C AIR and Terrorism: Blanket Opposition to U.S. Investigations, Equivocal Condemnations for Plots Against America

This section assesses CAIR’s reaction to direct questions about terrorist acts and American efforts to crack down on those who facilitate them. CAIR claims that it has unequivocally condemned 9/11, but a number of its officials openly and repeatedly espoused conspiracy theories questioning Al Qaeda’s responsibility for the most devastating terrorist attacks in American history.

And when it comes to domestic investigations CAIR casts virtually any law enforcement action as an assault on all American Muslims. Missing is any possibility that a radical element, unwelcome in its midst, has been exposed.

CAIR hesitated on a number of fronts immediately after 9/11. On Sept. 14, 2001, CAIR-New York issued a qualified condemnation on its email list: “If such attacks were carried out by a Muslim -- as some biased groups claim -- then we, in the name of our religion, deny the act and incriminate the perpetrator.”

Four days later, in an online chat with the Washington Post, CAIR-New York Executive Director Ghazi Khankan launched a propaganda campaign casting the attacks as part of a conspiracy to discredit Muslims. It would continue for weeks. A cousin in Saudi Arabia sent him local newspaper reports “that two of the supposed terrorists who hit the Twin Towers whose names were given showed up (sic) Saudi Arabia,” he said during the chat. “Somebody is stealing passports and using them for such horrific acts. I wonder who is behind this terrorism and who benefits from it. Based on this discovery of these two names printed in the Saudi newspaper along with their pictures, I believe that many of the names of the terrorists are people impersonating innocent Muslims and Arabs.”

Similarly, CAIR spokesman Ibrahim Hooper hesitated in condemning Al Qaeda. “We condemn terrorism. We condemn the attacks on the buildings,” he told Salon.com in a Sept. 26, 2001 article. He declined to condemn Bin Laden outright. “If Osama Bin Laden was behind it, we condemn him by name.” Reporter Jake Tapper asked Hooper why the “if” -- why qualify the response?

“Hooper said he resented the question.”

CAIR-NY then pushed Khankan’s conspiracy theory that the hijackers were misidentified. On Oct. 5, 2001 it encouraged constituents to write letters to The New York Times saying “two of the 19 suspects: Abdulaziz Alomari and Saeed Alghamdi could not have been on the hijacked planes because they are still alive and are working in

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Saudi Arabia…Last week, the father of Mohamed Atta…was interviewed on the Egyptian Satellite Arabic Channel and said that his son, Mohamed Atta, was well and alive working now in the United Arab Emirates!…If three of the 19 suspected ‘hijackers’ are still alive, who were the other 16? The important questions are: Who is impersonating these three Muslim Arabs? Why are Muslim Arabs been (sic) implicated in this terrorism? And, who could ‘benefit’ from this horrific tragedy?”

Khankan repeated himself at a CAIR fundraiser in Vienna, Va. two days later, asking “Why is it assumed that Muslims were behind the attack on Sept. 11? …We know for sure at least three (unintelligible) whose names appear as part of the nineteen hijackers, who, in my opinion, have hijacked Islam. These people are still alive in the Middle East. The question is, who is impersonating these Muslim names? Who benefits from assuming that Muslims are behind this tragedy, and who benefits from this tragedy?”

At no point did CAIR publicly rebuke Khankan or disassociate itself from his statements. Khankan was at it again in an Oct. 14, 2001 Newsday article. Atta, he said yet again, was alive and well in the United Arab Emirates, the victim of a stolen passport. “Yet the FBI insists he was one of the hijackers. Why hasn't the media reported this?” He insisted at least two hijackers were in Saudi Arabia in a subsequent Newsday story four days later. “I spoke with the Saudi ambassador recently and he confirmed that.” Again, he asked “who really benefits from such a horrible tragedy that is blamed on Muslims and Arabs?”

It was not until December 2001, three months after the attacks, that CAIR finally released a statement acknowledging Bin Laden’s role in 9/11. And that was only after Bin Laden himself claimed credit for the attacks in a videotape aired around the world.

- **CAIR-Canada Board Member’s 9/11 Conspiracy Theory**

Advisory Board member Jamal Badawi, called the 9/11 attacks “un-Islamic” and “I strongly condemn” them, he told the Saudi Gazette. But, he said, it had not yet been confirmed who was actually behind the attacks. This wasn’t weeks after the attack, but in June 2005.

To Badawi, terrorists “are the ones who occupy others land by force, subjugate people and take away their rights by killing them and destroying their property.”

He applied similar logic to the violence in Iraq, alleging the America government was behind suicide car bomb attacks killing civilians: “There have been allegations that I cannot confirm that people going to the market to buy vegetables are stopped in the name of inspecting their cars by [American] forces, their hands are tied and they are blindfolded. There have been cases and I want a clarification from American officials to these allegations. After inspecting their cars they are allowed to go and when the car...

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reaches [the] checkpoint it explodes and they call them suicide bombers, perhaps the occupants of the car were not even aware that they are carrying a bomb in their car. Such incidents should be thoroughly probed."11

• **CAIR “Know Your Rights” Speaker Promotes 9/11 Conspiracy Theory, Anti-Semitism**

CAIR tolerated continued 9/11 revisionism at a “Know Your Rights” workshop it sponsored in San Diego two months later. Invited speaker and civil rights lawyer Randall Hamud said he understood an audience member’s comment that “enemies of Islam are successful at… putting Muslims on the defensive. There’s still no evidence that Muslims carried out 9-11.”

A lot of people felt that way, Hamud said. “And maybe a hundred years from now we’ll find that out.”12

At the same event, Hamud dismissed a recent “Fatwa Against Terrorism”13 from the Fiqh Council and endorsed by CAIR as an empty public relations gesture: “And this latest one, if it’s worded appropriately with the leadership of the various masjids across the country and they want to sign it, fine. You just need to read it and sign it and decide what you want to do with it. But it’s a fatwa I think for popular consumption in the United States. You try to get the religion off the hook with the media, it isn’t gonna work. Because a lot of the people in the media is controlled by basically Zionists.”14

**CAIR Consistently Opposes the U.S. Government’s Investigations into Terrorist Financiers and Supporters**

As the following examples show, when the Treasury Department freezes the assets of a charity which sent money to a terrorist group, it’s a baseless attack on the Muslim community. When the FBI raids offices of a suspected terrorist supporter it’s “a fishing expedition” with no proof. And when federal grand juries indict people on charges of supporting or even planning terrorist attacks, it’s evidence of a justice system that can’t be fair to Muslims.

• **CAIR Florida defends Boca Raton doctor accused of conspiring to provide material support to Al-Qaeda.**

Dr. Rafiq Sabir of Boca Raton was charged, along with an accomplice (Tariq Shah of New York), in May of 2005 with providing material support to al-Qaeda. The government alleges that Sabir agreed to “provide medical assistance to wounded

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Altuf Ali, the CAIR executive director in Pembroke Pines, attended Sabir's court hearing on May 31, 2005. He told the *Palm Beach Post* that Sabir's companion “is devastated over the ordeal and she has remained adamant” that Sabir is innocent.16

Ali told the *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, “We've seen cases where Muslims are charged for XYZ and then cleared of the charges, so we need to make sure that all the facts are revealed. ... Muslims, in general, in America are still facing a lot of adversity. ... I understand that our country has been on a high state of alert since 9-11, but in the American justice system there's still the presumption of innocence.”17

At his trial, Sabir was shown on video making the bayat, the pledge of allegiance, to Al Qaeda. Sabir was convicted May 21, 2007. He was sentenced to 25 years in prison on November 28, 2007.18 CAIR has yet to issue any statement regarding the conviction.

