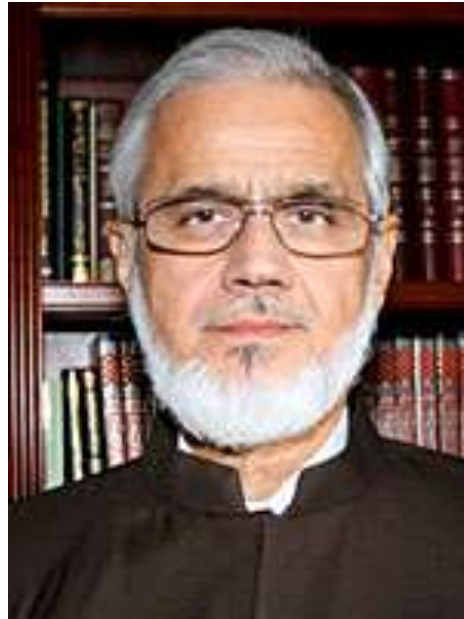




THE INVESTIGATIVE PROJECT ON TERRORISM

MUZAMMIL SIDDIQI



Muzammil Siddiqi visited the White House at least once. Siddiqi met with Paul Monteiro, Associate Director, White House Office of Public Engagement, on June 8, 2010.

Biography

Siddiqi has been the religious director of the Islamic Society of Orange County (ISOC) since 1981,¹ and was formerly the president of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) from 1997 to 2001.² He currently serves on ISNA's board of directors³ and has been on board of the ISNA affiliated North American Islamic Trust (NAIT) since at least 2007.⁴

In addition to his role at ISNA, Siddiqi served as Chairman of the Department of Religious Affairs at the Muslim World League (MWL) Office to the United Nations from

¹ "Religious Director – ISOC" Islamic Society of Orange County. 2012 <http://www.isocmasjid.org/about/staff/dr-siddiqi/> (Accessed October 19, 2012).

² "Muzammil Siddiqi – ISNA" Islamic Society of North America. 2007. <http://www.isna.net/ISNAHQ/pages/Muzammil-Siddiqi.aspx> (Accessed October 19, 2012).

³ <http://www.isna.net/articles/News/Meet-the-Newly-Elected-ISNA-Leaders-ISNA-2012-General-Election-Results.aspx> (Accessed October 19, 2012).

⁴ North American Islamic Trust, "About NAIT," http://web.archive.org/web/20070210120833/http://www.nait.net/NAIT_about_%20ous.htm (Accessed October 19, 2012); Current NAIT Board members, Siddiqi among them, are listed here: http://nait.net/NAIT_about_%20ous.htm

1976 to 1980.⁵ The Muslim World League (MWL) was set up in 1962 by the royal Saudi family to “promote Islamic unity”⁶ and to spread the Wahhabi brand of Islam.⁷ Since its founding the MWL has frequent allegations levied against it for linkage to terrorist activity.⁸

Hosted Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman

In 1992, Siddiqi's mosque hosted a lecture by Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, according to an article in *The New Yorker*.⁹ Sheikh Rahman, longtime spiritual leader of Egypt's largest Islamic militant group, al-Gama'a al-Islamiya (Islamic Group) was indicted in 1993 for conspiring with a group of followers to destroy New York bridges and tunnels. He was sentenced to life in prison. Siddiqi translated Rahman's lecture in real time. According to *The New Yorker*:

“Abdel Rahman dismissed nonviolent definitions of jihad as weak. He stressed that a number of unspecified enemies had “united themselves against Muslims” and that fighting them was obligatory. “If you are not going to the jihad, then you are neglecting the rules of Allah,” he said. The opportunities for jihad were virtually everywhere, ranging from apostate Middle Eastern regimes to “those who are taking the wealth of Muslims from petrol or from oil.” As he spoke, a red toolbox, with a slit cut into its lid for donations, was passed around the room. Videotapes of the lecture were later offered for sale at the society's bookstore.”¹⁰

Regarding the incident, Siddiqi defended his participation, saying that Rahman “was touring, and some people insisted that he should be there.”¹¹

Tour with Saudi Muslim World League leader Abdullah al-Turki

In July 2002, Siddiqi toured the United States alongside Muslim World League leader Abdullah bin Abdul Mohsin al-Turki.¹² The Muslim World League is a Saudi Arabia-

⁵ “Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi” *Pakistani Link*, November 11, 2007

<http://web.archive.org/web/20071111215426/http://www.pakistanlink.com/religion/siddiqi.html> (Accessed October 19, 2012).

