



THE INVESTIGATIVE PROJECT ON TERRORISM

EDINA LEKOVIC



Edina Lekovic visited the White House at least twice. She met with Paul Monteiro, Associate Director, White House Office of Public Engagement on July 14, 2010 and July 16, 2010.

Biography

Edina Lekovic is Director of Policy and Programming at the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC).¹ From 2004-2010, she served as MPAC's Communications Director.² Lekovic was also *The Minaret's* managing editor from 2000-2004. *The Minaret* carried many articles by MPAC employees until it ceased publication in 2005.³

Anti-Israel Rhetoric

In a speech at the Islamic Center of Irvine in July 2002, Lekovic said that Muslims were being oppressed and massacred everywhere by non-Muslims and accused “Zionists” of massacring Muslims because this was inherent in their behavior:

- “We feel as Muslims that we’re being oppressed everywhere and that injustice is being thrown upon Muslims left and right in every corner of the globe... Any corner of the globe you choose, Muslims have been massacred...In Palestine, for example, we know the history of Zionism...and point to the Zionists constantly. We can expect that the

¹ <http://www.mpac.org/about/staff-board.php> (Accessed October 19 2012).

² www.linkedin.com/pub/edina-lekovic/7/481/5a9

³ <http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/misc/356.pdf>

Zionists will act as Zionists. That's the equation we always know will exist..."⁴

Lekovic on Racial Profiling

- “But this post-9/11 phenomenon is one that is framed in terms of trying to protect us. However, in fact we all know that it violates both civil liberties and it generalizes by appearance. This method has now increased in intensity and is expanding its scope into religion and origin. The key question for all groups including one that has been posed by the ACLU is, ‘Does concern about terrorism justify doing something different from what we should otherwise accept in this country as civil liberties people should enjoy?’ Now, of course, our universal answer to this is no and that is no for several reasons.”⁵

Lekovic: former Editor for Al-Talib, UCLA Student Magazine

As a UCLA student during the late 1990s, Lekovic served as an editor for *Al-Talib*, a Muslim student magazine.⁶ The magazine's July 1999 issue featured Ayatollah Khomeini and Osama bin Laden on its cover, with a headline “The Spirit of Jihad.” Inside, bin Laden was identified as a “freedom fighter and philanthropist.”⁷

In an editorial about Muslim pride and maintaining a Muslim identity in the West, the *Al-Talib* staff urged readers to “act not according to the watered-down, twentieth-century version of Islam in the West, but to the Islam that was revealed by Allah and taught by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) – the Islam people took pride in, and didn't sacrifice any part of.”⁸

Even after al-Qaida declared war on the West and carried out several attacks, the *Al-Talib* editorial cast bin Laden as a heroic figure:

“When we hear someone refer to the great *Mujahid* (someone who struggles in Allah's cause) Osama bin Laden as a ‘terrorist,’ we should defend our brother and refer to him as a freedom fighter; someone who has forsaken wealth and power to fight in Allah's cause and speak out against oppressors. We take these stances only to please Allah.”⁹

⁴ Edina Lekovic, “Struggle in the Muslim World,” MPAC & the Islamic Center of Irvine, CA, July 14, 2002.

⁵ “Racial and Religious Profiling and the War on Terror,” Edina Lekovic, Neighborhood Church, Pasadena, CA, July 12, 2005

⁶ Lekovic is listed as managing editor in the November 1998, January, May and July 1999 issues. At least five issues from November 1999 thru May 2002 list her as copy editor and writer. Lekovic's service as *Al-Talib* managing editor appeared in her biography at the December 2001 MPAC convention. See:

http://www.investigativeproject.org/redirect/MPAC-2001_Bio_with_Al-Talib.pdf#page=6

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ Editorial, “Jihad in America, maintaining an Islamic identity in an un-Islamic environment,” *Al-Talib*, Volume 9, issue 6, July 1999.

⁹ Editorial, “Jihad in America, maintaining an Islamic identity in an un-Islamic environment,” *Al-Talib*, Volume 9, issue 6, July 1999.

The May 1999¹⁰ issue, which lists Lekovic as "Managing Editor" and "Writer," contains the article, "Commercialization of the Holocaust," which disputes the nature, scope and broadly-accepted facts of the Holocaust and offers the following "Author's note":

"For the purpose of this piece, so as not to get derailed from the main argument, I'm assuming that traditional Holocaust history is true, though of course **there are libraries of compelling evidence to indicate that the numbers, accounts, and narratives are either exaggerated, or in some cases, wholly imaginary.** Suffice it to say that proponents of a less-gory account of Holocaust history are no longer fringe racists spouting nonsense, but now include a number of once-prominent historians who have been ostracized from university and intellectual circles that once held them in high esteem. The mere mention that things might be different than that of conventional wisdom is usually enough to brand a once well-regarded professor an anti-Semite, a radical, and for the growing number of JEWISH scholars questioning standard Holocaust history, a "self-hating Jew." The author's position is that rather than open a topic that can generate volumes of work, we'll assume that standard history is true. Readers are nevertheless encouraged to explore the growing body of literature detailing alternative accounts on their own accord."

A September 1999¹¹ issue, which listed Lekovic as an "Assistant Editor," contained an article entitled, "Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd al-Rahman - Tortured in Prison Cell," which claimed that the notorious "Blind Cleric" was "falsely accused" of involvement in the first World Trade Center bomb plot:

"CNN interactive confirmed on August 10, 1999 that Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd al-Rahman was attacked by a prison officer and suffered contusions. The attack occurred while the Shaykh was using the prison toilet. As a result of the attack, he fell down and then seems to have been dragged to his cell. Shaykh 'Umar is the spiritual guide of the Jama'ah al-Islamiyyah in Egypt. The depth and support of this movement is witnessed by the fact that 70,000 associates of the group are now in Egyptian dictator Mubarak's prisons. **In 1996, Shaykh 'Umar was falsely accused of being a conspirator in the World Trade Center bombing, and was sentenced to life in prison.**"

Later, Lekovic downplayed her association with the magazine. In a 2007 television interview, she denied ever having worked at *The Minaret*, only to later acknowledge in an email that she had in fact done so.¹² MPAC attempted to back her up by whitewashing the claims made in the issues Lekovic was tied to.¹³

¹⁰ http://www.investigativeproject.org/1999-05_Al-Talib.pdf

¹¹ http://www.investigativeproject.org/1999-09_Al-Talib.pdf

¹² <http://www.investigativeproject.org/293/ms-lekovica-dozen-printing-mistakes>

¹³ <http://www.investigativeproject.org/292/mpac-whos-changing-the-subject>