- **CAIR warned that the arrest of two Albany men on charges of taking part in what they thought was a plot to import a shoulder-fired missile and assassinate a Pakistani diplomat could be used to “smear Muslims and to demonize Islam.”**

On Aug. 5, 2004, Yassin Aref, the imam of the Masjid As-Salam mosque in Albany, N.Y., and Mohammed Hossain, the mosque’s founder,19 were indicted after a yearlong sting operation. The pair allegedly had taken part in what they believed was a money-laundering scheme connected to the purchase of shoulder-fired missiles and the planned assassination of the Pakistani ambassador to the United Nations.20

According to the criminal complaint, Hossain told an FBI informant that “he was a member of Jamaat-e-Islami (‘JEI’), a group identified...as an Islamic fundamentalist political party in Pakistan...”21 Additionally, in the summer of 2003, U.S. troops raided an Ansar al-Islam terrorist training camp in northern Iraq and found a notebook that contained Aref's name along with his former Albany address and telephone number.22

CAIR issued a press release following the indictment calling the allegations “deeply troubling to the American Muslim community...All too often, these types of cases are...

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used by those with political or religious agendas to smear Muslims and to demonize Islam. We should stick to the facts of the case and avoid generalizations and stereotypes that only serve to create societal divisions and promote anti-Muslim bigotry.”

Additionally, Hooper commented, “There's always a concern that people may be targeted for a sting operation like this solely because they are Muslims…It's a perplexing case, and the question we have is whether the government got these men to do something they otherwise wouldn't have done.”

Aref was convicted of material support in connection with an attack involving a weapon of mass destruction, money laundering, and conspiracy to provide material support to a terrorist organization in October 2006 and sentenced to 15 years in prison. Hossain was convicted on 27 counts and also sentenced to 15 years in prison.

- CAIR called the sentencing of three members of a jihad network in Northern Virginia “draconian,” and “call[ed] on Congress to conduct hearings into the selective prosecution of Muslims since the 9/11 terror attacks.”

In September 2003, 11 men alleged to be part of a Virginia jihad network were charged with conspiracy to wage war against the United States and conspiracy to provide material support to Al Qaeda.

Three of the men, Masoud Khan, Seifullah Chapman, and Hammad Abdur-Raheem were convicted on multiple charges the following March. Khan was convicted of conspiracy to wage war against the United States and providing material support to the Taliban. All three were convicted of conspiring to provide material support to Lashkar-e-Taiba, a Designated Foreign Terrorist Organization, and to attack India in violation of the Neutrality Act, as well as various firearms-related offenses, for actions during 2000 to 2003.

Six others pleaded guilty to various charges. Two men, Caliph Basha Abdur-Raheem and Sabri Benkhala, were acquitted.

CAIR-Maryland issued a press release decrying the convictions. The group’s executive director stated, “Although we pride our legal system on the theory of ‘presumption of

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innocence,” the perception within the American Muslim community is that Muslims and Arabs are automatically considered guilty until proven innocent.”

Abdur-Raheem was sentenced to life in prison, Chapman to 85 years, and Khan to 97 months.

“It is the near universal perception in the Islamic community that these men would never have been charged had they not been Muslims, and that once convicted, prosecutors would never have sought such draconian sentences,” CAIR said in response.

“Under the current administration,” the statement continued, “we are quickly approaching a state of affairs in which there is a two-tier prosecutorial system in America; one system for Muslims, and one for all other Americans. This disturbing trend should be of concern to everyone who values America's centuries-long tradition of equal justice under the law. We call on Congress to conduct hearings into the selective prosecution of Muslims since the 9/11 terror attacks.”

The Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development

As noted in the section on “The Suspect Ties of CAIR Officials,” the U.S. government shut down HLF on Dec. 4, 2001 for funneling money to Hamas. “Money raised by the Holy Land Foundation is used by Hamas to support schools and indoctrinate children to grow up into suicide bombers,” President Bush explained at the White House. “Money raised by the Holy Land Foundation is also used by Hamas to recruit suicide bombers and to support their families.”

CAIR spokesman Ibrahim Hooper dismissed the president’s words in interviews throughout the country. He told the Dallas Morning News the president made “political statements. These are not criminal allegations.” He told Cox News the move was “ill-advised and counter-productive. The only specific accusation is that [HLF funds] feed the orphans of suicide bombers along with hundreds of other children.” Interviewed by the New York Times, Hooper said, “This action is really creating outrage in the Muslim

The holy foundation has a long history of being a respected Muslim charity that does good work….”  

CAIR joined seven other Islamic groups in a statement the day HLF was shut down. Their release stated:

American Muslims support President Bush’s effort to cut off funding for terrorism and we call for a peaceful resolution to the Middle East conflict. These goals will not be achieved by taking food out of the mouths of Palestinian orphans or by succumbing to politically-motivated smear campaigns by those who would perpetuate Israel's brutal occupation.

The statement continued:

“We ask that President Bush reconsider what we believe is an unjust and counterproductive move that can only damage America's credibility with Muslims in this country and around the world and could create the impression that there has been a shift from a war on terrorism to an attack on Islam.”

Hussam Ayloush, CAIR-Southern California executive director, appeared on CNN the following day, saying the shutdown “sends a very wrong message to the American Muslim community. Because here we are, we’re saying this is a war on terrorism. Yet we target the most trusted and largest Islamic charitable organization in the U.S. It sends a wrong message to Muslims all over the world, basically, that Israel gets to dictate our foreign policy.”

HLF and its key officials were indicted in July 2004 for allegedly providing material support to Hamas. Some of the government’s evidence would come from material seized from Hamas offices by the Israeli military, a fact CAIR used to attempt to de-legitimize the case. “The government should not use evidence apparently tainted by foreign...”

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intelligence sources from a nation that has its own political agenda,” CAIR argued in a
release.43

Jurors deadlocked on all counts in the 2007 trial against HLF and four of the individual
defendants. Jurors acquitted Mohammad El-Mezain on all but one count, that of
conspiracy to provide material support to a terrorist group. A second trial is expected in
2008.

CAIR trumpeted the verdicts as a full exoneration of the defendants. “The reason it failed
is the government does not have the facts; it has fear," Awad told a reporter.44

Later, Awad invoked the McCarthy era as a comparison to government investigations of
Muslim charities. "Today's campaign has a different name and a different target," Awad
said. "The campaign is anti-terrorism and the target is the American Muslim
community."45

Awad has not addressed his presence at the Philadelphia meeting or CAIR’s listing on the
Palestine Committee roster.

DePaul University law professor M. Cherif Bassiouni issued a letter through CAIR
calling the case “one of the great abuses of the American legal process.”46

BIF/GRF

On the heels of the HLF designation, the U.S. government blocked the assets of the
Benevolence International and Global Relief foundations on Dec. 14, 2001 saying they
gave financial support to Al Qaeda.47

CAIR issued an alert urging its constituents to “contact Attorney General Ashcroft to
demand due process of law.”48 It stated, “three of the largest Muslim charities (Holy Land
Foundation, Global Relief Foundation and Benevolence International Foundation) have
been shut down without any judge making a ruling or any jury hearing evidence of
criminal behavior.”49

CAIR-NY posted on its website a petition to Ashcroft that contended, “The funds
collected by these American charitable institutions do not belong to them [the U.S.

44 David Koenig, “Mistrial for most defendants in Muslim charity trial,” The Associated Press, October 22,
2007.
45 Michael Grabell and Jeffrey Weiss, “Verdicts Cause Confusion, Then More Deliberation, Finally Joy and
48 “Contact Attorney General Ashcroft to Demand Due Process of Law,” CAIR Action Alert, December 16,
49 “Contact Attorney General Ashcroft to Demand Due Process of Law,” CAIR Action Alert, December 16,
BIF’s executive director, Enaam Arnaout, was arrested on perjury charges in April 2002 for stating under oath that BIF did not support terrorism. CAIR spokesman Jason Erb said, “You’re going to be charged with perjury for declaring your innocence? I think it really makes American Muslims feel that they are not going to get a fair shake in the justice system.” And Hooper accused the government of using “backhanded legal technicalities.” In February 2003, Arnaout pleaded guilty to racketeering conspiracy, admitted providing items to fighters in Chechnya and Bosnia, and agreed to cooperate with the government.

When the government detained GRF co-founder Rabih Haddad on a visa violation on December 14, 2001, CAIR-Michigan board member Homam Albaroudi co-founded the Free Rabih Haddad Committee. In January 2002, CAIR co-sponsored a rally held outside Haddad’s court hearing. “This is not about one man. It is about defending the principles that our nation was built on,” CAIR-Michigan’s executive director, Haaris Ahmad said.

Hooper later criticized the government for bringing Haddad’s case administratively, rather than criminally, “so evidence does not have to be produced.” In November 2002, an immigration judge denied Haddad’s application for asylum and withholding of removal, concluding that he presented “a substantial risk to the national security of the United States.” In July 2003, he was deported to Lebanon.

Additionally, CAIR-NY defended Alaa Al Sadawi, who was indicted in July 2002 along with his son, Hassan, on currency reporting violations. Two months earlier, federal agents had discovered that Hassan Al Sadawi, a passenger on an Egypt-bound flight...
departing from New York’s Kennedy Airport, had $659,000 in cash in boxes of Ritz crackers, Quaker Oats, and baby wipes in his suitcase.\textsuperscript{61}

In July 2003, Hassan Al Sadawi was acquitted, but Alaa Al Sadawi was convicted.\textsuperscript{62}

During sentencing procedures, prosecutors asserted that between May 2000 and late 2001, Alaa Al Sadawi had raised money for GRF,\textsuperscript{63} and had passed $10,000 to a member of GRF under a bathroom stall divider at Chicago’s O’Hare Airport.\textsuperscript{64} The assistant U.S. attorney also asserted that Al Sadawi had been heard “thanking God for the loss of American lives in Afghanistan.”\textsuperscript{65}

CAIR-NY placed action alerts on its email list asserting that the “community stands behind Ala (sic) Al-Sadawi’s innocence”\textsuperscript{66} and urging “all people of conscience to support a fair sentencing hearing…” Commenting on Sadawi’s links to GRF, CAIR-NY noted, “no one at the Global Relief Fund has been charged with a terrorism related crime” and added, “At the time Al Sadawi was associated with Global Relief Fund, it had not been designated as an organization which funds terrorism.”\textsuperscript{67}

In December 2003, Alaa Al Sadawi was sentenced to 63 months in prison.\textsuperscript{68}

**General Comments on HLF, BIF, and GRF**

CAIR has continued to criticize government actions against terrorist financiers. At a fundraiser on Oct. 26, 2002, Chairman Omar Ahmad said:

> Our Muslim…organizations have been shut down, some of them in the northern Virginia area, some of them in Dallas, charitable organizations and they are begging to belong….We [Muslims] are under attack…We are under the squeeze.\textsuperscript{69}

At a January 2003 CAIR event in New York, Hooper said, “All you have to do is make some comment oh it’s security related…and once that’s done, all blinders go on everyone….Why do you think that all the Muslim charities…that were shut down, nobody’s ever brought to trial because they don’t have the evidence. All they have to do is make the accusation and that’s sufficient.”\textsuperscript{70}

Awad, CAIR’s executive director, voiced similar concerns at a May 2003 forum hosted by the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. When an audience member commented during the ensuing question-and-answer session that “the Department of Justice had released reams of evidence showing that these organizations,

\textsuperscript{64} Tom Hays, “Feds Link Money Smuggler to Outlawed Muslim Charity,” \textit{Associated Press}, November 27, 2003.
\textsuperscript{69} CAIR Fundraiser, Tyson’s Corner, Virginia, October 26, 2002.
including the Holy Land Foundation and Benevolence International, have direct connections and in fact their leadership was the leadership of Al Qaeda and Hamas,” Awad replied.

I am sure if we…put under the microscope, every major civic or political organization in this country, including the Red Cross, you will see that some dollars went here and there in some country, but we don’t shut down the entire operation of the Red Cross…

- CAIR Dallas-Fort Worth labeled charges against Ghassan Elashi and his four brothers an “injustice” and “selective prosecution” against Muslims.

As mentioned in “CAIR’s Origins,” Ghassan Elashi was a founding board member of CAIR-Texas, as well as HLF’s chairman and treasurer. He also served as vice president of marketing for Infocom, a company that exported computers and computer components primarily to the Middle East. Further links between Marzook, the Elashi family, IAP, HLF, and CAIR can be seen in terms of Infocom’s role in hosting the websites for a number of Islamic groups, including those of HLF, IAP, and CAIR.

In September 2001, the FBI raided Infocom’s offices, froze two of its accounts, and subpoenaed HLF’s and IAP’s records. CAIR, IAP (led by CAIR incorporator Rafeeq Jaber) and other Islamic “advocacy groups” held a press conference outside Infocom headquarters a short time later and issued a statement blaming Israel:

American Muslims view yesterday's action as just one of a long list of attempts by the pro-Israel lobby to intimidate and silence all those who wish to see Palestinian Muslims and Christians free themselves of a brutal Apartheid-like occupation. We believe the genesis of this raid lies not in Washington, but in Tel Aviv.

72 CAIR Articles of Incorporation, Texas Secretary of State, September 29, 1998.
73 “1999 HLFRD Form 990,” Internal Revenue Service.
74 “1993 and 1998 HLFRD Form 990,” Internal Revenue Service.
Further dismissing the legitimacy of the Infocom raid, CAIR Executive Director Awad invoked McCarthyism and called it “an assault and an insult to Muslims in America...We don’t see that there is a good probable cause for this except stereotypes.”

The raid led to indictments in December 2002 of Infocom, the Elashi brothers, Mousa Abu Marzook, and his wife Nadia Elashi. Infocom and the Elashi brothers were charged with illegally sending computer equipment to Libya and Syria and with engaging in financial transactions with Marzook, a Specially Designated Terrorist.

Marzook and Nadia Elashi live abroad and have never been apprehended in the case.

Mohamed Elmougy, CAIR Dallas-Fort Worth chairman, and Khalid Hamideh, registered agent for CAIR-Texas, held a press conference to protest the government’s action. “We are concerned that these charges result from what appears to be a war on Islam and Muslims rather than a war on terror,” Elmougy said.

And CAIR-DFW Executive Director Tamir Ayad commented, “We're hoping that this is not a case of the government trying to limit people's freedom of speech in their dissent of U.S. foreign policy by focusing on these people.”

