

# An IPT Investigative Report:

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*Ahmed Rehab*

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CAIR-CHICAGO**



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## Introduction

Ahmed Rehab currently serves as both CAIR-Chicago's executive director and CAIR's national strategic communications director.<sup>1</sup> Rehab joined CAIR-Chicago in 2004 and became the chapter's executive director mid-2006.<sup>2</sup>

Rehab has staunchly defended a charity found guilty of funneling money to Hamas, a Hamas operative, a fundraiser for a Hamas-linked group, and his own organization from its founding officials' ties to a U.S. Hamas support network. He has also failed to wholly condemn Hamas when questioned by the media.

Though CAIR has pledged to combat extremist voices that reinterpret Islamic principles to promote violence,<sup>3</sup> Rehab has written off the threat of some extremist groups that do just this, focusing instead on their limited reach and disapproval by the Muslim community. He has also implied that the U.S. government is responsible for radicalizing individuals through the use of informants.



Before his time with CAIR, Rehab listed an Islamist thinker who inspired Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida's ideology as one of his "favorites."

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## The Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS)

Notably, Rehab has called Hamas "part of the problem, not the solution."<sup>4</sup>

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1. "Our Staff: Ahmed Rehab, Executive Director," CAIR-Chicago, <http://www.cairchicago.org/our-staff/> (Accessed November 3, 2010).

2. "Our Staff: Ahmed Rehab, Executive Director," CAIR-Chicago, <http://www.cairchicago.org/our-staff/> (Accessed November 3, 2010); Form 990, CAIR Chicago Chapter, 2006.; Form 990, CAIR Chicago Chapter, 2007.

3. Aisha Qidwae, "US Muslims Fight Domestic Extremism," *Islam Online*, December 10, 2009, [http://www.islamonline.net/servlet/Satellite?c=Article\\_C&cid=1260257840109&pagename=Zone-English-News/NWELayout](http://www.islamonline.net/servlet/Satellite?c=Article_C&cid=1260257840109&pagename=Zone-English-News/NWELayout) (Accessed November 9, 2010).

4. Ahmed Rehab, "Media Self-Censorship Abets Gaza Atrocities," *The American Muslim*, January 12, 2009, [http://www.theamerican-muslim.org/tam.php/features/articles/medias\\_self\\_censorship\\_abets\\_gaza\\_atrocities/0017123](http://www.theamerican-muslim.org/tam.php/features/articles/medias_self_censorship_abets_gaza_atrocities/0017123) (Accessed November 6, 2010).

However, as a CAIR representative, Rehab has sidestepped condemning Hamas more than once, after the movement's 1995 designation as a terrorist organization.<sup>5</sup>

In November 2006, Rehab would not condemn Hamas in its entirety on *BBC's* "HardTalk." When *BBC* correspondent Stephen Sackur asked if Rehab would give a "straight forward" condemnation of Hamas, he responded, "Do I condemn the hospitals run by Hamas, or the schools that help children learn, in Hamas? No, I don't condemn that. But I do condemn

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5. "Executive Order 12947 – Prohibiting Transactions with Terrorists Who Threaten to Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process," January 25, 1995, <http://www.treas.gov/offices/enforcement/ofac/legal/eo/12947.pdf>, pg. 4 (Accessed November 3, 2010).



the blowing up of Tel Aviv pizzerias or cafes.”<sup>6</sup>

The U.S. government rejects the argument that Hamas’ social wing should be considered separate from its violent actions. A material support statute, recently upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in a 6-3 opinion, made it illegal to send support to any part of a terrorist organization, including its social wing.<sup>7</sup> In arguments before the court, Justice Antonin Scalia explained the theory behind the legislation, saying that aid given to any part of a terrorist group legitimizes the entire organization. “Hamas for, example, gained support among Palestinians by activities that are perfectly lawful, perhaps running hospitals,” said Scalia.<sup>8</sup>



Rehab’s reluctance to criticize Hamas was just as apparent in July 2007, when he appeared on a panel on PBS with Zuhdi Jasser, president of the American Islamic Forum for Democracy.

Jasser asked Rehab to condemn Hamas, and Rehab responded, “Are you asking me if I condemn terrorism or if I condemn Hamas?”<sup>9</sup> Jasser clarified by asking if Rehab condemned groups that “use terrorism as an action.” In the ensuing cross-talk, Rehab said, “Then you would condemn the IDF (Israeli Defense Forces) and the Israeli army as well...”<sup>10</sup>

## Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development (HLF)

While CAIR has never been accused of providing financial support to Hamas, it steadfastly stood by the nation’s largest Muslim-American charity after it was accused to sending millions to the terrorist group. Rehab was part of that political support for HLF. Not only has Rehab hesitated to provide a direct condemnation of the U.S. designated terrorist organization, he has also publicly vouched for Hamas supporters.

In 2008, the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, a U.S. charity, and five of its officials were convicted of funneling money to Hamas through *zakat* (charity) committees.<sup>11</sup> Before the convictions, Rehab delegitimized the government’s case against HLF, calling it “particularly worrisome because of its dubious legal arguments.”<sup>12</sup> Rehab called the government’s argument that by providing support to Hamas’ social wing, HLF was supporting Hamas’ military wing “ludicrous.”<sup>13</sup> The government’s evidence, said Rehab, “ranged from the mention of the word ‘Hamas’ by the defendants to textbook guilt by association.”<sup>14</sup>

Rehab attended a town hall meeting held by supporters

6. Stephen Sackur interview of Ahmed Rehab, “Hard Talk,” *BBC*, November 9, 2006.

7. *Eric H. Holder, et al., vs. Humanitarian Law Project, et al.*, 08-1498, “Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit,” (U.S.S.C. Decided June 21, 2010). Available at: <http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/09pdf/08-1498.pdf>.

8. *Eric H. Holder, et al., vs. Humanitarian Law Project, et al.*, 08-1498, “Court Transcript,” (U.S.S.C. February 23, 2010).