⁶ “Muslim World League – SAMIRAD (Saudi Arabia Market Information Resource).” Saudi Arabia Market Information Resource and Directory. <http://www.saudinf.com/main/k312.htm> (Accessed October 19, 2012).

⁷Novikov, Evgenii. “The World Muslim League: Agent of Wahhabi Propagation in Europe.” The Jamestown Institute Terrorism Monitor, Volume 3, Issue 9, May 06, 2009. <http://web.archive.org/web/20060620223259/http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2369686> (Accessed October 19, 2012).

⁸ Susan Schmidt, “Spreading Saudi Fundamentalism in U.S.,” *Washington Post*, October 2, 2003.

⁹ Khatchadourian, Raffi. “Azzam the American.” *The New Yorker*. January 22, 2007.

http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2007/01/22/070122fa_fact_khatchadourian?printable=true
¹⁰ Khatchadourian, Raffi. “Azzam the American.” *The New Yorker*. January 22, 2007.
http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2007/01/22/070122fa_fact_khatchadourian?printable=true (Accessed October 19, 2012).

¹¹ Khatchadourian, Raffi. “Azzam the American.” *The New Yorker*. January 22, 2007.

http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2007/01/22/070122fa_fact_khatchadourian?printable=true (Accessed October 19, 2012).

¹² “Muslim Scholars Visit U.S.” Associated Press. July 8, 2002.

<http://wwrn.org/articles/10072/?&place=united-states> (Accessed October 19, 2012).

based organization founded in 1962, which has been accused of funding terrorist groups from Hamas to al-Qaeda, through subsidiary charity fronts like the IIRO.¹³

Siddiqi Quotations

- *On March 3, 2011, in a Q and A session for the onislam.net, Siddiqi proclaimed that there is no separation between religion and politics/economics:*

“Faith in Allah has everything to do with every aspect of our lives. We cannot compartmentalize religion or life. Islam requires that we live our whole life, every aspect of life in obedience to Allah. We are not part-time servants of Allah. We belong to Allah. ... Our work, school, athletics activity, family life, economics, politics – everything must be according to Allah's Rules. Whatever He Almighty has allowed is allowed for us, and whatever He Almighty has forbidden is forbidden. All His rules are for our own good and we must live by them.”¹⁴

- At a "Jerusalem Day Rally" in Lafayette Park in Washington, DC on October 28, 2000, Siddiqi said Jerusalem is land "that belongs to Muslims."

“And al-Aqsa, my brothers and sisters, is our sacred mosque. It belongs to Islam. It belongs to all the Muslims of the world, 1.5 billion Muslims of the world, it belongs to them. We cannot accept any threat to the al-Aqsa mosque. We cannot give up Jerusalem. Jerusalem belongs to Islam.”¹⁵

And:

“America has to learn that because if you remain on the side of injustice, the wrath of God will come. Please! Please all Americans, do you remember that, that Allah is watching everyone. God is watching everyone. If you continue doing injustice, and tolerating injustice, the wrath of God will come.”¹⁶

- During a "Live Dialogue," on IslamOnline.net on May 31, 2001, Siddiqi was asked about implementing *Sharia* (Islamic law) in the U.S. Siddiqi answered:

“The criminal law of the Sharia is not practiced here [in America] and it is not even required for Muslims to practice the criminal law in a non-Islamic state. Muslims have to continue living their own lives faithfully

¹³ “Backgrounder: Muslim World League,” Anti-Defamation League. May 19, 2009.

http://www.adl.org/main_Terrorism/Muslim_World_League_Backgrounder.htm?Multi_page_sections=sHeading_4 (Accessed October 19, 2012).