CAIR and the IAP used their email list servers to solicit donations to the Muslim Legal Fund of America (MLFA), formed to raise money for Elashis’ defense. Three current and former CAIR officials, Waseem Nasrallah, Khalil Meek, and Ghassan Hitto were on MLFA’s board of directors in February 2007.

89 Nasrallah is identified as the Chairman of CAIR’s Southwest region in a 1999 press report. See: Jennifer Packer, “Groups Rally Downtown to Show NATO Support,” The Dallas Morning News, April 11, 1999. In addition: Nasrallah is the registered agent for a company called Softx Technology, Inc. A director in the company is Dallel Mohmed, formerly of HLF. See: Texas Secretary of State, Corporate Record, Softx Technology, Inc.
MLFA’s website states that the group “has built strong alliances with national organizations such as CAIR...” and MLFA advertised Omar Ahmad as a speaker at its “first Special Dinner” in March 2002.

In July 2004, Ghassan Elashi was convicted on six counts, and Infocom was found guilty on 10 at one of the two trials that resulted from the 2002 indictment.

CAIR Dallas-Fort Worth issued a statement casting the verdicts as evidence of “a growing disparity and climate of injustice for Muslims, who we feel are being selectively prosecuted and given unfair sentences precisely because they are Muslim or Arab…This growing trend of selective prosecution only furthers much of the community’s view that this is nothing but a witch-hunt against the Muslim community…The injustice waged against this family, by which over 20 children were robbed of their fathers for their crime of being Muslims in America, is only part of this tragedy we witnessed. The other victim in this ordeal is justice itself.

The indictment produced separate trials – one in 2004 on the export charges and one in 2005 for money laundering and dealing with Marzook, a specially designated terrorist.

On April 13, 2005, Ghassan and Bayan Elashi, and Infocom were found guilty of all 21 federal counts they faced at the second trial resulting from the 2002 indictment, including conspiracy, money laundering and dealing in property of a terrorist. Basman Elashi, who faced the same charges, was convicted of three counts of conspiracy but acquitted on the rest. Ghassan and Basman Elashi were sentenced to 80 months in prison and Bayan Elashi was sentenced to 84 months in prison. Ihsan Elashi was sentenced to 72 months in prison; he had already been sentenced to 48 months on other charges and his terms will run consecutively. Hazim Elashi was sentenced to 66 months in prison and will be deported upon completion of his term.

- CAIR Chicago’s executive director called the Boim verdict holding IAP and HLF liable in damages for a Hamas murder a “modern day lynching and a mockery of justice.”


95 “Elashi Brothers Convicted,” US Department of Justice Press Release, July 8, 2004,


97 Trial begins for men accused of helping Hamas,” Associated Press, March 31, 2005,

98 “INFOCOM CORPORATION AND ITS OPERATORS SENTENCED IN FEDERAL COURT; ELASHI BROTHERS CONVICTED FOR DOING BUSINESS WITH TERRORIST,” Department of Justice Press Release, October 13, 2006,
http://dallas.fbi.gov/dojpressrel/pressrel06/terroristsupport101306.htm; Michael Grabell, “Holy Land group’s co-founder sentenced,” Dallas Morning News, October 12, 2006,

99 “Elashi Brothers Sentenced” Department of Justice press release, January 25, 2006,
http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/txn/PressRel06/elashi_hazim_ihsan_sen_pr.html
In December 2004, a federal magistrate judge in Illinois held three American Muslim organizations, IAP, HLF, and the Quranic Literacy Institute (QLI), as well as a high level Hamas operative, Mohammad Salah, liable for $156 million in damages in the 1996 death of David Boim. Boim, a 17-year-old New York native, was shot to death by a Hamas gunman while waiting at a bus stop in the West Bank town of Beit El.

Declaring the verdict a travesty of justice, then CAIR Chicago’s executive director, Yaser Tabbara, commented, “We feel that the decision is unfortunate but expected. I think this will only serve to discourage American Muslims from giving to charity.” Tabbara asserted that “there is redress for Israeli victims of Palestinian ‘terrorism’ but no redress for Palestinian victims of Israeli ‘terrorism,’… By the same logic, it should be possible for a Palestinian American to sue a U.S. organization like the Friends of the Israeli Defence Force for the unlawful killings they perpetrate.”

Tabbara disputed the judge’s finding that Hamas terrorists killed David Boim, observing that “to my knowledge they have never claimed” responsibility. In his decision, Judge Arlander Keys had said, “all of the evidence in the record on this issue points to Hamas as the entity responsible for David’s murder.”

Previously, Tabbara had taken issue with Keys’ failure to grant a continuance to QLI, stating, “At the end of the day, what we are witnessing is a modern day lynching and a mockery of justice.”

As mentioned in “CAIR’s Origins,” an appellate court overturned the damage award and remanded the case back to the district court for further proceedings. In its ruling, the appellate judges found “the ample record evidence (particularly taking into account the classified information presented to the court in camera) establishing HLF’s role in the funding of Hamas and of its terrorist activities is incontrovertible.”

- CAIR endorsed a brochure contending that the case against Mohammed Salah and the Quranic Literacy Institute was rooted in “outrageous complaints.”

100 Boim v. Quranic Literacy Institute, Minute Order, (N.D. Ill 00-CV-2905, filed December 8, 2004).
101 Boim v. Quranic Literacy Institute, Memorandum and Order, (N.D. Ill 00-CV-2905, filed November 10, 2004).
105 Boim v. Quranic Literacy Institute, 00-CV-2905, “Memorandum and Order,” 27 (N.D. Ill November 10, 2004).
On January 25, 1993, Mohammad Salah, a naturalized American citizen and Chicago-area resident, was arrested in Israel for his membership in Hamas. In January 1995, Salah pleaded guilty in an Israeli military court to belonging to Hamas and was sentenced to five years in prison. Also in 1995, the U.S. Treasury Department’s Office of Foreign Asset Control named Salah a Specially Designated Terrorist. He was released by Israel in November 1997 and permitted to return to the United States.108

On June 9, 1998, the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois filed an action for forfeiture of bank accounts and other properties belonging to Salah, his wife, and the Quranic Literacy Institute.”109

The affidavit of FBI Special Agent Robert Wright stated, “A review of bank records further indicates that QLI and QLI-related entities or individuals likely were a source of funds for Salah’s Hamas-related expenditures between 1991 and his arrest in January of 1993 and beyond.”110

A brochure published by the Chicago-based Muslim Americans for Civil Rights and Legal Defense (whose Treasurer was CAIR incorporator Rafeeq Jaber),111 contended, “Properties of well known and well respected Muslim leaders were seized by the U.S. government with some outrageous complaints.”112 The brochure listed CAIR and IAP as supporters “of this cause.”113

- **CAIR defended Hamas leader Mousa Abu Marzook.**

On Aug. 7, 1995, the U.S. attorney’s office for the Southern District of New York (SDNY) requested the arrest and extradition to Israel of Mousa Abu Marzook.114 An investigation undertaken by the government of Israel had determined that Marzook should be prosecuted for murder.115

Marzook was arrested at New York’s Kennedy Airport on his return from a trip to the Middle East.116

On May 7, 1996, Judge Kevin Duffy (SDNY) found probable cause that Marzook “engaged in and intended to further the aims of the conspiracy by his membership in and support of the Hamas organization. I also find that probable cause exists that Abu Marzook knew of Hamas’ plan to carry out violent, murderous attacks, that he selected

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the leadership and supplied the money to enable the attacks to take place, and that such
attacks were, therefore, a foreseeable consequence of the conspiracy.”