9. Moderator: John Hockenberry, Panelists: Dr. M. Zuhdi Jasser, Rafia Zakaria, Ahmed Rehab, “Islam vs. Islamists,” *PBS*, July 30, 2007.

10. Moderator: John Hockenberry, Panelists: Dr. M. Zuhdi Jasser, Rafia Zakaria, Ahmed Rehab, “Islam vs. Islamists,” *PBS*, July 30, 2007.

11. *U.S. vs. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, et al.*, 3:04-CR-240-G, “Jury Verdict,” (N.D. Tx. November 24, 2008).

12. Ahmed Rehab, “Fighting Imaginary Terrorist Threats,” *The Chicago Tribune*, October 28, 2007, [http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2007-10-28/news/0710270325\\_1\\_holy-land-foundation-american-muslims-muslim-american](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2007-10-28/news/0710270325_1_holy-land-foundation-american-muslims-muslim-american) (Accessed November 8, 2010).

13. Ahmed Rehab, “Fighting Imaginary Terrorist Threats,” *The Chicago Tribune*, October 28, 2007, [http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2007-10-28/news/0710270325\\_1\\_holy-land-foundation-american-muslims-muslim-american](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2007-10-28/news/0710270325_1_holy-land-foundation-american-muslims-muslim-american) (Accessed November 8, 2010).

14. Ahmed Rehab, “Fighting Imaginary Terrorist Threats,” *The Chicago Tribune*, October 28, 2007, [http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2007-10-28/news/0710270325\\_1\\_holy-land-foundation-american-muslims-muslim-american](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2007-10-28/news/0710270325_1_holy-land-foundation-american-muslims-muslim-american) (Accessed November 8, 2010).



of HLF in 2007.<sup>15</sup> He urged the audience to attend “every single court session” in the trial and to “be there in large numbers.”<sup>16</sup> Rehab then claimed:

“This is not just a case against the Holy Land Foundation. This is a case against the Muslim community.”<sup>17</sup>

Rehab has also defended an individual listed as an unindicted co-conspirator in the Holy Land Foundation trial, Kifah Mustapha.<sup>18</sup> Internal records admitted into evidence showed the Holy Land Foundation was the fundraising arm of something called the Palestine Committee.<sup>19</sup> Those government exhibits show that the committee was created by the Egyptian-based Muslim Brotherhood to support Hamas politically and financially in America.<sup>20</sup> Mustapha’s role in two Palestine Committee entities, the Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP) and the Holy Land Foundation, recently resurfaced when the Illinois State Police (ISP) revoked Mustapha’s appointment as a Muslim police chaplain.<sup>21</sup>

Rehab criticized the ISP’s reasons for revoking Mustapha’s position, calling the ISP’s decision following an IPT report unveiling Mustapha’s connections, the “result of some notorious, dubious individual on the Internet.”<sup>22</sup> In defense of Mustapha, Rehab talked about the imam’s “integrity” and his will to “serve his country and his community.”<sup>23</sup> Rehab did not mention the imam’s employment and service with two Hamas-supporting organizations in the United States as laid out in HLF exhibits and Mustapha’s own words.<sup>24</sup>

One HLF exhibit even showed Mustapha singing militaristic lyrics. Mustapha sang, “O mother, Hamas for jihad. Over mosques’ loudspeakers with freedom. Every day it resists with stones and the dagger. Tomorrow, with God’s help, it will be with a machine gun and a rifle.”<sup>25</sup>



15. Ahmed Rehab, Hungry for Justice Town Hall Meeting, Plano, Texas, July 15, 2007.

16. Ahmed Rehab, Hungry for Justice Town Hall Meeting, Plano, Texas, July 15, 2007.

17. Ahmed Rehab, Hungry for Justice Town Hall Meeting, Plano, Texas, July 15, 2007.

18. *U.S. vs. Holy Land Foundation*, 3:04-CR-240-G, “Superseding Indictment,” (N.D. Tx., July 26, 2004) pg.6.; *U.S. vs. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, et al*, 3:04-CR-240-G “List of Unindicted Co-conspirators and/or Joint Venturers,” pg. 6.

19. *U.S. vs. Holy Land Foundation*, 3:04-CR-240-G, “Superseding Indictment,” (N.D. Tx., July 26, 2004) pg.6.; *U.S. vs. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, et al*, 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit Elbarasse Search 7, pg. 9.

20. *U.S. vs. Holy Land Foundation*, 3:04-CR-240-G, “Superseding Indictment,” (N.D. Tx., July 26, 2004) pg.6.; *U.S. vs. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, et al*, 3:04-CR-240-G “Government Exhibit Elbarasse Search 19” (N.D. Tx. September 29, 2008).

21. *Kifah Mustapha v. Jonathon E. Monken, et. al.*, 1:10-CV-5473, (N.D. Ill.) Complaint, August 30, 2010. See also; Chuck Goudie, “Group challenges Muslim chaplain’s dismissal from force,” *ABC-WLS Chicago*, June 23, 2010.

22. Chuck Goudie, “I-Team Report: Pillar of the State Police,” *ABC-WLS Chicago*, March 3, 2010.

23. Chuck Goudie, “I-Team Report: Pillar of the State Police,” *ABC-WLS Chicago*, March 3, 2010.

24. Chuck Goudie, “I-Team Report: Pillar of the State Police,” *ABC-WLS Chicago*, March 3, 2010.; *For Mustapha’s work with the Holy Land Foundation and the Islamic Association for Palestine see for example: U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development et al*, 3:04-CR-240-G, “Government Exhibit- HLF Search 2,” (N.D. Tx. September 25, 2008); *US v. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development et al*, 3:04-CR-240-G, “Government Exhibit- HLF Search 23,” (N.D. Tx. October 2, 2008); *Stanley Boim vs. Quranic Literacy Institute*, 00-C-2905, “Deposition of Kifah Mustapha,” (N.D. Ill. March 2, 2004) pgs. 6-7.; *Stanley Boim vs. Quranic Literacy Institute*, 00-C-2905, “Deposition of Kifah Mustapha,” (N.D. Ill. March 2, 2004) pg.8.; *Stanley Boim vs. Quranic Literacy Institute*, 00-C-2905, “Deposition of Kifah Mustapha,” (N.D. Ill. March 2, 2004) pgs.10-11.