¹⁴ Siddiqi, Muzammil. “Separation between Religion and Life.” OnIslam.net March 13, 2011.

http://www.onislam.net/english/ask-the-scholar/shariah-based-systems/imamate-and-political-systems/174334-separation-between-religion-and-life.html?Political_Systems (Accessed October 19, 2012).

¹⁵ Muzammil Siddiqi, Jerusalem Day Rally, Washington, DC, October 28, 2000

¹⁶ Muzammil Siddiqi, Jerusalem Day Rally, Washington, DC, October 28, 2000

and presenting the message of Islam to others. Once more people accept Islam, insha'allah, this will lead to the implementation of Sharia in all areas.”¹⁷

- During the same May 2001 Islamonline.net dialogue, Siddiqi was asked about “bringing Sharia” to American politics and whether Muslims should participate in it or focus on building Islamic schools instead:

“As an American Muslim do (you) think that by voting we as Muslims can bring Sharia in this country or to even think that the Kufar [unbelievers] are going to help us establish ourselves in this country when they have been supporting countries such as Turkey, Russia, India and China and list goes on and on, where every practicing Muslim is being oppressed?”

Siddiqi responded:

“We should not lose hope. Islam is a religion of optimism. Prophet Muhammad (SAAWS) started his work as a single person in Mecca and, by the grace and mercy of Allah, he was able to bring a large portion of humanity to the path of truth and righteousness. We should also work with sincerity, devotion and wisdom. We should work in all fields: social, economic, political, spiritual; the Islamic dawa includes everything.”¹⁸

- In the Oct. 18, 1996 issue of the newspaper, *Pakistan Link*, Siddiqi wrote an article in which he responded to reader questions. On the subject of the political participation of Muslims in a non-Islamic state, he said:

“It is true that Islam stands for the sovereignty of Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala and Allah's rules are not limited to the acts of worship. They also include social, economic and political matters. By participating in a non-Islamic system, one cannot rule by that which Allah has commanded. But things do not change overnight. Changes come through patience, wisdom and hard work.”¹⁹

And:

“I believe that, as Muslims, we should participate in the system to safeguard our interest and try to bring gradual change for the right cause, the cause of truth and justice. We must not forget that Allah's rules have to

¹⁷ Dr. Muzammil Siddiqi, “The Future of the Muslim Community in America,” May 31, 2000. <http://web.archive.org/web/20061019100528/http://www.islamonline.net/livedialogue/english/Browse.asp?hGuestID=04wWNv> (Accessed October 19, 2012).

¹⁸ Dr. Muzammil Siddiqi, “The Future of the Muslim Community in America,” May 31, 2000. <http://web.archive.org/web/20061019100528/http://www.islamonline.net/livedialogue/english/Browse.asp?hGuestID=04wWNv> (Accessed October 19, 2012).

¹⁹ Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi, "Issues and Questions," *Pakistan Link*, October 18, 1996.

be established in all lands, and all our efforts should lead to that direction.”²⁰

- In an undated video, acquired by the IPT and made in California sometime in the early 1990s, Siddiqi lectured on "jihad," proclaiming:

“When people really carry on Jihad, they carry on the Islam in its peak in its totality. And that's why in the hadith the Prophet (SAS) said (Arabic), 'No people have ever neglected Jihad except they became humiliated.' And people leave, renounce Jihad, they became humiliated. That means in order to gain the honor, Jihad is the path, Jihad is the way to receive the honor.”

