



Terrorism and the Middle East Peace Process

The Origins and Activities of Hamas in the United States

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Introduction: Hamas and Islamic Jihad in the U.S.

Last July, Musa Abu Marzuk, the head of the Hamas political bureau and chief operating officer responsible for orchestrating the group's terrorist attacks, was arrested at Kennedy Airport upon his return to the States. He had been living on and off in the U.S. for some 15 years—where he had set up an elaborate Hamas military and financial infrastructure. In his possession at the time of his arrest was paperwork showing his business companies to be worth more than \$10 million, which law enforcement officials believe to have been part of a massive money laundering operation for Hamas in the U.S.. Equally significant was the discovery of Marzuk's personal telephone directory which contained the telephone numbers of nearly every top terrorist and liberation leader in the world today. Interestingly, more than 20 percent of the phone numbers are those of Marzuk's contacts and senior terrorist collaborators in the United States. At least ten of these close contacts currently live in the Northern Virginia area.

At the end of October, 1995, Ramadan Abdullah Shallah declared in Damascus that he was the new head of Islamic Jihad. Since 1991, Shallah had lived in the United States where he served as a Professor at the University of South Florida at Tampa and also directed a "research facility" affiliated with the University of South Florida. He worked closely with Sami al-Arian, another professor who was not only the corporate founder of Mr. Shallah's research facility but also the head of a non-profit "charitable organization." FBI searches of both Shallah's and al-Arian's premises have produced a voluminous amount of raw intelligence and primary source material on the vast radical Islamic connections that were established from Tampa. At this time, the FBI is operating a task force with representatives from the INS, Customs, and Treasury, in what may ultimately become the largest counter-terrorist investigation in the United States.

The very fact that the top terrorist leaders of both Hamas and the Islamic Jihad radical groups were found in 1995 to have been living in the United States should disabuse anyone of the notion that militant Islamic organizations are not using the United States as a safe haven. Although FBI director Louis Freeh recently testified for the first time on the record that Hamas raises funds in the United States, the fact is that both Hamas and Islamic Jihad have not only raised considerable amounts of funds in the United States but have also set up operational headquarters in the U.S.

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where terrorist attacks and military strategies are orchestrated. In turn, both Islamic Jihad and Hamas have succeeded in establishing their U.S.-based support infrastructure because both groups have networked together with other militant Islamic groups.

The culmination of this pan-Islamic militant partnership may have been seen in the World Trade Center bombing: rather than being an attack dominated by the militant Islamic Jama from Egypt, evidence now shows that the bombing

was the product of collaboration from five different radical Islamic organizations, including the Gamaa Islamiyah, Islamic Jihad, al-Fuqra, Sudanese National Islamic Front and Hamas. The scope and breadth of these militant Islamic groups should demonstrate unambiguously that, while not coordinated formally on an operational level, the militant Islamic groups network with one another in a sort of terrorist “Internet.” At virtually every place on the globe today—Paris, Rome, Dallas, New York or Manila, Peshawar, Gaza, Beirut and Khartoum—militant Islamic groups network with one another by receiving or providing assistance, obtaining safe haven, and generating mutual support for all of their activities. No evidence exists to suggest the existence of any formal Politburo-like board of directors; rather, many of these groups are united firmly by a common denominator—belief in the application of the *sha’ariah* (Islamic code of law) to society and rejection of Western values and systems.

The Dynamics Behind the Creation of Hamas in the U.S.

In trying to understand the dynamics of Hamas and its dedication to terrorism, there has been a series of erroneous assumptions made by U.S. government officials and some in the counter-terrorism/Middle East business in recent days:

1. Contrary to its constant portrayal as limited to the geographical terrain of Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, Hamas is a worldwide movement that feeds off the conflict in Palestine in

order to demonstrate that the first step toward establishing an Islamic empire is through the liberation of Palestine. Hamas itself, like the other militant Islamic groups such as Hizb' al-Tahrir, Gamaa Islamiyah and the Algerian FIS, are children of the larger pan-Islamic movement known as the Muslim Brotherhood.

2. Hamas as a movement cannot be neatly compartmentalized or divided into the traditional Western division of “moderate” and “radical” camps, nor can the socio-political institutions of Hamas be separated politically from the deadly military wings that believe in genocide for the Jews and anyone else deemed an enemy of their interpretation of Islam.

First of all, it must be stated that in referring to militant and radical Islam, I am only referring to the existence of extremist Islam. Extremist Muslims are no different from other religious extremists—whether it be the Jewish terrorist who shot the Israeli Prime Minister because he believed he was commanded to do so by God, or the anti-abortionist assassin who believes he has the right to kill anyone in the name of God. Each religious extremist differs only in which religion he invokes to commit a crime. Thus, contrary to the apologists for militant Islam, scrutiny of the Hamas infrastructure in the United States is not an attack on Islam—just as focusing on Jewish support for the radical Jewish extremists known as Kahane Chai could never be construed as an attack on Judaism. If anything, it is the growing power of radical Islamic forces over the established Muslim community that would, for reasons that are quite understandable, prefer to keep the lid on the militant Islamic paradise they have neatly set up in the United States.

The vast majority of Muslims do not support in any way the politics of the extremists. Nevertheless, to deny the existence of radical Islam (as some Islamic groups have asserted recently in the United States) is tantamount to equating militants and peace-seeking moderates as one and the same. This fallacy, rather than protecting moderates from being tarred by the extremist brush, only paints them further. For the militants, of course, the deliberate blurring of the distinction between militant and moderate Islam enables them to hide under the protection of mainstream Islam.

