington condemned King's latest verbal atrocities, his bigotry is hardly a secret. In 2013, during debate on a failed immigration bill, King made the notorious claim that for every Mexican immigrant who graduated from college in the US, there were 100 who had "calves the size of cantaloupes" from carrying heavy loads of marijuana across the border. He once called immigration a "slow-motion Holocaust" directed against the white majority in the United States.

King's open racism did not deter Republican presidential candidates from virtually camping out on his doorstep in 2015-2016 to seek his endorsement, which eventually went to Texas Senator Ted Cruz, the favorite of the Christian fundamentalist groups that dominate the Iowa Republican Party.



To contact the WSWWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact