San Bernardino Shooter’s Dad: He was ‘Obsessed’ with Israel

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By Rosella Tercatin

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<http://www.timesofisrael.com/san-bernardino-shooters-dad-he-was-obsessed-with-israel/>

Syed Farook, father of San Bernardino terrorist Syed Rizwan Farook, has described his son as negatively “obsessed” with Israel.

In an interview with Italian daily La Stampa, Farook said that he once tried to console his son by promising him that Israel would not exist in another two years because “China, Russia and America will bring the Jews back to Ukraine.”

[In Sunday’s La Stampa (link in Italian)](http://www.lastampa.it/2015/12/06/esteri/il-pap-del-killer-di-san-bernardino-affascinato-dallisis-odiava-israele-t52TU5O4wHwqD1uYHmzsGJ/pagina.html) report, Farook said, “My son said that he shared [IS leader Abu Bakr] Al Baghdadi’s ideology and supported the creation of the Islamic State. He was also obsessed with Israel.”

“I told him he had to stay calm and be patient because in two years Israel will not exist any more. Geopolitics is changing: Russia, China and America don’t want Jews there any more. They are going to bring the Jews back to Ukraine. What is the point of fighting? We have already done it and we lost. Israel is not to be fought with weapons, but with politics. But he did not listen to me, he was obsessed,” Farook explained to US correspondent Paolo Mastrolilli.

Farook’s son is suspected of carrying out a mass shooting that killed 14 people in San Bernardino. The father was interviewed in Corona, California, where he lives with his older son, Syed Raheel Farook, a US Navy veteran.

Farook senior was born in Pakistan and arrived in the US in 1973. The family has been described by many as very integrated in American society, almost the [embodiment of the American dream](http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-syed-farook-had-traveled-to-saudi-arabia-married-appeared-to-live-american-dream-co-workers-say-20151202-story.html).

Farook told La Stampa how, once in the US, he got a degree in engineering and started to work hard to guarantee his children “an education and the opportunity to succeed in life.”

Other reports told a more nuanced story: Farook split from his wife Rafia, also Pakistan-born, who filed for divorce in 2006 and, according to [The New York Times](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/04/us/san-bernardino-shooting-syed-rizwan-farook.html), said her husband was violent and an alcoholic and beat her and the children.

In the La Stampa interview, Farook denied the accusations, saying that “Rizwan’s mother is very religious, as he was, and they united against me. Once we had a dispute over the historical figure of Jesus. My son called me a godless person and he decided that my marriage with my wife had to end,” he recalled. “They destroyed the family.”

Farook declared himself in complete despair and disbelief over what his son allegedly did. His daughters, Rizwan’s sisters, told [The New York Times](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/06/us/sisters-of-san-bernardino-shooting-suspect-say-they-saw-no-warning-signs.html?emc=edit_th_20151206&nl=todaysheadlines&nlid=72545571) that they had seen no warning signs.