In the same manner, denial that a militant White supremacist movement exists in the United States would be tantamount to defending its existence. For the Muslim world, the stakes may be higher. The battle for the heart and soul of Islam in recent years is really at the core of a violence which continues to spiral out of control: as militant Islamic groups attempt to impose the *Sha'aria* by force, destroy regimes they have deemed heretical, or assassinate those who are considered enemies of their interpretation of Islam, violence once contained within the Middle East proliferates throughout the world. The bombing in Buenos Aires in 1994, the bombings in Paris in 1995, the attempted bombings in Denmark in 1993, and the series of bombings and assassinations in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan all point to the irreconcilable anger of militant fundamentalists whose agenda is not subject to compromise or rational dialogue.

The hearing today was prompted by a deadly series of Hamas suicide bombings in Israel. The ideology behind these attacks, the same type of fanatical assassins who carried them out, and the very organizers of such horrific violence are located here in the United States.

The larger question of how Hamas and other radical terrorist movements obtain the financial, material and political wherewithal to sustain their groups is one of the most vexing issues facing American foreign policy. Because Hamas and its precursor Islamist organizations have successfully used the United States as a major haven of support, the issue of how to curb Hamas has become intertwined with the growing influence of radical Islamic groups in the United States. To the extent that militant groups are able to dictate the agenda when dealing with this issue—at universities and even at the White House—moderate Muslims get tragically shortchanged, American allies continue to be subjected to terrorist attacks, and ultimately American citizens and American society are rendered more insecure and vulnerable to terrorism and extremism.

The Roots of Hamas

Hamas is the Palestinian offspring of the Muslim Brotherhood, a pan-Muslim movement. Originally known as al-Mujama al-Islamia (The Islamic Association), an Islamic social-welfare body, the group became Hamas (Arabic for the Islamic Resistance Movement) when the *intifadah* erupted in December 1987.

When the Mujama was created in 1975 in Gaza, it dealt only with social, welfare and religious issues and was primarily dedicated toward deep Islamic indoctrination of society. Because it did not engage in any violence, the Israeli military government recognized it as an official welfare association and treated it like other non-violent, religious, charitable establishments.

But in the early 1980's, the Mujama began acquiring weapons and preparing for the initiation of its military phase. Immediately thereafter, the Israeli Defense Forces cracked down on the Mujama, resulting in the imprisonment in 1981 of Sheik Ahmed Yassin, the leader of Mujama—and later the leader of Hamas. Four years later, Yassin was released in the infamous and ill-advised prisoner swap between Ahmed Jabril and Israel.

Since its inception, Hamas has depended primarily on funds from the Persian Gulf, in particular Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates. At first, this money came directly and officially from the Persian Gulf regime to the Mujama organization—a non-violent group. As the Mujama underwent its transformation into Hamas, dedicated to carrying out *jihad* or violent holy war, it still continued to receive Persian Gulf funds. The flow was interrupted—though only temporarily—during the Gulf War as anger developed among the Gulf nations for the anti-American position adopted by the radical Islamic groups. On average, the Gulf states provide about 50 percent of the Hamas budget, which is estimated at 70 to 90 million dollars per year. Funds

generated in the United States, together from other Western countries, provide the other half of Hamas' funding. While no hard core figures exist, insofar as Hamas does not file a tax return, these figures are based on known Hamas charitable transfers, intelligence assessments of covert transfers, and detailed examinations of the major Hamas institutions in the West Bank, Gaza and Israel.

The significance of the free flow of funds generated in the United States, coupled with the safe protection afforded by the U.S., cannot be underestimated. At the same time that Hamas was reconstituting itself into a violent organization in

the mid-1980's, its dependence on an outside support base became manifestly clear. As an entity that engaged Israeli military forces, Hamas became increasingly constrained and besieged, its on-the-ground leaders either arrested or deported, and its freedom of maneuverability increasingly restrained by the Israeli Defense Forces and other security services. Consequently, the U.S. became the natural selection for a new source of support. Why?

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1. The Jihad in Afghanistan created a vast fundraising and political mobilization network in the West to support the *mujahideen*. The anti-Soviet *jihad* not only mobilized a new generation of Islamic militants, but created a terrorist infrastructure through which Hamas and other radical Islamic movements could simultaneously use for their own battles. Thus, when the confrontation with Israel began to escalate militarily, Hamas desperately needed an external haven from which to direct operations, raise funds, coordinate political activities and disseminate propaganda. While Jordan provided some outlet for the Hamas diaspora leadership, Hamas found that the U.S., with its existing militant anti-Soviet *jihad* infrastructure, provided a virtual paradise for the emerging Hamas leadership to raise funds and develop the external networks needed to coordinate attacks back in its homeland.
2. As a veritable greenhouse for new recruits, the United States provided Hamas with the opportunity to carry out *da'wah* (missionary work, propaganda and proselytizing), recruit operatives, and serve as a safe haven for Hamas fugitives and leaders; it also enabled Hamas to raise tens of millions of dollars (tax-free) for their infrastructure on their warfront.

Mousa Abu Marzuk and the Islamic Association for Palestine

The first manifestation of Hamas' presence in the United States was the creation of the Islamic Association for Palestine for North America in 1981—soon followed by the replication of this organization in various cities. Among the early founders of the Islamic Association for Palestine

was Mousa Abu Marzuk (the Hamas leader now held under detention in New York following his apprehension last July), Ghassan al-Ashey and his brother Bassam al-Ashey. Marzuk and the al-Asheys developed extensive business holdings and corporate entities worth tens of millions of dollars.¹

An examination of Mr. Marzuk's achievements is instructive in understanding how Hamas has been able to develop a widespread network on American soil with neither scrutiny nor restrictions.

Born in 1951 in the town of Rafiah in the Gaza Strip, Marzuk earned a college degree in engineering in Cairo in 1975 and moved to Louisiana soon after to attain his doctorate. By the early 1980's, Marzuk had become increasingly involved with a growing community of militant Muslims in the U.S. whose worldwide ideological fundamentalist fervor was unleashed by the Iranian revolution, the assassination of Anwar Sadat, and the *jihad* against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Together with several colleagues, Marzuk helped create an umbrella organization called the Islamic Association for Palestine; Marzuk would later be elected head of the group's *Majlis al-Shura* or consultative council that oversaw all the group's activities. By the mid-1980's—several years before Hamas came into formal existence in December 1987—the IAP had established offices in Indiana, Arizona, Illinois and California, and was publishing a militant magazine called *Ila Falastin*, which routinely called for the death of “infidels and Jews”. Moreover, internal Hamas documents

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strongly suggest that the 1988 Hamas charter, a virulent anti-Semitic tract that incorporates elements of both Nazi dogma and the notorious turn-of-the-century Protocols of the Elders of Zion, was first written by members of the IAP in the United States in the early to mid-1980's.

As Hamas began leaving its special violent trademarks—stabblings and mutilations of its victims—in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank, it was

from the United States that Hamas was controlled and funded. Marzuk, according to the confessions of several captured Hamas terrorists, appointed the military commanders and dispatched couriers to the territories with specific instructions to carry out terror attacks, along with the money to do so. Although some cash was given directly to Hamas death squad leaders, other monies—collectively totaling tens of millions of dollars—were channeled through Islamic charities, known as *zakats*, which served as indoctrination greenhouses for Hamas operatives, provided a conduit for the funding of terrorism, and acted as a powerful socio-religious magnet to the population.

In the meantime, Marzuk was busy further establishing the Hamas network under the guise of seemingly innocent religious groups, research institutions and investment companies. According

to federal documents, in 1989, Marzuk became the founding president of the United Association of Studies and Research (UASR), a self-described Islamic “think-tank” which in reality served as a covert branch for planning Hamas operations and disseminating propaganda. In an interview with the *Washington Post* last year, Ahmed bin Yousef, current head of the Virginia-based UASR, denied any affiliation with Hamas and claimed that Mr. Marzuk was only a “businessman” who briefly served on UASR’s board of directors.²

In June 1991, the largest international gathering of Islamist leaders ever held in the United States convened in the outskirts of Washington, DC. Sponsored by the UASR, the extraordinary conference—which focused on the need to respond to the Western “crusades” against Iraq, the need to destroy the “Jewish state” and the threat of American-Crusader imperialism—was represented by nearly every major radical fundamentalist organization, including Islamic Jihad, Hizba Tahrir, Hizbollah, al-Jihad, Jamat Muslimeen and others. Representatives at this extraordinary conference included, to name a few, Marzuk, Ahmed bin Yousef, Abdulrahman al-Amoudi (now director of the American Muslim Council), Sami al-Arian (head of the Tampa-based Islamic Jihad front group known as the Islamic Committee for Palestine), Ramadan Abdullah Shallah (now head of the Islamic Jihad and former head of the Tampa-based Islamic Jihad front known as the World Islamic Studies Enterprise, or WISE), and many senior terrorist chieftains from overseas. The presence of so many militants has made this gathering the all-time “All-Star” terrorist conference in U.S. history. Scores of papers and resolutions were presented that condemned the United States and Jews as part of a diabolical world plot to destroy Islam; those present also decided to support one another in their respective Islamic confrontations with their non-Islamic hosts.

Among the Jordanians was the radical parliamentarian Ishaq al-Farhan, who only a few months before gave a pep talk to Nasser Hidmi and the 25 other Hamas rising stars, and a few years earlier collaborated with Yusuf al-Azm on gunrunning for Hamas leader Ahmed Yassin in its pre-*intifadah* armament phase. Leith Shbeilat, another Jordanian parliamentarian present at the conference, was later caught with Ya’aqub Qarash maintaining a cache of weapons paid for by Iran, and implicated in a plot to assassinate King Hussein.

At the time this conference was held, as with other conferences, U.S. law enforcement and intelligence were totally unaware of its existence. Such gatherings provided opportunities for the worldwide militant Islamic network to coalesce and establish new linkages.

As for planning specific operations, Marzuk—according to the confession of Mohammed Saleh (an American Palestinian arrested by Israel for smuggling funds to Hamas terrorists) and confirmed independently by the statements of other Hamas operatives—told Saleh and other Hamas operatives which terrorists to meet and how much money each was to be given. On another occasion, Marzuk gave Saleh, prior to his departure from the U.S., the location of the body of

an Israeli soldier kidnapped and murdered by Hamas in order to negotiate the release of imprisoned Hamas leaders. On still another occasion, Marzuk sent Saleh to the territories in 1990 to create a military-security apparatus for Hamas and a means of coded communication for Hamas operatives to communicate to their commanders in the United States and London. Marzuk secretly visited the West Bank and Gaza in 1989 and 1990 to provide firsthand instructions to his troops on the ground. Although Hamas supporters deny that Saleh worked for Marzuk³—the Marzuk bank records tell a different story. The records show that Marzuk deposited hundreds of thousands of dollars into Saleh's Chicago bank accounts.

The Islamic Association for Palestine: The Real Hamas

IAP is presently headquartered in a nondescript shopping mall in Richardson, Texas. IAP has set up an elaborate publications and video operation to promote Hamas, in both Arabic and English.

One IAP publication, called "America's Greatest Enemy: The Jew and an Unholy Alliance," has been routinely distributed at Islamist conventions.

While the Arabic publications brazenly support Hamas, IAP's English-language literature and videos—clearly intended for non-Muslim Western audiences—are relatively tame, refraining, for the most part, from advocating terrorism and hatred against Jews and Christians.

But not entirely. One IAP publication, called "America's Greatest Enemy: The Jew and an Unholy Alliance," has been routinely distributed at Islamist conventions. Another IAP brochure, authored by Yusef Islam, formerly known as the singer Cat Stevens before he converted to Islam, contains plain old anti-Semitism:

The Jews seem neither to respect God nor his creation. Their own holy books contain the curse of God brought upon them by their prophets on account of their disobedience to Him and mischief in the earth. We have seen the disrespect for religion displayed by those who consider themselves to be 'God's chosen people.'... There will be no justice until all the land is given back to its rightful owners... Only Islam can bring peace back to the Holy Land...

