

**CAMPBELL DEFENDS MUSLIM GROUPS ORGANIZATIONS HAVE RIGHT TO
MAKE POLITICAL DONATIONS, CANDIDATE SAYS** *San Jose Mercury News
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HEADLINE: CAMPBELL DEFENDS MUSLIM GROUPS ORGANIZATIONS HAVE RIGHT TO
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BODY:

With his campaign for U.S. Senate struggling to emerge from obscurity, Congressman Tom Campbell spoke out Friday in defense of American Muslim organizations in the wake of a flap that caused New York Senate candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton to return more than \$50,000 in campaign contributions.

"I will not insult a single donor to my campaign by returning their contribution because the American Muslim Council or the American Muslim Alliance was associated with raising it," Campbell said outside the Islamic Center in Los Angeles.

Clinton returned money to donors associated with both groups after news accounts said that an AMC member, Abdurahman Alamoudi, had made statements in support of terrorist organizations, and that the Fremont-based president of the AMA, Agha Saeed, has supported armed resistance by Palestinians. Both men said their remarks were taken out of context and that they and their organizations condemned violence. But Clinton's opponent, Republican Rick Lazio, accused her of having taken "blood money."

Campbell, who has long enjoyed good relations with the American Muslim community and has advocated a neutral American position between Israel and the Palestinians, received a \$1,000 donation earlier this year from Alamoudi. Both Clinton and Republican presidential candidate George W. Bush returned \$1,000 donations from Alamoudi last week.

Campbell said in an interview that he spoke with Alamoudi after the New York flap broke out and felt comfortable with his position.

"He had never supported violence nor encouraged anybody to engage in it," Campbell said.

In his statement in Los Angeles, Campbell said Muslim Americans must not suffer "guilt by association" and defended their right to participate in the American political system.

Clinton last week returned \$50,000 to members of the Massachusetts chapter of Saeed's group. Saeed, who teaches at both California State University-Hayward and the University of California-Berkeley, on Friday thanked Campbell for his support and said he does not condone violence. But Saeed also said he has made statements consistent with a United Nations resolution that affirms the right of people who suffer from foreign domination, including Palestinians, to engage in "armed struggle."

Campbell waded into the issue as new poll numbers -- including some inadvertently released by his own campaign -- demonstrated that he continues to lag far behind incumbent Democrat Dianne Feinstein.

A new Field Poll out today said Campbell remained behind Feinstein by 52 percent to 32 percent. The survey of 990 likely voters was conducted Oct. 27-31. The 20-point margin is the same as an early October Field Poll, despite a modest television campaign Campbell started using what for California is a meager campaign budget.

Field Poll Director Mark DiCamillo said he has never seen a candidate close a 20-point deficit in the final days of a campaign, and noted that the deficit has remain essentially unchanged since Campbell announced his candidacy a year ago.

A Zogby International poll conducted Oct. 31 to Nov. 2 and commissioned by the Campbell campaign was released Friday to Hotline, a political newsletter, and showed Campbell 17 points behind Feinstein. That's far worse than an 11-point deficit Campbell claimed when he touted Zogby's poll at the Republican National Convention in late July.

Comfortable with her lead, Feinstein has engaged in little campaigning this fall, showing up at campaign events this week mostly to boost other Democratic candidates. On Wednesday, she appeared in San Jose with congressional candidate Mike Honda and Assembly candidates Rebecca Cohn and Simon Salinas; on Thursday, she was in Contra Costa County with candidates in close races there; and on Friday, she appeared with Congressman Cal Dooley, who is locked in a tight contest in his Central Valley district.

CHART: MERCURY NEWS

FEINSTEIN STILL LEADS CAMPBELL BY 20 POINTS

Democrat Dianne Feinstein has maintained her lead of 20 percentage points over Republican Tom Campbell in the race for her Senate seat.[Please see microfilm for chart]

GRAPHIC: Chart

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