25. *U.S. vs. Holy Land Foundation, et al.*, 04-C-4240, “Government Exhibit HLF Search-71 Video C,” (N.D. Tx. September 25, 2008).



## Muhammad Salah and Abdelhaleem al-Ashqar

Rehab has also accused the government of “political persecution” of Muhammad Salah, a known Hamas operative.<sup>26</sup>

Muhammad Salah, Rehab said during a July 2007 town hall, is “not a specially designated terrorist,” but “a decent individual” and a “man we hold dear.”<sup>27</sup>

Salah had been previously designated by the U.S. as a Specially Designated Terrorist (SDT) in 1995.<sup>28</sup> Rehab also remarked that Salah came to the United States “searching for justice and yearning for dignity.”<sup>29</sup>

In January 1993, Salah was arrested in Gaza by Israeli authorities for his activities with Hamas.<sup>30</sup> Salah pleaded guilty in an Israeli military court in 1995 to participating in Hamas affairs. Salah admitted that he was a member of Hamas from 1988 until his arrest, that he had acted as an envoy for Hamas members outside

26. Ahmed Rehab, Hungry for Justice Town Hall Meeting, Plano, Texas, July 15, 2007.

27. Ahmed Rehab, Hungry for Justice Town Hall Meeting, Plano, Texas, July 15, 2007.

28. “List of Specially Designated Terrorists Who Threaten to Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process,” *Office of Foreign Assets Control*, 60 Federal Register 41152, August 11, 1995, <http://www.federalregister.gov/articles/1995/08/11/95-19831/list-of-specially-designated-terrorists-who-threaten-to-disrupt-the-middle-east-peace-process> (Accessed November 4, 2010).

29. Ahmed Rehab, Hungry for Justice Town Hall Meeting, Plano, Texas, July 15, 2007.

30. *U.S. vs. Muhammad Hamid Khalil Salah*, 03-CR-978-2, “Government’s Evidentiary Proffer Supporting the Admissibility of Co-Conspirator Statements,” (N.D. Ill. August 16, 2006) pg. 28.

of Gaza and that he was the head of military operations in the West bank at the request of Hamas leader Mousa Abu Marzook.<sup>31</sup> Salah was sentenced to five years in prison; Israel released him in 1997 and allowed him to return to the United States.<sup>32</sup>

On July 11<sup>th</sup>, several days before Rehab’s comments at the town hall, Salah was found guilty by an Illinois court on one count of obstruction of justice for submitting false and misleading statements through his lawyers to the U.S. District Court, including saying that he had “never provided or delivered funds for the purpose of supporting Hamas.”<sup>33</sup>

“  
*Mr. Muhammad Salah is neither a terrorist nor a criminal for having supplied charitable aid to the most vulnerable factions of his occupied and war-ravaged country of origin, Palestine.*”

-Ahmed Rehab

Rehab protested the government’s use of statements Salah made to Israeli authorities after his 1993 arrest, because the Israelis “systematically tortured” Salah to get him to admit to supporting Hamas.<sup>34</sup>

“The same policies that drove him out of his home followed him to his adopted homeland,” Rehab said in July 2007.<sup>35</sup> Rehab also called Salah “only guilty of being a bold Palestinian activist.”<sup>36</sup> “Mr. Muhammad Salah is

31. *U.S. vs. Muhammad Hamid Khalil Salah*, 03-CR-978-2, “Government’s Evidentiary Proffer Supporting the Admissibility of Co-Conspirator Statements,” (N.D. Ill. August 16, 2006) pg. 30.

32. *U.S. vs. Muhammad Hamid Khalil Salah*, 03-CR-978-2, “Government’s Evidentiary Proffer Supporting the Admissibility of Co-Conspirator Statements,” (N.D. Ill. August 16, 2006) pg. 31.

33. *U.S. vs. Muhammad Hamid Khalil Salah*, 03-CR-978-2, “Judgment in a Criminal Case,” (N.D. Ill. July 11, 2007); *U.S. vs. Mousa Abu Marzook et al.*, 03-CR-978, “Second Superseding Indictment,” (N.D. Ill. August 19, 2004) pg. 33.

34. Ahmed Rehab, “The Muhammad Salah Bottomline,” *The Electronic Intifada*, February 1, 2007, <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article6493.shtml> (Accessed November 8, 2010).

35. Ahmed Rehab, Hungry for Justice Town Hall Meeting, Plano, Texas, July 15, 2007.

36. Ahmed Rehab, “The Muhammad Salah Bottomline,” *The Electronic Intifada*, February 1, 2007, <http://electronicintifada.net/>



neither a terrorist nor a criminal for having supplied charitable aid to the most vulnerable factions of his occupied and war-ravaged country of origin, Palestine,” wrote Rehab in February 2007 opinion piece.<sup>37</sup>

Rehab told the *Chicago Tribune* “the feeling is this [Salah’s prosecution] could happen to anyone.” He said the community saw Salah as someone “caught in a political drama at a time when it’s difficult to be a Palestinian or a Muslim.”<sup>38</sup>

In a statement issued by CAIR-Chicago responding to Salah’s sentencing, Rehab echoed many of his previous statements. The release also cited CAIR-Chicago’s Civil Rights Coordinator Christina Abraham saying that Salah’s case “is of concern to every person who cares for the stated principles of this nation.”<sup>39</sup>

Similarly, Rehab stood behind Abdelhaleem Al-Ashqar, who was found guilty of obstruction of justice and criminal contempt for refusing to provide immunized testimony before a federal grand jury investigating a Hamas-related case. Specifically, Ashqar refused to answer questions including whether he personally was a member of Hamas.<sup>40</sup> He was sentenced to 11 years in prison.<sup>41</sup> Ashqar had been previously indicted, along with Salah, on racketeering charges related to Hamas.<sup>42</sup> Both were acquitted of the racketeering charges against them.<sup>43</sup>