From his home in Great Britain, Islam/Stevens has raised tens of thousands of dollars for Hamas in cooperation with its British fundraising arm, known as the Relief Fund for Lebanon and Palestine.

IAP also publishes and translates Hamas communiqués from the territories. A spokesperson for IAP once explained that this was no different than any news organization, while another official of IAP insisted that IAP had no connection at all to Hamas.

One Hamas communiqué disseminated by IAP urged the “killing of...the bloodsuckers...and killers of prophets.” Another condemned the “American enemy” as a “full participant in the conspiracy” to wipe out the Palestinians, specifically blaming the U.S. for participating in the Sabra and Shatilla massacres. And following the dispatch of U.S. forces to Saudi Arabia after Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in 1990, IAP published another Hamas communiqué:

History repeats itself. Once more the Ummah is exposed to a fierce crusade, an imperialist attack, an oppressive Western alliance, to target its dignity, break its power and unity. ...The only justification for a crusading alliance is another anti-Islamic war to complete the deficient Zionist actions, so thousands of Jews are smuggled to Palestine in pitch darkness. ...Burn Israeli and American flags...

In late August 1990, IAP held a special one-and-a-half day conference in Kansas City, with more than 100 representatives from militant Islamist groups from the Middle East and Persian Gulf. The group issued a resolution which “regret[ed] the state of affairs between Iraq and Kuwait for using force to resolve disputes.” But its primary rage was directed at the United States. The IAP “condemn[s] the American crusades leading arrogant international forces.”

During this conference, one of the speakers was Khalil al-Qawqaa, a Hamas leader from the territories:

Dear brothers and sisters, we used to cross swords with America and with imperialism in a sportive way, by means of culture clash, by critique and writing in newspapers and journals and in debates. But the confrontation has reached a point of no return.... All veils have fallen. All barriers have broken down. And today, America is right here at your doorstep, in everybody’s house. Ba’al, the idol, is back and stands erect in the Arabian peninsula. Is there a Muhammad to slay the Ba’al of our times? Is there an Abu Bakr, an Ummah, for this neo-Ba’al? The marines, dear brothers, are stealing the doors of your houses, and the doors of your mosques, in obstinate and open provocation. They are at our doors. Their plan is to penetrate the flesh of our girls. And our honor, and our values, in order to turn our society into a pervert nation...

At a special rally hosted by IAP in the U.S., Qawqaa, from the territories, declared, “America’s fall is a decided matter.” At the same rally, a choir of children who appeared to be no more than about nine years old, sang revolutionary Islamist songs in praise of Hamas, and appeared to imitate Hamas dagger stabbings in a syncopated rhythm.

Ila Falastin was a monthly IAP Arabic-language publication, but is no longer published. Many of the articles routinely called for terrorism against Jews and exhorted Muslims to attack the “worldwide Jewish enemy.” Its articles routinely referred to Jews in the same language as the Protocols of the Elders of Zion and praised the leaders of Hamas, such as Sheikh Ahmed Yassin. One cover showed a Hamas fighter cloaked in a *keffiyeh* and wielding an axe. At the time of its publication, *Ila Falastin* served as one of the two primary Hamas magazines in the world, including the West Bank and Gaza. The other, *Falastin al-Muslimah*, is still published out of London.

IAP also operated a once-a-year training camp and retreat for six years out of Arizona. In advertisements in *Ila Falastin*, the camp was promoted as a “jump-start” (*Intilaaqah*) in preparation for waging *jihad*. Hamas recruits in the Tucson area conducted military training, similar to the training carried out in the northeastern United States by members of the Jihad organization led by Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman.

More recently, IAP has produced and distributed terrorist recruitment videos. One such production, called *Iz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades*, opens with dramatic shots of bearded Palestinian men armed with Kalashnikovs jumping out of trees and aiming their rifles. Hamas fighters are featured arming and preparing weapons, machine guns, and molotov cocktails. Interspersed with the operational video, fighters are interviewed, and boast of their heroic killings of Jews and Palestinian “collaborators.” There are even chilling interviews of blindfolded Palestinians “confessing” to their “crimes” moments before their execution. The end of the video says, “To order your copy, call Aqsa Vision,” and gives the Texas phone number of IAP. (The Aqsa Vision office and address are the same as that of IAP. The labels of other publicly available tapes state “IAP Aqsa Vision.” Although Aqsa Vision is Hamas’s audio-visual arm, it is operated under a separate corporate entity known as the American Media Group.)

The Extraordinary 1989 Conference: The Islamic Association for Palestine

In recent years, IAP has organized several extraordinary conferences of militant leaders. Even though the central theme is Hamas and the *jihad* in Palestine, the conferences are like Muslim Arab Youth Association (MAYA) conferences in that they serve as an umbrella for the core members of the most militant Islamist groups. As the case of Muhammad Salah and Nasser Hidmi shows, these

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conferences serve as covers for recruitment, training, and fundraising of terrorist organizations, beyond their overt function of introducing new groups to one another so they can network with one another from their indigenous bases.

One extraordinary IAP conference attended by 1,200 people was held in Kansas City in December 1989. A videotape, made by the IAP, captured the highlights of the conference, which featured the core of militant Islamist leaders. Behind a long table at the head of a large auditorium was a 30-foot sign with the Arabic words “Palestine is Islamic from the River to the Sea” superimposed over a blood-red map of Israel.

One of the first speakers was Yusef al-Qaradhawi, an Egyptian-born Islamist scholar who is touted by militant Islamists in the West such as the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) as a “moderate” who “has written and lectured for many years against extremism in religion.”