As authorities mulled Marzook’s fate, CAIR came out in his support. Nihad Awad
organized a press conference three days later where he called the case politically
motivated and part of a campaign to drive a wedge between America and Islamic
countries.”

The following month, CAIR signed an open letter to then-Secretary of State Warren
Christopher that railed against “the injustice that has prevailed against Dr. Marzook” and
alleged that “our judicial system has been kidnapped by Israeli interests.” The letter
added, “Dr. Abu Marzook is a political leader; no more, no less than any other political
leader in the world…” Additionally, CAIR’s 1996 *The Status of Muslim Civil Rights in
the United States* included Marzook’s arrest in its list of incidents of anti-Muslim bias
and violence.

Marzook was deported to Jordan in May 1997.

In August 2004 he was indicted for allegedly participating in a 15-year racketeering
conspiracy in the United States and abroad to finance terrorist activities in Israel, the
West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The indictment, which for the first time identified
Hamas as a criminal enterprise, alleged that the affairs of the enterprise were conducted
through multiple acts of conspiracy to commit and solicit first degree murder, conspiracy
to kill persons in a foreign country, money laundering, obstruction of justice, providing
material support or resources to designated foreign terrorist organizations, and hostage
taking.

Marzook remains abroad.

- **CAIR defended Hamas operative Abdulhaleem al-Ashqar.**

Abdulhaleem al-Ashqar organized the 1993 Hamas meeting in Philadelphia and is the
former executive director of the Al Aqsa Educational Fund. According to the FBI, the
Al Aqsa Educational Fund – along with HLF – was the main American fundraising front
for Hamas in 1994.

In February 1998, Ashqar was called to testify before a grand jury in the Southern
District of New York investigating Hamas fund-raising in the United States. He

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117 US District Court Southern District of New York (USDC-SDNY), In the Matter of the Extradition of
Mousa Muhammad Abu Marzook, 95 Cr Misc. 1, Memorandum and Order, May 7, 1996.
119 Open Letter of Mr. Warren Christopher, Secretary of State, Signed by CAIR, Reprinted in *Justice
123 Watson Action Memo, 9.
125 IRS Form 990 filed by Al Aqsa Educational Fund for Fiscal Year 1995.
126 *In re: Grand Jury Subpoena of John Doe (Abdelhaleem Ashqar)*, United States District Court Southern
District of New York, May 26, 1998 and Benjamin Weiser, “2 Men Jailed Over Refusal to Aid Inquiry,”
refused to cooperate and, on February 23, 1998, Judge Denise Cote found him in contempt and incarcerated him. He subsequently began a hunger strike to protest his detention.

CAIR co-sponsored a letter to Judge Cote “request[ing] the immediate release of Dr. Abdelhaleem Ashqar” to enable him to “continue offering positive contributions to this society.” The letter stated, “This respected member of our community is being held for refusing to cooperate in what they, and we, believe is a politically motivated investigation prompted by and in the service of a foreign government.”

Ashqar was indicted along with Marzook in August 2004 on the racketeering conspiracy charges discussed above. He was acquitted of racketeering but convicted of obstruction of justice and criminal contempt of court. He was sentenced to 11 years in prison after a 90-minute statement in which he said he refused to give testimony that could help Israel against the Palestinians.

"It is something I will not do as long as I live," Ashqar said, adding he refused "to live as a traitor or as a collaborator."

- CAIR vehemently defended convicted Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) leader Sami Al-Arian and alleged that his arrest was based on “political considerations.”

After a 10-year investigation, University of South Florida Computer Science Professor Sami Al-Arian was indicted in February 2003 on charges of establishing and operating the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) network in the United States. In December 2005, after a six month trial, Al-Arian was acquitted of eight charges, while the jury deadlocked on the nine other charges, including conspiracy to provide material support PIJ.

The Al-Arian indictment alleged the PIJ allegedly is responsible for the deaths of two Americans and more than 100 Israelis.

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131 CAIR sponsored the letter with the American Muslim Alliance (AMA), the American Muslim Council (AMC), and the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA).
132 “Immigration Case of Dr. Abdelhaleem Ashqar,” CAIR List Serve Email, May 28, 1998. CAIR sponsored the letter with the American Muslim Alliance (AMA), the American Muslim Council (AMC), and the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA).
133 “Immigration Case of Dr. Abdelhaleem Ashqar,” CAIR List Serve Email, May 28, 1998. CAIR sponsored the letter with the American Muslim Alliance (AMA), the American Muslim Council (AMC), and the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA).
138 “Members of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad Arrested, Charged With Racketeering and Conspiracy to Provide Support to Terrorists,” United States Department of Justice News Release, February 20, 2003,
On April 14, 2006, after more than a decade of denying any involvement with PIJ, and five months after the conclusion of his jury trial, Al-Arian pleaded guilty to “conspiracy to make or receive contributions of funds, goods or services to or for the benefit of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, a Specially Designated Terrorist.” Al-Arian agreed to be deported as part of his plea.”

He also admitted that he “performed services for the PIJ in 1995 and thereafter” and that he was “aware that the PIJ achieved its objectives by, among other means, acts of violence.” The services Al-Arian performed “included filing for immigration benefits for individuals associated with the PIJ, hiding the identities of individuals associated with the PIJ, and providing assistance for an individual (Mazen al-Najjar) associated with the PIJ in a United States Court proceeding,” the plea agreement states.

CAIR Executive Director Nihad Awad, whose organization insisted upon Al-Arian’s innocence for years, did not comment on the plea itself. Rather, he lamented that Al-Arian’s family has been inconvenienced by his trial.

We welcome the decision not to retry Professor Al-Arian. We are concerned however that the price paid for his freedom is deportation to another country, an additional burden on a family that has suffered tremendously over the past few years.

The 50-count, 121-page indictment against Al-Arian and seven others was based on years of painstaking FBI surveillance, during which investigators amassed reams of phone conversation transcripts, faxes, letters, videotapes and other documents. Those intercepts showed Al-Arian played a leadership role in the Jihad and worked to keep it together during a financial crisis during the mid 1990s.

Despite Al-Arian’s documented history of extremism, CAIR officials have consistently defended him.

On the day of Al-Arian’s arrest, Hooper appeared on MSNBC’s “Buchanan & Press” to suggest that the charges were “politically motivated”:

I think the problem we're seeing is that the Israelization of American policy and procedures, the failed tactics of the Israelis, where, if you just kill a few more people, destroy a few more homes, seize a few more acres, everything will be OK. We don't want to take that and translate it into the American setting…The entire controversy began with the


CAIR chairman Omar Ahmad issued a press release the same day repeating what Hooper said on television: “This action could leave the impression that Al-Arian's arrest is based on political considerations, not legitimate national security concerns.”

At a news conference outside Tampa’s federal courthouse the next day, CAIR-Florida spokesman Ahmed Bedier said Al-Arian’s arrest was “not about Sami as a person. It’s about a situation that could set a precedent for other Muslims across the country. The core of the judicial system is that all men are innocent until proven guilty. In this case, it seems like the other way around.”