Rehab was quoted in a CAIR press release expressing dismay that Ashqar’s sentence “apparently ignores Dr. Ashqar’s acquittal on the most serious charges and instead reflects a prison term that could only have been imposed if he had actually been convicted of those charges.”<sup>44</sup>

In October 2009, the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals upheld Ashqar’s sentence, finding the district judge appropriately applied an enhancement due to the terrorist nature of the investigation.<sup>45</sup>

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## Defense of CAIR-National

**C**AIR-National was named as an unindicted co-conspirator in the Holy Land Foundation case, though an appeals court later ruled that the government should not have released the list publically.<sup>46</sup> Prosecution exhibits in the HLF trial identified CAIR as a part of the Palestine Committee, the umbrella organization created by the Muslim Brotherhood meant to serve as the Hamas support network in America.<sup>47</sup>

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v2/article6493.shtml (Accessed November 8, 2010).

37. Ahmed Rehab, “The Muhammad Salah Bottomline,” *The Electronic Intifada*, February 1, 2007, <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article6493.shtml> (Accessed November 8, 2010).

38. Michael Higgins, “21-month sentence for Salah; Businessman guilty of lying in Hamas case,” *Chicago Tribune*, July 12, 2007.

39. “CAIR-Chicago Reacts to Salah Trial Sentencing,” CAIR-Chicago, July 12, 2007, <http://www.cairchicago.org/2007/07/12/cair-chicago-reacts-to-salah-trial-sentencing/> (Accessed November 9, 2010).

40. *U.S. vs. Mousa Abu Marzook et al.*, 03-CR-978, “Second Superseding Indictment,” (N.D. Ill. August 19, 2004) pg. 37.

41. *U.S. vs. Abdelhaleem Hasan Abdelrazziq Ashqar*, 07-3879, “Appeal from the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division,” (7<sup>th</sup> Cir. October 2, 2009) pg. 2.

42. *U.S. vs. Mousa Abu Marzook et al.*, 03-CR-978, “Second Superseding Indictment,” (N.D. Ill. August 19, 2004).

43. *U.S. vs. Muhammad Hamid Khalil Salah*, 03-CR-978-2,

“Judgment in a Criminal Case,” (N.D. Ill. July 11, 2007); *U.S. vs. Abdelhaleem Hasan Abdelrazziq Ashqar*, 03-CR-978-3, “Judgment in a Criminal Case,” (N.D. Ill. November 21, 2007).

44. “CAIR-Chicago Dismayed by ‘Excessive’ Ashqar Sentence,” CAIR-Chicago, November 21, 2007, <http://www.cair.com/ArticleDetails.aspx?mid1=777&&ArticleID=23816&&name=n&&currPage=1> (Accessed November 8, 2010).

45. *U.S. v. Abdelhaleem Hasan Abdelrazziq Ashqar*, 07-3879, “Appeal,” (N.D. Ill. October 2, 2009).

for the Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division. Decided October 2, 2009.

46. *U.S. vs. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development et al.*, 3:04-CR-240-G, “List of Unindicted Co-Conspirators and/or Joint Venturers: Attachment A,” (N.D. Tx. 2007); *U.S. vs. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, et al.*, 09-10875, “Appeal from the United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas,” (5<sup>th</sup> Cir. October 20, 2010).

47. *U.S. vs. Holy Land Foundation*, 3:04-CR-240-G, “Superseding Indictment,” (N.D. Tx., July 26, 2004) pg. 6; *U.S. vs. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, et al.*, 3:04-CR-240-G “Government Exhibit Elbarasse Search 19” (N.D. Tx. September 29, 2008).



FBI transcripts placed two of CAIR's founders – Omar Ahmad and Nihad Awad – at a 1993 meeting of the Palestine Committee in Philadelphia. During the meeting, Ahmad and Awad discussed how to make the Hamas viewpoint more popular in the United States.<sup>48</sup> The Philadelphia meeting “has no bearing on CAIR,” Rehab has said, because CAIR wasn't founded until 1994, almost a year after the meeting.<sup>49</sup> However, FBI case agent Lara Burns testified during the 2008 HLF trial that CAIR's creation was a result of planning that occurred during the Philadelphia meeting.<sup>50</sup>

Additionally, Rehab said “Nihad Awad and Omar Ahmad have never been members of or tied to Hamas.”<sup>51</sup>

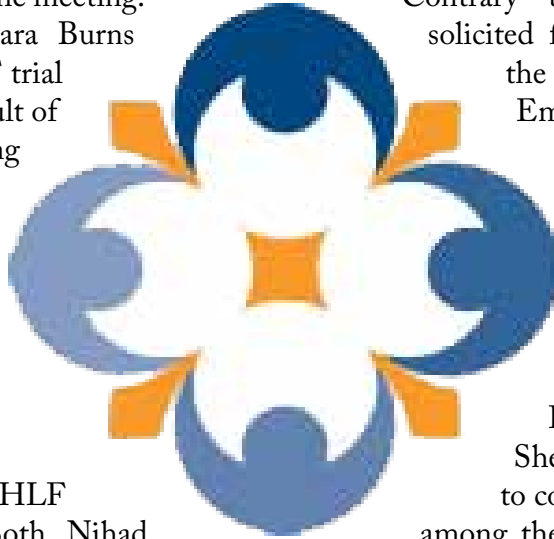
Evidence submitted in the HLF trial indicates otherwise. Both Nihad Awad and Omar Ahmad (aka Omar Yehya) appeared on a Palestine Committee phone list.<sup>52</sup> Omar Ahmad was listed on two different pages in the phonebook of Hamas leader Mousa Abu Marzook.<sup>53</sup>

In addition, it was Ahmed who called the Philadelphia

meeting to order, saying it was convened by the Palestine Committee.<sup>54</sup>

In 2007 Rehab claimed that, “Neither CAIR chapters nor the national office solicits or accepts money from any foreign government.”<sup>55</sup>