Qaradhawi’s stem-winding speech was anything but moderate. It was instructive because it showed the duplicity of Islamist spokespeople who seek to legitimize militant Islam in the West by misrepresenting their leaders as moderate:

Palestine cannot be liberated except by Islam! And the *mujahideen* will not be victorious except by Islam. . . Islam has been the way to victory in our history. And it is the way to victory in the present. Especially in the case of Palestine—especially! Because the enemy that is fighting us is fighting us with religion!

Al-Qaradhawi continued:

So if they fight us with Judaism, we will fight them with Islam! If they fight with the Torah, we will fight them with the Qur’an. . . . If they say their temple, we have the Masjid al-Aqsa. Because our religion is stronger than theirs. . . . On the Hour of Judgment, the Muslims will fight the Jews and kill them, until the Jews will hide behind the stone, and the stone and the tree will say, O Servant of Allah, O Muslim! There is a Jew behind me, come and kill him. . . Muslims will not be victorious by nationalism, and not by monarchy, and not by democracy, and not by Marxism — they will only be victorious by Islam and they will only be liberated by Islam!

Another speaker was Sheikh Rashid al-Ghannoushi, leader of the militant Islamist party in Tunisia, al-Nahdah. (The Tunisian government would later find him guilty of masterminding numerous lethal terrorist operations, including the killing of Western tourists and plots to assassinate high-ranking government officials. Britain later granted him political sanctuary.) Islamist groups in Washington, including the American Muslim Council (AMC) and CAIR, have been lobbying for the past year to grant him another visa to visit the United States, portraying him as a leading moderate “who has not been linked to any violent acts.”

In his Kansas City speech on December 1989 to IAP, Ghannoushi said:

O brother and sister *mujahideen*, I salute you and transmit to you greetings from your brothers in Tunisia, including those who are behind bars, imprisoned in the past few days following a tempestuous march of solidarity with the triumphant march of the people of the *intifadah*, in its second commemoration, and peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allah, and his blessing.

The Islamic Ummah: Once again it embarks upon the salvation of humanity, confronting the Zionist project in Palestine, seeking to save the civilization of mankind, the salvation of the Islamic Ummah. Humanity has surrendered to the Zionist project today, and there is no hope for the civilization of man, there is no hope for goodness and mercy and justice except that the vanguards of the Islamic Ummah lift away the damage [?] forever.

What you are embarking on is not just a regional project. It is not merely the liberation of one land of the many well-known lands. Rather, you are embarking on the salvation of man, by the salvation of Islam — the salvation of the civilization of humanity — because the Zionist project is a danger to all goodness in the entire world.

Leaders from the Middle East were not the only ones to speak. A mainstream Muslim organization known as the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA) sent a representative, Sayid Thaqib, to express its solidarity with Hamas. Based in Queens, ICNA is one of the largest Muslim organizations in the United States; its constituency is primarily Pakistani, Indian, and Bangladeshi immigrants.

We say to the enemies of Islam, wherever they may be, that their days are limited, and they will have no refuge after we show them true Islam, and there is no peace without Islam. And this message we send to all Muslims, and especially the mujahideen in Palestine, and if we are not with you in our bodies, then we are with you in our hearts, through our material and activist support, praised be to Allah. And we assert to you that the Dawn of Islam is coming in Palestine, and we will see it *In Sha Ullah* in Palestine, and all the Islamic countries, and Allah bless them with true Islam *In Sha Ullah*.

Perhaps the most incendiary speech at the convention was delivered by Ahmed al-Qattan, a militant Palestinian cleric based in Kuwait:

Greetings to those who shoot at the Jews with the catapult, and to those who poke out the eyes of the Jews with the slingshot... In 1967...the Jews sang, 'Muhammad is dead and he gave birth to girls'...[and we answer], 'O sons of pigs and monkeys, Muhammad is not dead and he did not give birth to girls.' Rather, Khaybar, Khaybar o Jews; Muhammad's Army will return!...

After al-Qattan surrendered the podium, a veiled Hamas commander stood up to take his place, a Hamas flag in one hand and a Qur'an in the other. The crowd roared, "*Allahu Akbar walillahi'l-Hamd!*" ("Allah is the greatest and to Allah the praise!")—the slogan of the international Muslim Brotherhood movement. "*Allahu Akbar!*"

For the next 20 minutes, the commander gave a report describing in methodical detail Hamas terrorist attacks against Jews, reveling in the bloody nature of each assault.

This was the moment everyone seemed to have been waiting for.

His face still cloaked in a red-and-white checkered *keffiyeh*, the Hamas commander then spoke: "Greetings...from the occupied land...I extend thanks to all those who stood on our side at times when our allies were few. By this I mean the

Islamic Association for Palestine, the Occupied Land Fund [renamed as the Holy Land Fund for Relief and Development]." For the next 20 minutes, the commander gave a report describing in methodical detail Hamas terrorist attacks against Jews, reveling in the bloody nature of each assault.

“...Naturally, the war moved into Israel’s ’48 boundaries. One day in Tel-Aviv, one of the brothers entered a building and began stabbing all the people.... The last operation I am going to tell you about is the operation of the bus...”

Shouts of “*Allahu Akbar*” erupted from the crowd, which seemed to know what he was going to discuss. The Hamas commander continued: “Abd al-Hadi Salim Ighneim was on the bus to Jerusalem, bus 405, and he steered it off the road.... And the bus plunged into the water—16 Jewish soldiers were killed!” (In fact, 17 civilians, including one American, were killed when a fundamentalist steered bus 405 into a ravine.) “...I call upon my brothers to take up arms with us...to take up arms and arms alone!” The crowd responded with thunderous ovation and chanting of “*Allahu Akbar*.”