Bedier upped the ante later that year, telling the Christian Science Monitor that Al-Arian’s arrest was “an effective tool to silence anti-Israeli views in the country.”

Rather than confront the indictment’s damaging disclosures, Bedier and others in CAIR tried to turn Al-Arian in to a victim. At a May 27, 2004 news conference, Nihad Awad protested the “inhumane” treatment Al-Arian and fellow defendant Sameeh Hammoudeh received in jail while awaiting trial.

Awad added, “we have the feeling...that probably their religion and their ethnicities and the...climate that we have and we live under has to do a lot with the way they are being treated...We just feel that it is discriminatory, it’s inhumane and it may affect the final outcome of the judicial ruling towards their cases.”

As the trial date approached, CAIR joined a “coalition of religious, human rights and civil liberties” groups, in support of a defense motion to change the venue. Bedier, the Central Florida director of CAIR, said “As a civil right (sic) organization, we have a fundamental belief in the right to due process, fairness, and individual's 6th amendment right to an impartial jury for all Americans … We will continue to monitor this trial to insure that what happens in the court room does not have a negative backlash on the American Muslim Community.”

Al-Arian’s change of venue motion was denied by the Middle District of Florida two days later, the court citing a relatively minimal amount of bias in the jury pool.

In February 2006, Bedier hosted a fundraiser for Al-Arian titled, “Justice Delayed is Justice Denied.” In a speech, he said the community hasn’t given the case proper

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Especially right after the arrest, many people disassociated themselves from Sami’s family, from the mosque, from the school. Understandably so, because there’s a lot of intimidation. And that’s what certain people that are in power wanted to create in our community. They want to scare us; they want to put fear in our hearts so we won’t react, so we won’t do anything about it, so they can cherry pick whoever they want, especially certain leaders are saying unpopular things…”

Al-Arian was sentenced to fifty-seven months in prison on May 1, 2006. U.S. District Judge James Moody stunned Al-Arian’s supporters with a strongly worded statement, calling the professor “a master manipulator.”

You looked your neighbors in the eyes and said you had nothing to do with the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. This trial exposed that as a lie.... The evidence was clear in this case that you were a leader of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad...

When Iran, the major funding source of the PIJ, became upset because the PIJ could not account for how it was spending its money, it was to your board of directors that it went to demand changes. Iran wanted its representative to have a say in how its money was spent. To stop that, you leaped into action. You offered to rewrite the bylaws of the organization...

But when it came to blowing up women and children on buses, did you leap into action then? Did you offer to form a committee to protect the innocent? Did you call your fellow [PIJ] directors and enlist their aid in stopping the bombing or even to stop the targeting of the innocent? No. You lifted not one finger, made not

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152 Some “unpopular” things that Al-Arian has said: “"The stones today defeat the Uzi, the tanks and the weapons," he said, according to the translation. "The stones that the boy, who is less than 5 years old, carries, and this mother, who receives the martyrdom of her children with smiles and trilling cries of joy, because her son has not died; rather he has been martyred ... "We see today the intifada, the truth which Muslims gather round. We say to them, 'Come to the Holy Land! Come forward to jihad!' " "Despite all difficulties, the Palestinian people have decided to continue: to continue to confront, to continue to resist, to continue to endure, to set an example for all people and Muslims around them. Thus is the way of struggle. Thus is the way of giving. Thus is the way of sacrifice. ... Thus is the way of jihad. Thus is the way of martyrdom. Thus is the way of blood, because this is the path to heaven." Elaine Silvestrini, “Tape Shows Al-Arian In Support Of Jihad,” Tampa Tribune, July 13, 2005, http://www.tampatrib.com/MGB2GTC13BE.html; “At the ICP's annual conference in 1988, and again in 1990 at an event commemorating the 1,000th day of the intifada, he used the phrase "Death to Israel." He said, in Arabic: "God is One, Mohammed is our Leader, the Koran is our Constitution. Struggling in the cause of God is our way. Victory to Islam, death to Israel. Revolution, revolution until victory, March, march towards Jerusalem. There is no deity but God. Mohammed is the Messenger of God. God is great. Victory to Islam." At another speech in 1991, a few weeks after the end of the Persian Gulf War, he said, "God cursed those who are the sons of Israel, through David and Jesus, the son of Mary. ... Those people, God made monkeys and pigs. (emphasis added) " Stephen Buckley, “The Al-Arian Argument,” St. Petersburg Times, March 3, 2002. http://www.sptimes.com/2002/03/03/TampaBay/The_Al_Arian_argument.shtml

153 USA v. Al Arian, et al., 03-CR-77, judgment in a criminal case (MD FL May 1, 2006).
one phone call. To the contrary, you laughed when you heard about the bombings, what you euphemistically call “operations.” ...

And yet, still in the face of your own words, you continue to lie to your friends and supporters, claiming to abhor violence and to seek only aid for widows and orphans. Your only connection to widows and orphans is that you create them, even among the Palestinians; and you create them, not by sending your children to blow themselves out of existence. No. You exhort others to send their children... You are indeed a master manipulator.154

Bedier criticized Judge Moody’s statement as “political” and accused the judge of being “biased and unfair.”155

CAIR’s support of Al-Arian has not wavered. He has refused to testify before a federal grand jury investigating terror financing in Northern Virginia, including the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), a think-tank that was among the largest donors to Al-Arian’s World and Islam Studies Enterprise (see section on CAIR’s Funding for more). This defiance led to a series of contempt orders, which essentially froze his prison sentence in place.156

Al-Arian insisted his plea agreement included a promise that he would not have to cooperate in other investigations, though no such reference appears in the signed plea agreement or was mentioned during his plea hearing. Courts have rejected this argument at least three separate times, including an 11th Circuit Court of Appeals ruling in January 2008.157

Al-Arian went on a hunger strike in March to protest the latest grand jury subpoena. CAIR issued a call for American Muslims to support his strike by writing letters urging his release to judges, members of Congress and Attorney General Michael Mukasey.158

- After Cleveland imam Fawaz Damra was convicted of concealing his involvement in groups that advocated “violent terrorist attacks against Jews and others” on his citizenship application, CAIR-Ohio’s executive director defended him as a “great interfaith leader.”

On June 18, 2004, Fawaz Damra, the Islamic Center of Cleveland’s imam, was convicted of unlawfully obtaining his U.S. citizenship through a fraudulent application.159 The

indictment had alleged that Damra concealed from the INS his affiliation with Al-Kifah Refugee Center, PIJ and the Islamic Committee for Palestine (ICP). The Al-Kifah Refugee Center was established as the American-based affiliate of Mekhtab al-Khidemat, which after the end of the Soviet-Afghan war became Al Qaeda. PIJ is a designated Foreign Terrorist Organization and ICP channeled funds to support PIJ activities.

Additionally, Damra concealed from INS the fact that he had, before applying for citizenship, “incited, assisted, or otherwise participated in the persecution” of Jews and others by advocating violent terrorist attacks against them. During the trial, jurors were shown footage of a 1991 speech in which Damra called Jews “the sons of monkeys and pigs” and a 1989 speech in which he said “terrorism and terrorism alone is the path to liberation.”

Damra “was the guy…brought in to raise the money for Islamic Jihad” federal prosecutor Cherie Krigsman said after the verdict.

Jad Humeidan, CAIR-Ohio executive director, said Damra “has been a great interfaith leader in the Cleveland community.” In January 2004, he had called the Damra case “part of a pattern of attacking the Muslim community, its leaders and its institutions.”