Contrary to Rehab's comment, CAIR had solicited funds from foreign governments just the year before. In 2006, United Arab Emirates (UAE) Minister of Finance and Industry and Deputy Ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum, endorsed a proposal to build a CAIR property in the United States.<sup>56</sup> Paul Findley, who reportedly headed CAIR's delegation to a meeting between Hamdan and CAIR, said he briefed Sheikh Hamdan on CAIR's strategic plan to correct the image of Islam and Muslims among the American public. Nihad Awad said CAIR values highly the stances of Sheikh Hamdan and Al Maktoum Charity Foundation for supporting its plans to promote dialogue.<sup>57</sup> A set of State Department cables received through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request confirm this trip and CAIR's solicitation to the UAE deputy ruler.<sup>58</sup>



48. *U.S. vs. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, et al.*, 3:04-CR-240-G, “Government Exhibit: Philadelphia Meeting 16E,” (N.D. Tx. September 29, 2008), pg. 2; *U.S. vs. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development*, “Government Exhibit: Philadelphia Meeting 4,” (N.D. Tx. September 29, 2008), pg. 14.

49. Rowan Scarborough, “CAIR trains FBI agents as new report cites links to terror,” *Insight*, March 18, 2008.

50. *U.S. vs. Holy Land Foundation*, 3:04-CR-240-G, “Redirect Examination of Lara Burns by Barry Jonas,” (N.D. Tx. October 7, 2008).

51. Rowan Scarborough, “CAIR trains FBI agents as new report cites links to terror,” *Insight*, March 18, 2008.

52. *U.S. vs. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, et al.*, 3:04-CR-240-G “Government Exhibit Elbarasse Search 1” (N.D. Tx. September 25, 2008).

53. *U.S. vs. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, et al.*, 3:04-CR-240-G “Government Exhibit Marzook Phonebook” (N.D. Tx. September 25, 2008).

54. *U.S. vs. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, et al.*, 3:04-CR-240-G “Government Exhibit Philly Meeting 1, pg. 10.

55. Noreen Ahmed-Ullah, “Muslim activist takes on his group's critics,” *Chicago Tribune*, March 25, 2007.

56. “Hamdan okays setting up endowment in U.S.” *Emirates News Agency*, May 21, 2006, [http://uaeinteract.com/docs/Hamdan\\_okays\\_setting\\_up\\_endowment\\_in\\_US/20882.htm](http://uaeinteract.com/docs/Hamdan_okays_setting_up_endowment_in_US/20882.htm) (Accessed November 9, 2010).

57. “Hamdan okays setting up endowment in U.S.” *Emirates News Agency*, May 21, 2006, [http://uaeinteract.com/docs/Hamdan\\_okays\\_setting\\_up\\_endowment\\_in\\_US/20882.htm](http://uaeinteract.com/docs/Hamdan_okays_setting_up_endowment_in_US/20882.htm) (Accessed November 9, 2010).

58. The documents confirmed that CAIR Executive Director Nihad Awad, CAIR Communication Director Ibrahim Hooper, then-CAIR Chairman Parvez Ahmed and CAIR Board Member Nabil Sadoun were all present. “Visit by Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) to UAE,” United States Department of State, FOIA Documents, May 2006, CASE ID: 200802848,



FOIA documents show CAIR officials also visited Saudi Arabia to raise funds in June 2006. The State Department cables noted that one “reason for the group’s current visit to the KSA [Saudi Arabia] was to solicit \$50 million in both governmental and non-governmental contributions.”<sup>59</sup>

Rehab also listed Sayyid Qutb’s brother, Muhammad Qutb, as one of his favorite thinkers. Osama bin Laden studied under Muhammad Qutb while in Saudi Arabia. <sup>64</sup> Bin Laden is said to have become more militaristic in his Islamist views during this period of his studies.<sup>65</sup>

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## The Muslim Brotherhood

**B**efore his time with CAIR, Rehab listed some of his favorite personalities and thinkers online as a DePaul University graduate student in the 1990s. Among them were Muslim Brotherhood Egyptian ideologue Sayyid Qutb.<sup>60</sup> Qutb’s writings inspired today’s al-Qaida.<sup>61</sup> Qutb believed that humans have the choice of either submission to Islam or *jahiliyya*, a condition of unbelief. For the Egyptian thinker, this also translated into the belief that Muslims have the obligation to take up arms against non-believers.<sup>62</sup>

Qutb was also well-known for his disenchantment with the West, which developed during the late 1940s. “Milestones,” one of Qutb’s well known writings, portrayed the United States as an oppressor engaged in an ongoing struggle against Muslims. It emphasized that Muslims should fight the enemy, the United States.<sup>63</sup>

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November 14, 2008.

59. “Visit by Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) to Saudi Arabia,” United States Department of State, FOIA Documents, June 2006, CASE ID: 200802848, November 14, 2008.

60. Ahmed Rehab, “Interests and Favorites,” <http://web.archive.org/web/20021113210413/arehab.tripod.com/ahmed/interests.html> (Accessed November 5, 2010).

61. “The Foundation of the New Terrorism: Bin Laden’s Worldview,” *The 9/11 Commission Report*,” pg. 51 <http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/report/911Report.pdf> (Accessed November 6, 2010).

62. “The Foundation of the New Terrorism: Bin Laden’s Worldview,” *The 9/11 Commission Report*,” pgs. 50-51 <http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/report/911Report.pdf> (Accessed November 6, 2010).

63. “From the Old Terrorism to the new: The First World Trade

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## Hizb ut-Tahrir (HuT)

**A**hmed Rehab has claimed that CAIR is working towards “weeding out any extremist voices” on a “daily basis.”<sup>66</sup> To his credit, Rehab has condemned certain extremist voices such as the radical Yemeni cleric Anwar al-Awlaki and al-Qaida No.2 Ayman al-Zawahiri.<sup>67</sup> However, in other cases, Rehab has minimized the attention focused on radical pockets in Islamist circles.

In the summer of 2009, Hizb ut-Tahrir (HuT), a group dedicated to the establishment of an international Islamic state, gathered for a Chicago conference. Rehab responded to news of the event on *Fox Chicago*, emphasizing that, “they remain on the margins of the community.”

