

March 16, 2001

**ATTORNEY GENERAL SALAZAR ANNOUNCES 69 YEAR SENTENCE FOR
"FUQRA" DEFENDANT CONVICTED OF RACKETEERING AND
CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT MURDER**

Denver - Attorney General Ken Salazar announced today that James D. Williams was sentenced yesterday by El Paso County District Court Judge Larry Schwartz to 69 years in the Department of Corrections, in criminal case number 92CR3030. James D. Williams was convicted on October 28, 1993, of Conspiracy To Commit First Degree Murder (Class 2 Felony), two counts of Racketeering (Class 2 Felonies) and Second Degree Forgery (Class 4 Felony). After his conviction in 1993, James D. Williams fled and remained a fugitive until being apprehended in Virginia in August, 2000.

From at least the middle 1980's through 1990, the defendant was a leader of a local cell of an international organization known by the name of "Fuqra." This organization has been investigated for terrorist acts including murder and arson in New York, Detroit, Philadelphia, Toronto, Denver and Tucson.

The local group's existence came to light in 1989 as a result of the execution of a search warrant on a storage locker by the Colorado Springs Police. The search revealed numerous documents that later became evidence in this prosecution, a number of firearms, and nearly forty pounds of homemade explosive devices. This discovery led to a two-year investigation by local and federal agencies and culminated in this prosecution for violations of the Colorado Organized Crime Control Act ("COCCA") and other criminal acts. This investigation was a coordinated effort by the Attorney General's Office, the Colorado Springs Police Department, and the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment.

In addition to the individual crimes, Williams was convicted under the COCCA. The enterprise or organization in the name of whom the criminal acts were committed is "Fuqra." This organization claims to be a Muslim religious order, but many of their activities have been shown to be criminal in nature. The crimes proven in this case fell into three distinct categories, but all were shown to be in support of the organization's goals:

1. Conspiracy to Commit Murder & Terrorist Acts. The defendant was convicted of Conspiracy to Commit Murder in the First Degree resulting from evidence which included a comprehensive written plan for the murder of a Tucson, Arizona Muslim

cleric, Rashad Khalifa. Khalifa was murdered on January 31, 1990 in a manner that was remarkably similar to the written plan. A co-defendant, Edward Flinton, has since told investigators that he wrote the plan at the defendant's direction, utilizing notes provided by the defendant and then giving it to him. Flinton also told investigators that he and the defendant visited Khalifa at his Tucson mosque before the plan was written.

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In 1984 the Denver Hare Krishna temple in east Denver was firebombed, causing over \$200,000 in damage. Evidence linking the defendant and his co-defendants to this crime included a series of photos of the temple taken before the explosion and fire, a written report of the bombing, and explosive devices of a unique design which matched the devices used in the bombing. All of these items were found in the Colorado Springs storage locker in 1989.

2. Workers' Compensation Fraud. The defendant and his co-defendants also participated in the filing of false duplicate claims for Workers' Compensation benefits over a period of nearly ten years. These claims resulted in the loss to the Colorado Compensation Insurance Authority of over \$350,000. In several instances, defendants were shown to have had two fraudulent claims active at the same time using different names.

Some of these funds were traced directly to payments for a parcel of land in Chaffee County, which was utilized by the group as a residence compound and training site.

3. Theft of Rental Property. The defendant and several co-defendants participated in a series of thefts from El Paso County rental businesses. Light construction equipment such as pumps, air hammers and generators were rented by Fuqra members, often using false names and addresses, then reported stolen. Nearly all of this equipment was recovered during the execution of a search warrant on the Chaffee County compound.

In praising the efforts of prosecutors Assistant Attorney General Steve Radetsky, Jefferson County Deputy DA Doug Wamsley, and former Colorado Department of Labor and Employment Chief Criminal Investigator Susan Fenger, Attorney General Ken Salazar said, "The investigation and prosecution team has worked hard for years to ensure justice and the public safety of our communities were served in this case."