Hamas Publications

Since 1989, IAP’s influence has blossomed in the American Muslim community. Its flagship publication, *al-Zaitonah*, is one of the largest indigenous Arabic-language publications in the United States. Although dedicated to promoting Hamas, the newspaper also supports other Islamist militant liberation movements, including those in Kashmir, the Phillipines, Egypt, and Algeria. *Al-Zaitonah* frequently celebrates successful Hamas attacks. In its October 27, 1994 issue, for example, *al-Zaitonah’s* headline was: “In its greatest operation, Hamas takes credit for the bombing of an Israeli bus in the center of Tel Aviv.” Articles routinely warn of international “Mossad plots” and other Jewish and American-led worldwide anti-Muslim conspiracies.

But *al-Zaitonah* does not limit its venom to Jews. An article in *al-Zaitonah* in 1993 discussed the role of gays and lesbians in the Clinton Administration under the title “Perverts in the American Centers of Decision Making”: “The active movement of those perverts has led many of those who previously used to hide their perversity to declare openly that they are perverts. Amongst them, Congress member Barney Frank, a Democrat from Massachusetts...”

IAP also publishes an English-language newspaper called the *Muslim World Monitor*. Following the convictions of four men in the World Trade Center bombing, the *Muslim World Monitor* published an editorial claiming that the guilty

verdicts represented “the degree to which anti-Muslim venom had penetrated society” and that the U.S. government suppressed evidence showing that the Mossad, Egyptian intelligence and FBI were all involved in the bombing. Frequently the *Muslim World Monitor* publishes articles alleging diabolical conspiracies perpetrated by Jews and other “enemies of Islam.” Articles routinely glorify Islamic terrorist attacks, praise the policies of radical Islamic regimes such as Sudan, attack Jews jointly with

One article in the Muslim World Monitor asserted that Jews ritually slaughter non-Jews during the holiday of Purim, thus “explaining” the actions of the Jewish terrorist Baruch Goldstein in his massacre in Hebron.

extremists such as Louis Farakhan, and brazenly exhort their readers to support militant Islamic movements wherever they may be found. One article asserted that Jews ritually slaughter non-Jews during the holiday of Purim, thus “explaining” the actions of the Jewish terrorist Baruch Goldstein in his massacre in Hebron.

IAP’s Roots, UASR, and the Pivotal Role in Terrorist Operations

IAP’s roots in the United States go back to 1981, when it was formally created in Plainfield, Indiana at the same site as MAYA by radical Islamists in the United States. Its early development mirrors the radicalization of the Palestinian Islamic movement in the Occupied Territories. Evidence indicates that Hamas owes its ideological inception in large part to the work of radical Palestinians who were already living in the United States.

Parts of the Hamas charter and many early Hamas communiqués, according to documentary evidence, were penned by Palestinians living in the United States, in particular Ahmed bin Yusef, whose real name is Ahmed Mahmoud Muhammad Salah, a Gazan immigrant to the United States. His brother, Khalid Mahmoud Salah who would later become one of the most wanted Islamic Jihad terrorists, broke out of a Gaza prison cell in 1987 and killed a senior Israeli officer. After fleeing to Egypt, he became an operative for the Ahmed Mahana faction of Islamic Jihad.

While maintaining a base of operations in the United States, Ahmed bin Yusef became the chief of the Hamas publications wing. He now resides in the Washington area, where he heads UASR. Despite the organization’s repeated denial that it is a Hamas organ, overwhelming evidence indicates that UASR has served as a meeting place for high-ranking Hamas operatives and a contact point for the transfer of communiqués between those operatives and their comrades in the occupied territories.

In May 1992, according to intelligence information, a meeting of seven Hamas leaders took place at UASR. Among the participants were Mahmoud Rumhi, a key Hamas operative, Muhammad Salah (a.k.a. Abu Ahmad), the international commander of Qassam brigades now serving a prison term in Israel, and Marzuk. Participants discussed Hamas’ activities in the territories and the allocation of funds. They debated whether to participate in elections in the impending self-governing authority in the territories. And they tried to work out strategies toward the resolution of disputes between Hamas and other factions.

High-ranking Hamas operatives in the West Bank and Gaza have been in telephone contact with UASR. Among them is Adil Jineedi, the Hamas operative in charge of the Hebron region, who transferred numerous faxes to UASR. Telephone records obtained by federal prosecutors in the World Trade Center bombing show that Mohamed Saleh—the Yonkers gas station owner who

had provided fuel to build the second set of bombs designed to blow up New York City tunnels and landmarks—was in contact with UASR officials in the period before the bombing.

The UASR's publications—some of which are in English but most of which are in Arabic—are advertised as academic-standard analyses of situations in the Middle East. In fact, they are brazen propaganda for Hamas and the world Islamist movement by bin Yusef and others, serving in effect as glossy paperback extensions of the work bin Yusef did as an official scribe of Hamas communiqués. In the UASR monograph, *Hamas: Between Pains of the Present and Hopes for the Future*, for example, the author comes to the following conclusion: “Islam will be the rock on which Israel's small and bigger dream will shatter. The Muhammedan prophecy that the tree and the stone will speak shall come true, and that the Muslim will fight the Jew and be victorious over him, this is near at hand. And the blessed Jihad *intifadah* is the first indications and glad tidings for this.” Other UASR Arabic publications not only call for the destruction of Israel but also call for the annihilation of all Jews.

The Story of a Young Hamas Recruit

Born into a middle class family, Nasser Isa Jallal Hidmi was a history student at Bir Zeit University. Recruited to join Hamas in the late '80s, Hidmi enjoyed a training tour of duty that took him from his preparatory college in Abu Dis outside Jerusalem to Kansas, Missouri, and Illinois.

While studying in Abu Dis, he joined an Islamic student club called al-Kutla al-Islamiya (the Islamic guild) and befriended a student leader named Marwan Hawajah. In addition to his academic responsibilities, Hawajah was also involved in other activities. He had risen through the ranks of Hamas, to its military wing. He transferred sensitive high-level communiqués from one military leader to another, and also disbursed moneys for the acquisition of weapons to be used against Jews and Palestinian “collaborators”—those deemed political and personal enemies of Hamas.