“As a matter of fact,” he said, “I don’t believe they could pass out their literature in any of these

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Center Bombing,” *The 9/11 Commission Report*,” pg. 72 <http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/report/911Report.pdf> (Accessed November 6, 2010).

64. John Rollins, “Al Qaeda and affiliates: historical perspective, global presence, and implications for U.S. policy,” *Congressional Research Service*, February 1, 2010, pg.5.

65. John Rollins, “Al Qaeda and affiliates: historical perspective, global presence, and implications for U.S. policy,” *Congressional Research Service*, February 1, 2010, pg.5.

66. Ahmed Rehab, “Do Not Be Fooled by Al Zawahiri,” *Huffington Post*, May 8, 2009.; “Fort Hood Memorial,” *WGN 9 News*, November 10, 2009.

67. Interview of Ahmed Rehab, “Fort Hood Memorial,” *WGN 9 News*, November 10, 2009.





mosques. They have to pass them outside.”<sup>68</sup>

When the *Fox* anchor mentioned that HuT was once tied to both the mastermind behind 9/11, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, and top al-Qaida official, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, Rehab responded that “in fairness to them [HuT], both of these terrorists that you mentioned were not involved with this organization when they committed their acts of terror. They had left the organization.”<sup>69</sup>

Rehab added that “there is no evidence to suggest that they [HuT] are in any way related to terrorism or extremism of that sort.”<sup>70</sup> Similarly, Rehab was quoted in the *Chicago Tribune* saying that CAIR doesn’t need to condemn the group, it just shouldn’t support them. “I can not claim that there is any danger to the group. As far as I’m concerned, they’re a non-violent group. That’s the litmus test of whether we should issue something.”<sup>71</sup>



Yet, HuT has advocated for violence in the past. Take, for example, HuT religious leaders’ 2007 call for Australian Muslims to kill all those who stand in the way of their goal of establishing a *Khilafah* (Islamic super-state).<sup>72</sup>

Rehab was also quoted in the *South Town Star*, saying, “They’re [HuT] not secretive; they’re not underground. To me that should be a cause for

68. Interview of Ahmed Rehab, *My Fox Chicago*, July 17, 2009.

69. Interview of Ahmed Rehab, *My Fox Chicago*, July 20, 2009.

70. Interview of Ahmed Rehab, *My Fox Chicago*, July 20, 2009.

71. “Valid criticism or vicious stereotypes?” *Chicago Tribune*, July 28, 2009, [http://newsblogs.chicagotribune.com/religion\\_theseeker/2009/07/valid-criticism-or-vicious-stereotypes.html](http://newsblogs.chicagotribune.com/religion_theseeker/2009/07/valid-criticism-or-vicious-stereotypes.html) (Accessed November 5, 2010).

72. Justin Vallejo, “Aussies called to jihad,” *The Herald Sun*, January 29, 2007, <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/national/aussies-called-to-jihad/story-e6frf716-1111112903616> (Accessed November 5, 2010).

comfort rather than fear.”<sup>73</sup>

## Revolution Muslim

In April 2010, Rehab’s reaction to a threat made by the radical group *Revolution Muslim* to the creators of *South Park* for depicting the Prophet Muhammad implied that the group might be a set-up.

“Whether true Muslims or agent provocateurs,” wrote Rehab in a piece published in *The Chicago Tribune*, “They are five community outcasts.” According to the CAIR-Chicago official, *Revolution Muslim*’s “mysterious leader, born Joseph Cohen, is an American Jew who converted to Islam in 2000 after living in Israel and attending an orthodox rabbinical school there.”<sup>74</sup> “Most suspect the group [Revolution Muslim] is fraudulent,” Rehab added.<sup>75</sup>

CAIR’s Ibrahim Hooper framed the CAIR viewpoint more directly. “In fact, most Muslims suspect they [Revolution Muslim] were set up only to make Muslims look bad,” Hooper said.<sup>76</sup>

Later that year, in October 2010, another *Revolution Muslim* leader named Zachary Chesser (aka Abu Talhah Al-Amrikee) pleaded guilty to threatening the *South Park* creators, in addition to providing material

73. Maura Possley, “Islamic gathering strikes a nerve in the Southland,” *South Town Star*, July 21, 2009.

74. Ahmed Rehab, “Contrived Cartoon Controversy,” *The Chicago Tribune*, April 26, 2010, [http://newsblogs.chicagotribune.com/religion\\_theseeker/2010/04/ahmed-rehab-contrived-cartoon-controversy.html](http://newsblogs.chicagotribune.com/religion_theseeker/2010/04/ahmed-rehab-contrived-cartoon-controversy.html) (Accessed November 5, 2010).

75. Ahmed Rehab, “Contrived Cartoon Controversy,” *The Chicago Tribune*, April 26, 2010, [http://newsblogs.chicagotribune.com/religion\\_theseeker/2010/04/ahmed-rehab-contrived-cartoon-controversy.html](http://newsblogs.chicagotribune.com/religion_theseeker/2010/04/ahmed-rehab-contrived-cartoon-controversy.html) (Accessed November 5, 2010).

76. Scott Collins and Matea Gold, “Threat against ‘South Park’ creators highlights dilemma for media companies,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 23, 2010, <http://articles.latimes.com/2010/apr/23/entertainment/la-et-south-park-20100423/3> (Accessed November 6, 2010).



support to the Somali Islamist terror group al-Shabaab and soliciting violent jihadists to desensitize law enforcement.<sup>77</sup>

In November 2010, the group called on Muslims to kill British parliamentarians who voted for the Iraq War.<sup>78</sup>

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## The “Bronx Four” Plot

**A**lthough Rehab condemned the “The Bronx Four” plot to destroy targets in New York, he implied that the U.S. government radicalized the individuals. “[I]t turns out that the radicalization ‘tipping factor,’ if you will, was none other than a paid government agent-provocateur,” said Rehab.<sup>79</sup>

The “Bronx Four,” James Cromitie, David Williams, Onta Williams and LaGuerre Payen, were arrested in May 2009 and indicted in June on charges they plotted to attack two targets in New York: a synagogue and the New York Air National Guard Base in Newburgh.<sup>80</sup> In October 2010, all of the defendants were convicted on seven counts related to the plot, including attempting to use weapons of mass destruction, attempt to acquire and use anti-aircraft missiles and conspiracy to kill officers of the United States.<sup>81</sup>

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77. “Virginia Man Pleads Guilty to Providing Material Support to a Foreign Terrorist Organization and Encouraging Violent Jihadists to Kill U.S. Citizens,” Department of Justice, October 20, 2010.