At the start of Damra’s trial, CAIR spokesman Hooper commented, “we’re concerned that all of his due process is maintained and evidence be free of religious or ethnic stereotyping… We’re always concerned when prominent leaders of the American Islamic community are charged, or detained or harassed.”

Damra was sentenced to two months in prison in September 2004 and stripped of his citizenship. He was deported in January 2007.

- After Nuradin Abdi was indicted on charges of conspiracy to provide material support to Al Qaeda, CAIR-Ohio’s president said Abdi’s arrest “raises questions of whether the U.S. government is covering up its troubles.

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in Iraq and elsewhere by reasserting the threat of domestic terrorism and again using immigrants and minorities as scapegoats.”

On June 14, 2004, Nuradin Abdi was indicted in Columbus, Ohio on four counts, including conspiracy to provide material support to Al Qaeda. Abdi allegedly was involved -- with admitted Al Qaeda member Iyman Faris -- in a plot to blow up a Columbus shopping mall, received bomb-making instructions from a co-conspirator, and had intended to travel to Ethiopia to receive training in guns, guerilla warfare and bombs at a military-style camp.

Following Abdi’s indictment, Ahmad al-Akhras, president of CAIR-Ohio, commented, “This may be one of the cases also that may not have enough evidence or there's no evidence at all.” Akhras added that the indictment “raises questions of whether the U.S. government is covering up its troubles in Iraq and elsewhere by reasserting the threat of domestic terrorism and again using immigrants and minorities as scapegoats.”

CAIR-Ohio Executive Director Jad Humeidan sought to minimize Abdi’s connection with convicted Al Qaeda terrorist Iyman Faris, noting, “I've shaken hands with Iyman Faris. Does that make me guilty? That doesn't make me guilty and shouldn't make anyone else guilty. It shouldn't make us afraid with being friends with people.”

In addition, CAIR Ohio board chairwoman Asma Mobin-Uddin, a physician, accused Abdi’s jailers of psychological abuse and called for an investigation into his treatment.

“Those who knew Abdi before he was taken into custody describe him as a friendly community member who was helpful to others around him,” she wrote in a column published in the Columbus Dispatch. “After seeing him in court in June, they were shocked at how different he was and described him twitching, laughing inappropriately, banging his head against the table, making noises, speaking to himself and staring strangely into space. As a physician, I am extremely concerned that his behaviors might indicate mental and possibly physical abuse during his detention, and that his mental injuries may be permanent.”

But separate psychiatric evaluations ordered by U.S. District Judge Algenon L. Marbly found he was competent to stand trial. The original review concluded Abdi was faking

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his symptoms when he said Hillary Clinton and Teresa Heinz Kerry would be his attorneys, showered fully clothed and tore pages for a Koran and put them in a toilet.\textsuperscript{181} “We believe such behaviors were calculated attempts to appear severely mentally ill,” forensic psychologist Andrew Simcox and staff psychiatrist Daniel Shine Jr. wrote to the court.\textsuperscript{182}

Abdi pleaded guilty to providing material support to terrorists on July 31, 2007, one week before his scheduled trial.\textsuperscript{183} Abdi was sentenced to 10 years in prison after which he will be deported to his native Somalia.\textsuperscript{184}

- **CAIR-Arizona’s executive director defended a former U.S. Navy sailor who praised the attack on the USS Cole and who passed classified information about his battle-group to an Al Qaeda-linked terrorist.**

In August 2004, authorities in England arrested Babar Ahmad on a criminal complaint issued in Connecticut that charged him with conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists and conspiracy to support the Taliban.\textsuperscript{185} Ahmad was formally indicted in October 2004 for providing material support to terrorists.\textsuperscript{186}

While searching Ahmad’s home, British authorities discovered a floppy disk that set forth plans for a U.S. naval battle-group operating in the Straits of Hormuz in April 2001.\textsuperscript{187} The document also discussed the vulnerabilities of the naval group to a terrorist attack.\textsuperscript{188}

“They have nothing to stop a small craft with RPG etc. except their Seals' stinger missiles,” one email said.\textsuperscript{189}

Investigators later discovered a series of email correspondence between an American sailor and Azzam Publications, a video distribution center Ahmad helped run. Hassan Abu-Jihaad, a signalman on the U.S. guided missile destroyer, “Benfold,” in the Middle East in late 2000 and 2001, ordered violent videos from Azzam Publications. In emails, he called the attack on the USS Cole that killed 17 sailors a “martyrdom operation.” He also expressed anti-American sentiments and praised the “men who have brought honor…to the ummah in the lands of Jihad Afghanistan, Bosnia, Chechnya, etc.”\textsuperscript{190}

\textsuperscript{181} Kevin Mayhood, Man Feigned Mental State, Analysts Say; Mall-bomb conspiracy suspect accused of faking his behavior \textit{Columbus Dispatch} September 6, 2005.
\textsuperscript{182} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{186} \textit{US v. Ahmad}, “Indictment,” (D.C. CT October 6, 2004).
\textsuperscript{188} \textit{US v. Ahmad}, “Indictment,” (D.C. CT October 6, 2004).
Abu-Jihaad was indicted in March 2007 of providing material support to terrorists and leaking secret Navy information. At a pretrial hearing, an FBI agent testified that Abu-Jihaad also had extensive discussions about attacking a San Diego military base with at least two other men. In court papers, prosecutors say Abu-Jihaad pledged to do "whatever I can . . . with whatever Allah has instilled me to . . . help out with" the alleged plot.

CAIR-Arizona Executive Director Deedra Abboud served as spokeswoman for Abu-Jihaad when reports of his e-mails first surfaced. As The Los Angeles Times reported, “Deedra Abboud…said he [Abu-Jihaad] had done nothing wrong and never mishandled classified information.” According to Abboud, the Times said, Abu-Jihaad “was very surprised to hear he might be connected to anything related to terrorism… He's now scared he might get picked up for something he can't imagine being a part of.”

Prosecutors say he, in fact, did all of those things. On March 5, 2008, a 12-member jury in New Haven, CT agreed, convicting Abu-Jihaad on both counts against him. He faces up to 25 years in prison when sentenced in May 2008.

After the verdict, Abboud, now with the American Muslim Society, told the Arizona Republic that Abu-Jihaad had been critical of American policy but didn’t express anti-American sentiments.

"What traditionally happens in our community is we have a lot of complainers, outrage against the injustices of the world and a lot of victim mentality," Abboud said. "Sometimes, you get somebody who gets passionate and is a little delusional to begin with."

Investigators reportedly found Abu-Jihaad's military e-mail address among the computer files upon execution of the search warrant involving Ahmad. An FBI affidavit contends Abu-Jihaad’s secret security clearance allowed him access to such information. Ahmad has exhausted his British appeals and could be extradited to the United States at any time.

- CAIR Canada defended accused bomb-plot suspect Mohammad Momin Khawaja, and noted that “the struggle for safety and security should not come at the expense of basic constitutional rights.”

In March 2004, Canadian authorities charged Mohammad Momin Khawaja of Ottawa with aiding a terrorist group and facilitating terrorist activity in Ottawa and London.
Khawaja allegedly had traveled to England the month before to meet with a cell that planned to launch a bombing campaign there. At the meeting, he was said to have shown his co-conspirators images of explosive devices and told them how to detonate bombs using mobile phones.