Al-Kutla is known as one of many religious organizations in the West Bank and Gaza that serves as a greenhouse for the development and indoctrination of Hamas operatives. Though many people mistakenly believe that Hamas is only military, it is also a vast social movement. In fact, its far larger appeal is derived from the fact that it is an all-encompassing social religious movement that tends to the needs of its adherents from cradle to grave. Al-Kutla operates youth leagues, hospitals, educational systems, Zakat (religious charity)—programs that not only cater to the specific physical needs of the population, but also serve to indoctrinate, recruit, and perpetuate the radical Hamas ideology. These above-board groups serve as a means of collecting funds and recruiting operatives for the clandestine terrorist wing of Hamas known as the Iz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades.

In August 1989, a friend introduced Hidmi to Muhammad Kazm Suwalha, whose *nom de guerre* is Abu 'Ubaada. Abu 'Ubaada was the Imam of a mosque in the West Bank town of al-Bireh whose Hamas responsibilities included connecting one Hamas operative to another as part of Hamas's decentralized system to avoid detection.⁵

"I agreed," Hidmi told Israeli authorities, "and subsequently we had several more meetings together. Abu 'Ubaada would give me religious instruction, so that I would have a basis to conduct Hamas activities." As the trust between the operatives increased, instructions became more specific and operational. At one point Hidmi was asked to deliver a package to the Ibrahimi mosque in Hebron, but was not told or allowed to ask what was in it. On another occasion, he delivered packages to a Hamas operative working at the Hadassah hospital in Ein Karem, Jerusalem. Another time, Hidmi drove two Palestinian Americans to the Tulkarem area in the West Bank, where they transferred to a cab to go to a nearby village for a clandestine meeting with Hamas military commanders.

Officially, in the United States, Muhammad Salah was nothing more than a Chicago-area used car salesman. In fact, this was a cover used to disguise his upper-echelon position in the Hamas network: international commander of the Iz ad-Din al-Qassam brigades.

Hidmi was both a promising student and a rising star in the Hamas infrastructure. Hamas would now send him to America, and pay for his study and travel.

On the eve of his flight to the United States in November '89, Abu 'Ubaada dropped by his place to say good-bye. "When you reach the United States," Abu 'Ubaada told him, "give this letter to Abu Ahmad." He handed Hidmi a sealed, addressed envelope, and they parted.

Who was Abu Ahmad? A distant relative? A friend of a friend? Sort of. His real name was Muhammad Salah—officially, in the United States, he was nothing more than a Chicago-area used car salesman. In fact, this was a cover used to disguise his upper-echelon position in the Hamas network: international commander of the Iz ad-Din al-Qassam brigades. In this capacity he controlled the deployment of cells, allocation of weapons to the territories, policies on whom to target, arms deals, and the transfer of moneys to on-the-field military commanders.

After arriving in the United States in November, 1989, Hidmi soon met up with his brother Hisham, already living in Manhattan, Kansas.⁴

Having moved into his brother's apartment in Manhattan, Hidmi enrolled at the local university branch. He promptly mailed the letter to Abu Ahmad according to the instructions of his handlers in the territories.

A few months later, Hidmi got a call from Muhammad Salah, the Chicago used-car salesman. Salah instructed him to come to Chicago for a short trip in June.

When Hidmi arrived at the airport in Chicago in June, 1990, he was one of twenty-five other youths like him, all originally from the occupied territories, and all being recruited into the Hamas military wing.

“In three cars we drove to the camp,” Hidmi later confessed, “which was near a forest by a lake. And the camp went on three days, from Friday to Sunday.” He remembers that there were about five “camp counselors,” including Salah and a Kuwaiti named Tariq Ahmad. The twenty-five campers were asked to fill out personal data forms. Subsequently, everyone got a personal identification code. While training, they were not to go by their real names; strictly by the code. “My code was H3,” Hidmi said.

The counselors gave lectures and led discussion panels all weekend. At first, the topics were general Islamic religious issues. By the end of the weekend, the subject matter was Hamas and its role in the escalation of the *intifadah*.

On the second day of the camp, Hidmi recalled, “by chance I entered one of the barracks, and there was Abu Ahmad, and three youths.” There was also a Libyan American man in his thirties who had served in the Marines and was married to an American woman. “He saw me, and invited me to sit down with my friends. The Libyan drew diagrams on a blackboard, showing how to plant a car bomb.”

Campers left Chicago that weekend with the understanding that they had merely attended an introductory session. Serious military training would begin in subsequent sessions.

Hidmi went back to school in Kansas. But he stayed in close touch with Salah, who sent him Hamas literature and publications, much of it published in the United States.

In December 1990, Hidmi, as instructed by Salah, traveled to Kansas City, Missouri to attend the annual convention of MAYA.

Held in the Kansas City Convention Center, which normally hosts trade exhibitions and other public events, this convention had an altogether different character. Booked with convention authorities as an innocent religious meeting, it was in fact—unbeknownst to U.S. law enforcement or the general public—a get-together of the most radical militant Islamist leaders in the world. And like all its annual conventions, it was attended by proponents and would-be recruits of extremist Islamic militant groups, and the speakers in the main auditorium included some of the Muslim world’s most radical militant leaders.

A triumvirate of high-ranking Hamas leaders also gave presentations. Marzuk, who was living in the United States at the time, was one of the most popular speakers. In his speech he said:

Every Muslim should be very clear in his mind that in the heart of the Muslim world, the Jewish state was born with the purpose of being a spearhead in the heart of the Muslim world. And this spearhead needs

to be confronted with a counter-spearhead to destroy it, and it should be the embodiment of the Islamic project, that shall find expression in the [recreation of] the caliphate, and ultimately will lead to the liberation of Palestine.