78. Appeared at [www.revolutionmuslim.com](http://www.revolutionmuslim.com) as of November 4, 2010. The site and posting have since been taken down after complaints from British authorities. Ravi Somaiya, “U.S. Islamic Web Site is Taken Down,” *The New York Times*, November 5, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/06/world/europe/06london.html> (Accessed November 9, 2010).

79. Ahmed Rehab, “Islam Not to Blame for Bronx Terror Plot,” *Huffington Post*, May 26, 2009.

80. *U.S. vs. James Cromitie, et al.*, 09-CR-558, “Indictment,” (S.D.N.Y. June 2, 2009).

81. “Four Men Found Guilty in Manhattan Federal Court of Plotting to Bomb Synagogue and Jewish Community Center and to Shooting Military Planes with Stinger Missiles,” Press Release, U.S. Attorney’s Office, S.D.N.Y., October 18, 2010.

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## September 2010 FBI Raids

**I**n late September 2010, the FBI raided the homes of several individuals in Illinois and Minnesota. Minneapolis FBI spokesman Steve Warfield explained that the warrants sought “evidence relating to activities concerning the material support of terrorism.”<sup>82</sup> Search warrants sought links to the Colombian terrorist group Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), Lebanese Hizballah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)—groups that have proved themselves violent.<sup>83</sup>

FARC, which is committed to the violent overthrow of the democratically elected government of Colombia, has committed numerous terrorist acts in 2009 and 2010. In September 2010, FARC set off a bomb outside of the Colombian intelligence agency’s offices, wounding 12 people.<sup>84</sup> Also in September, five Colombian police officers were killed by a suspected FARC roadside bomb.<sup>85</sup> FARC set off a car bomb

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82. Alex Perez and BJ Lutz, “Feds Raid Homes in Chicago, Minneapolis,” *NBC-Chicago*, September 24, 2010, <http://www.nbcchicago.com/news/local-beat/FBI-Serves-Terroism-Related-Search-Warrants-in-Minneapolis-and-Chicago-103725009.html> (Accessed November 9, 2010).

83. Randy Furst and Abby Simons, “FBI cites terror link in raids of local activists, Agents raided the Minneapolis homes of five antiwar activists, seizing computers and documents,” *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, September 24, 2010, <http://www.startribune.com/local/103716104.html?> (Accessed September 28, 2010).; Andy Grimm and Cynthia Dizikes, “FBI raids anti-war activists’ homes, Agents looking for links to terrorists, federal spokesman says,” *Chicago Tribune*, September 24, 2010, [http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2010-09-24/news/ct-met-fbi-terrorism-investigation-20100924\\_1\\_fbi-agents-anti-war-activists-federal-agents](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2010-09-24/news/ct-met-fbi-terrorism-investigation-20100924_1_fbi-agents-anti-war-activists-federal-agents) (Accessed September 28, 2010).

84. “Bomb blast wounds 12 outside Colombia spy agency,” *Agence France Presse*, September 8, 2010, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gSgCFFKtsIF2zRwrMmo893o9pmSw> (Accessed November 10, 2010).

85. “Five Colombian police killed by suspected Farc bomb,” *BBC*, September 2, 2010, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-11161049> (Accessed November 10, 2010).



outside of a Colombian radio station in August 2010 which wounded nine people.<sup>86</sup> In November 2009, six died when FARC guerillas opened fire on a civilian bus after the driver refused to stop.<sup>87</sup> FARC, in addition to kidnapping U.S. nationals, has directed violent actions towards Americans, such as the bombing of popular restaurants in Bogota frequented by U.S. nationals.<sup>88</sup>

The PFLP is also known for its attacks which have killed innocent civilians.<sup>89</sup> As a testament to Hizballah's continued commitment to the use of violence, in November 2010, the group promised that blood would be spilled if a United Nations tribunal found Hizballah members guilty in the assassination of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri.<sup>90</sup>

Rehab participated in a Sept. 27 rally at the FBI's Chicago headquarters. A CAIR-Chicago press release promoting the rally said the raids were a "blatant attempt to intimidate those who organize in opposition to U.S. wars."<sup>91</sup> The release read, "Join CAIR-Chicago

at the FBI Headquarters to protest recent FBI raids of the homes of peaceful, anti-war activists."<sup>92</sup>



In Chicago, the FBI raided the home of Hatem Abudayyeh, director of the Arab American Action Network (AAAN). Rehab called the investigation into the AAAN "a waste of taxpayer dollars" and called Abudayyeh "a longtime, respected leader in the community."

"It is unthinkable that he would have any connections to terrorism." Rehab added, "This is a new low... This is an example of FBI overreach when it comes to activism or commentary on the (Middle East) conflict."<sup>93</sup>

On Sept. 28, CAIR-Chicago sent out a press release responding to the raids.<sup>94</sup> It noted that Ahmed Rehab and CAIR-Chicago staff attorney were present at the

86. "Colombia says FARC rebels behind August car bomb," *Reuters*, October 2, 2010, <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/N02151462.htm> (Accessed November 10, 2010).

87. Ashley Hamer, "Six dead in FARC bus attack," *Columbia Reports*, November 20, 2009, <http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/6973-six-dead-in-farc-bus-attack.html> (Accessed November 10, 2010).