On March 30, eight men were arrested in London during anti-terrorist raids in which half a ton of ammonium nitrate fertilizer was seized. A ninth person was arrested two days later.

CAIR Canada quickly mobilized support for Khawaja. The day that his house was raided, the organization issued a press release that ‘expressed concern’ about the government’s action and noted, ‘The reasons and details for the raid have not yet been disclosed.’ After Khawaja was charged under the nation’s anti-terrorism law, a CAIR Canada press release commented, ‘There have been repeated concerns that the legislation violates fundamental constitutional liberties and makes a transparent trial difficult.’

CAIR-Canada Executive Director Riad Salojee added, ‘The struggle for safety and security should not come at the expense of basic constitutional rights.’

Five men were sentenced to life in prison by a British court in May 2007 after being convicted for their roles the bombing plot. Khawaja’s case in Canada has been slowed by a series of pre-trial motions by his counsel. He has yet to stand trial.

- CAIR condemned the detention of two Saudis who may have carried out a dry run of the 9/11 attack.

On Nov. 18, 1999, Mohammad Al-Qudhaieen and Hamdan G. Al-Shalawi, two Saudi doctoral students, were detained for trying to gain access to the cockpit of an America West commercial airliner on a flight headed from Phoenix to Washington, D.C. Qudhaieen denied having jiggled the handle on the cockpit door, and insisted that he was searching for the bathroom at the front of the cabin. Shalawi and Qudhaieen were released and said they were singled out because of their appearance.

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199 Gary Dimmock and Isabel Teotonio, “Police Link Khawaja to Bomb Plot,” The Ottawa Citizen, April 15, 2004.
201 Gary Dimmock and Isabel Teotonio, “Police Link Khawaja to Bomb Plot,” The Ottawa Citizen, April 15, 2004.
202 CAIR Website (accessed July 5, 2006).
CAIR Ohio provided a lawyer for the two men\textsuperscript{208} and called for a boycott of America West.\textsuperscript{209}

At a press briefing on Capitol Hill, Nihad Awad said the Saudis’ detention was based on “racial and religious profiling.”\textsuperscript{210} He told \textit{United Press International}, “The hysteria around [the crash of] EgyptAir [Flight 990] has created a negative atmosphere that leads to such incidents. Stereotyping is deeply rooted in the minds of many people, thanks of decades of Hollywood movies.”\textsuperscript{211}

In an \textit{Orange County Register} op-ed, CAIR Southern California’s Hussam Ayloush blamed the incident on the “‘Islamophobia’ generated by this irresponsible reporting.”\textsuperscript{212}

CAIR Ohio President Ahmad al-Akhras also charged racial profiling, declaring, “It seems like they single out some individuals because of their name, the way they look or their national origin.”\textsuperscript{213}

In fact, the incident does not appear to have been benign. As \textit{The 9/11 Commission Report} documented, Shalawi had trained in an Al Qaeda camp in Afghanistan in November 2000, receiving instruction in how to conduct “Khobar-style” attacks that he and a colleague planned to execute in Saudi Arabia.\textsuperscript{214}

Further, according to the 9/11 Commission, Shalawi was a friend of Ghassan al Sharbi, who was captured in Pakistan along with Al Qaeda leader Abu Zubaydah in March of 2002.\textsuperscript{215} Sharbi, who reportedly attended Al Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan and swore bayat, an oath, to Bin Laden, attended Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona.\textsuperscript{216}

Neither the 9/11 Commission Report nor media accounts say more about Al-Qudhaieen. He was arrested on a visa violation in June 2003 and deported to Saudi Arabia two months later.\textsuperscript{217}

Following 9/11, FBI agents in Phoenix considered the possibility that the America West incident was a “dry run” for the attacks.\textsuperscript{218}

- \textit{After radical imam Wagdy Ghoneim was arrested on an immigration violation, CAIR Los Angeles’ Sabiha Khan assailed his “callous treatment.”}

\textsuperscript{212} Riad Abdelkarim and Hussam Ayloush, “EgyptAir Crash Shows Rush to Judgment about Muslims,” \textit{The Orange County Register}, November 29, 1999.
\textsuperscript{214} \textit{The 9/11 Commission Report}, 521.
\textsuperscript{215} \textit{The 9/11 Commission Report}, 521.
\textsuperscript{216} \textit{The 9/11 Commission Report}, 521.
\textsuperscript{217} Barbara Ferguson, “Two-Month Ordeal of Al-Qudhaieen Ends,” \textit{Arab News}, September 5, 2003.
\textsuperscript{218} \textit{The 9/11 Commission Report}, 521.
Wagdy Ghoneim is a radical Egyptian cleric who was denied entrance to Canada after immigration officials determined he was a member of Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood. He also led the audience in a song with the lyrics, “No to the Jews, descendants of the apes,” at a CAIR co-sponsored rally at Brooklyn College in New York in May 1998.

A year earlier, Ghoneim defended the practice of suicide bombings and advocated their continuance.

Palestine will not be liberated by speeches and peaceful means, but through jihad. The Jews are scared by the word ‘jihad.’ They came to Sharm el Shaikh after they were hit by 4 martyrdom [suicide] operations. Those young people who explode themselves to kill the Jews were not committing suicide but jihad. They are Mujahideen [holy warriors] because there is no way to struggle and fight the Jews except that way. Allah bless those martyrs. We have to prepare ourselves for jihad against Jews and to liberate Aqsa Masjid. This is a must whether we accept it or not.

In November 2004, Ghoneim was arrested on immigration violations and held without bond, in the words of Immigration and Customs Enforcement spokeswoman Virginia Kice, “based upon Department of Homeland Security concerns that his past speeches and participation in fund-raising activities could be supportive of terrorist organizations.”

CAIR Southern California Executive Director Hussam Ayloush questioned the arrest, complaining, “The whole Muslim community today is under a microscope of scrutiny. Committing a mistake that would invite a slap on the wrist for anyone else could lead to prison or deportation for a Muslim.”

Similarly, Ra’id Faraj, public relations director for CAIR-Anaheim, said, “There is a perception in the community that there is selective targeting and enforcement, and that is a widespread perception.”

When Ghoneim was hospitalized with chest pains, CAIR Los Angeles’ Sabiha Khan commented, “Such callous treatment of someone who is only charged with minor immigration violations goes against American values of compassion and justice. We call for an urgent investigation into Imam Ghoneim's treatment and urge that Immigration and

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221 50 Years of Occupation, MSA News, Direct submission from IAP information office, May 23, 1998.
222 Muslim Arab Youth Association Convention, Ontario, CA, December 26-29, 1997.
Customs Enforcement and the Department of Homeland Security release the Imam on bail on humanitarian and medical grounds.”\textsuperscript{226}

CAIR-Southern California also met with DHS officials\textsuperscript{227} and Congressman Chris Cox (R-CA) to protest Ghoneim’s detention.\textsuperscript{228}

Ghoneim agreed to leave the country voluntarily in December 2004. Ayloush called his departure “a dent in our civil rights struggle” and lamented the “high level of fear” in the community.\textsuperscript{229} Addressing the secrecy surrounding Ghoneim’s removal, Ayloush commented, “This is not the KGB [the former Soviet state security agency] but the DHS.”\textsuperscript{230}

Subsequent to his departure from the United States, Switzerland also refused to allow Ghoneim into the country to attend a conference in 2005 but did not offer any public explanation.\textsuperscript{231}