And:

“I can see that there is already some impact after Jihad in Afghanistan in the Intifada movement in Palestine. With this, more courage, more strength, more confidence and shall I even say that in a few years we will be celebrating with each other the victory of Islam in Palestine. Insh'allah, we shall be celebrating the coming of the Masjid al-Aqsa under the Islamic rule. We shall be celebrating insh'allah the coming of Jerusalem and the whole land of Palestine insh'allah and the establishment of the Islamic State throughout that area.”

- The *San Francisco Chronicle* published a story in June 2001 about homosexuality among Muslims. Siddiqi, then director of the Islamic Society of Orange County, was interviewed for the story, as shown in the following excerpt:

“I ask those people to repent, turn to God and take Islam seriously. Being gay and Muslim is a contradiction in terms. Islam is totally against homosexuality. It's clear in the Koran and in the sayings of the prophet Mohammed”²¹

Siddiqi said he did not condone violence against gays but supported laws in countries where homosexuality is punishable by death. As in the Bible, Siddiqi said, the Koran includes the story of Lot, in which men who have sex with men are punished. He stated:

“How can people accept something that is against the Koran, unless Muslims stop being Muslims?”²²

²⁰ Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi, "Issues and Questions," *Pakistan Link*, October 18, 1996.

²¹ Heredia, Christopher. "Gay Muslims battle oppression," *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 21, 2001. <http://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Gay-Muslims-battle-oppression-Support-network-2906320.php> (Accessed October 19, 2012).

²² Heredia, Christopher. "Gay Muslims battle oppression," *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 21, 2001. <http://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Gay-Muslims-battle-oppression-Support-network-2906320.php> (Accessed October 19, 2012).

- In a speech at the September 2002 ISNA convention, Siddiqi stated that he wasn't sure who committed the 9/11 attacks, even after bin Laden took credit:

“It is, the point is that we said, whosoever did it, we condemn it. We did not say it is Muslims who did it. We did not say this and that. But the point is that whosoever did it, it was wrong. And this is a basic point ... We cannot say in surety whoever did it or not. But the point is that if the name of Islam is taken, we have to clarify the name of Islam.”²³

- During a 2006 sermon, Siddiqi offered mixed messages about the controversy surrounding Danish political cartoons that mocked the Prophet Muhammad. He said he did "not condone any violence" and that he "strongly rejects those who misbehaved in expressing their disapproval" but then advocated limits on free speech that offends religious sensibilities.”²⁴

“Religion and religious figures are dear to people's hearts. Their emotions are attached to them. Even if one does not believe in a religious figure, one should express one's criticism in a responsible and respectful manner.”²⁵

He added:

“We do not force others to believe in Prophet Muhammad the way we believe in him; but they should not insult us and humiliate us by abusing his name, his personality and character in public.”²⁶

- In a December 2000 fatwa posted on *IslamOnline*, Dr. Siddiqi ruled that women should not travel without a guardian, a practice common in conservative countries like Saudi Arabia. He stated:

“The most important reason not to be alone is to guarantee her safety, security and protection of deen manners. She must guarantee all those necessities. However, a woman cannot travel without a mahram unless there is a big need for her journey, like her parents are sick.”²⁷

²³ Muzammil Siddiqi, ISNA Convention, September 2002.

²⁴ Khutbah (sermon) by Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi, "Freedom of Expression or Freedom to Abuse," Islamic Society of Orange County, February 3, 2006; <http://pakistanlink.org/religion/2006/02152006.htm>

²⁵ Khutbah (sermon) by Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi, "Freedom of Expression or Freedom to Abuse," Islamic Society of Orange County, February 3, 2006; <http://pakistanlink.org/religion/2006/02152006.htm>

²⁶ Khutbah (sermon) by Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi, "Freedom of Expression or Freedom to Abuse," Islamic Society of Orange County, February 3, 2006; <http://pakistanlink.org/religion/2006/02152006.htm>

²⁷ Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi, *IslamOnline.net*, "Fatwa" December 11, 2000.

<http://web.archive.org/web/20060722222214/http://www.islamonline.net/livefatwa/english/Browse.asp?hGuestID=UK32p6> (Accessed September 27, 2012).