88. *U.S. vs. Oumar Issa et al.*, 09-CR-1244, "Indictment," (S.D.N.Y. December 30, 2009).; "Second Farc Terrorist Indicted for 2003 Grenade Attack on Americans in Colombia," U.S. Department of Justice, October 28, 2004, <http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2004/October/20041028153052GLnesnoM0.5771448.html> (Accessed November 10, 2010).

89. John Ward Anderson and Molly Moore, "Attack in Tel Aviv is Warning, Group Says: Fight Must Persist, Militants Declare After Bomber Kills 3," *Washington Post*, November 2, 2004, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A14943-2004Nov1?language=printer> (Accessed November 10, 2010).

90. "Hezbollah warns Hariri indictment would be 'explosive,'" *Agence France Presse*, November 2, 2010, [http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5g1\\_EcgsG\\_9zmXiDxSf6\\_P8ORtY4w?docId=CNG.f3daab386228eefc5765738b9b4c1d64.3a1](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5g1_EcgsG_9zmXiDxSf6_P8ORtY4w?docId=CNG.f3daab386228eefc5765738b9b4c1d64.3a1) (Accessed November 10, 2010).

91. "CAIR-Chicago's Ahmed Rehab to Speak at Protest Against FBI Raids," *CAIR-Chicago*, September 27, 2010, <http://www.cairchicago.org/2010/09/27/cair-chicagos-ahmed-rehab-to-speak-at-protest-of-fbi-raids/> (Accessed September 28, 2010).

92. "CAIR-Chicago's Ahmed Rehab to Speak at Protest Against FBI Raids," *CAIR-Chicago*, September 27, 2010, <http://www.cairchicago.org/2010/09/27/cair-chicagos-ahmed-rehab-to-speak-at-protest-of-fbi-raids/> (Accessed September 28, 2010).

93. Serena Maria Daniels and Andy Grimm, "Activists protest FBI raids, Last week's searches were part of a probe of possible terrorist links," *Chicago Tribune*, September 27, 2010, [http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2010-09-27/news/ct-met-fbi-protest-0928-20100927\\_1\\_jim-fennerty-activists-search-warrant](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2010-09-27/news/ct-met-fbi-protest-0928-20100927_1_jim-fennerty-activists-search-warrant) (Accessed September 29, 2010).

94. Press Release, "Muslim Civil Rights Group Expresses Deep Concern with FBI Raids: CAIR-Chicago Supports Peace Activists and Calls on FBI to Reform Policies," *CAIR-Chicago*, September 28, 2010.



protest in front of the FBI headquarters. It also issued a statement which read in part:

“The FBI has overstepped its bounds in targeting individuals based on their commitment to peacefully challenge U.S. policies in Palestine and Colombia.”

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## Anti-Semitism

Rehab has been an outspoken critic of anti-Semitism,<sup>95</sup> but his reaction to signs with the Star of David twisted into a swastika used during a 2009 rally calls his commitment to battling it into question. Clearly, the signs in question equated the religion of Judaism with Nazism. Another banner at the same rally alleged that Jews were responsible for 9/11.<sup>96</sup>

Rehab responded to concerns about the signs dismissively. “As hundreds of innocent human lives are crushed in full view of the world by a belligerent Israeli government,” said Rehab, “I find it appalling that some on the pro-Israeli side are better concerned with cardboard paper.”<sup>97</sup>

Additionally, a webpage from his time as a graduate student at DePaul University stains his record. In the piece posted online, Rehab defended David Irving, who authored a book minimizing the death toll of the Holocaust. Rehab called Holocaust history “the established opinions of the able Jewish historians.”

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95. A CAIR-Chicago photo features Ahmed Rehab standing with a sign that reads, “Chicago Muslims: Drive Anti-Semitism Out,” <http://www.cairchicago.org/photos/synagogue/8.jpg> (Accessed November 9, 2010).

96. “Anti-Israel or anti-Semitic,” *The Chicago Tribune*, January 14, 2009, [http://newsblogs.chicagotribune.com/religion\\_theseeker/2009/01/anti-israel-or.html](http://newsblogs.chicagotribune.com/religion_theseeker/2009/01/anti-israel-or.html) (Accessed November 8, 2010).

97. “Anti-Israel or anti-Semitic,” *The Chicago Tribune*, January 14, 2009, [http://newsblogs.chicagotribune.com/religion\\_theseeker/2009/01/anti-israel-or.html](http://newsblogs.chicagotribune.com/religion_theseeker/2009/01/anti-israel-or.html) (Accessed November 8, 2010).

“If Jewish historians have the right to research the history of the Holocaust and dictate it for schools and Universities, why can’t other historians do the same even if their findings are different?” Rehab asked.<sup>98</sup>

Irving used “educated methods, a researched content and objective arguments,” to write his book, Rehab said. Curiously, at the end of his article Rehab noted, “The point of this article is not to justify the validity of Irving’s book, for I, myself, have never read it before...” Rather, Rehab said, he hoped to show that the American media reacts different to anti-Semitism than anti-Islamic pieces, comparing the U.S. media’s reaction to Irving’s work to Salman Rushdie’s “The Satanic Verses.”<sup>99</sup>

Talking about American journalist Charlie Rose’s condemnation of Irving’s work, Rehab said that “Rose confirmed the Jewish control over the media.” Rehab made the comment in response to guest Christopher Hitchens saying he wasn’t convinced by Irving’s conclusions when asked by Rose.<sup>100</sup> ■

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98. Ahmed Rehab, “Double Standardism’: The Tale of Two Books,” <http://web.archive.org/web/20060215092446/http://arehab.tripod.com/ahmed/rose.html> (Accessed November 9, 2010).

99. Ahmed Rehab, “Double Standardism’: The Tale of Two Books,” <http://web.archive.org/web/20060215092446/http://arehab.tripod.com/ahmed/rose.html> (Accessed November 9, 2010).

100. Ahmed Rehab, “Double Standardism’: The Tale of Two Books,” <http://web.archive.org/web/20060215092446/http://arehab.tripod.com/ahmed/rose.html> (Accessed November 9, 2010).