Marzuk's speech focused on reinforcing the central tenet of the Hamas principle: that Palestine is the central issue confronting the Islamic movement.

The nature of the confrontation is also determined by a resuscitation of that spirit in the Muslim youth. And the future will belong to this Islamic project.... The factors of the struggle are presently [weighted] in favor of the West.... There is no force presently able to withstand this powerful Western project except the Islamic project, built on divine law.

Jamil Hamami, the articulate young on-the-field Hamas spokesman, described to the audience how Hamas has successfully killed collaborators and those that would penetrate their movement. He also pressed the militant "hot button" by describing the "atrocities" that Israel allegedly carried out at the al-Aqsa mosque, the holy shrine in Jerusalem. He told of an incident: "Chief Rabbi of Israel Shlomo Goren, immediately following the six-day war, told Israeli General Moshe Dayan, 'Now that we have liberated Jerusalem, why don't we build the temple?' Dayan said, 'The time has not yet come. But one day we will no longer lack the means of destroying al-Aqsa.'" Hamami continued recounting Jewish "crimes:" "They [the Jews] tried to hit it [the al-Aqsa mosque] and destroy it from the air...the border guard forces drank wine in the al-Aqsa mosque. They committed adultery in the al-Aqsa mosque. Muslim girls were chased in the al-Aqsa mosque. Muslims were killed in the al-Aqsa mosque." Today, Hamami is a senior Palestinian representative of the Dallas-based Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development—a "charitable" organization that funds Hamas charities.

Muhammad Abu Faris, of the Jordanian Muslim brotherhood, recounted the great victories of the original founders of the Muslim Brotherhood movement: Iz ad-Din al-Qassam, the leader of the Palestinian Jihad in the '20s, and Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood party in Egypt. "The causes of nations do not live except by blood, and the more blood the more the nation rises....The *intifadah* brought life into the soul of others, and it made the Muslim youth cross into the borders of Palestine, from Jordan and from Egypt.... And they will cross the borders [again] and bring an end to Camp David. And it [the *intifadah*] will kill those who signed the Camp David Agreement. And it will kill the Jews in Palestine."

Another speaker, Rajib Najib, gave a history lesson:

Benjamin Franklin, one of the founders of the United States of America, said at the Constitutional Convention when the Constitution was being drafted, said, 'O Americans, don't let the Jews enter America. You have to get rid of the Jews. And if the Jews remain in America a hundred years, they will be dominating the economy. They spoil public life, they spoil your morals. And if you stay two hundred years, you will find yourselves working the fields of the Jews.... They will be sitting in their palaces happily...If only the American people would read these words of this American leader from two hundred years

ago...?...The corrupted nature of the Jews has been explained by almighty Allah in his revelation...in the Qur'an...[and the Jews began] to kill the prophets unjustly. There is injustice in their hearts.... This bad character is clear, since the day they left Egypt together with Moses, into the land of Palestine. And from that time on to this day, their character has never changed. And in Israel, we see the present day Jewish strategy is built upon a corrupt religious foundation.'

Kamil Hilbawi, the radical Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood leader based in Pakistan who has financial and operational ties with Hamas and Afghan militants, rose from the floor in an open panel discussion and called on Jordan's King Hussein to "open the borders of Jordan to the Muslim [*mujahideen*] youth, so that they may confront the Jews and the Americans at once."

Other speakers at the conference included Ibrahim Ghushah, chief spokesman for Hamas in Jordan, and Sheikh Mustapha Mash'ur, the deputy supreme guide for the International Muslim Brotherhood movement. But the most rabble-rousing speech was given by Ahmad al-Qattan, who had stirred Islamists to war through his incendiary sermons at al-Aqsa mosque but now lives much of the time in Kuwait: "You students, you foreigners, you should be at home...Who sent you to the land of the infidels? Who dispersed you, here and there, without a fatherland?"

Qattan raised his voice dramatically. "On this panel, we proclaim In the Name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful. And what do we see there hanging from the ceiling?" He pointed to a portrait on the wall of the convention center. "The President of the White House has been put up there. Yet there is no honor except the honor of Islam!"

He also offered his idea for a resolution of the then-brewing Gulf conflict. "O Saddam," he said, "If you are ready to withdraw your forces from Kuwait, then we are all ready to join your forces in the struggle against the Jews—side by side with every Muslim who raises the flag of La Illaha Ilallah!"

Another prominent Palestinian leader who spoke at the conference was Ibrahim Mahmoud Muzayyin, director of the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, the main fund raising arm for Hamas in the United States.

While the speakers were giving their lectures, other smaller meetings were held. Muhammad Salah was the organizer of these clandestine meetings. Salah collected Hidmi and other Palestinian youths with whom Hidmi had spent a weekend in Chicago the previous June, and brought them to a quiet room in the nearby Ramada Inn.

Mahmoud Muzayyin greeted the young trainees. Also present was Ishaq al-Farhan, a member of Jordan's radical Islamist parliamentary opposition. A younger man of Lebanese origin introduced himself as Najib al-Ghosh. Today the American Muslim community knows al-Ghosh as the editor-in-chief of MAYA's flagship magazine, *al-Amal*, published out of Plainfield, Indiana, and as an author of publications distributed by the Hamas U.S.-based propaganda wing, UASR. But Hidmi and his friends met him for the first time here.

Muzayyin spoke first: “You have been assembled here because you are all residents of the Occupied Territories, and you have been chosen to carry out operations to escalate the *intifadah* on behalf of the Hamas movement.”

Another Palestinian who looked about 30 years old divided the trainees into groups. He explained that everyone would go through training in improvised explosives, hand grenades, and the engineering of car bombs. But the youths would also be divided into areas of specialized training in the realms of military, security (interrogation and execution of collaborators), “culture and education” (propaganda and indoctrination), and politics. Hidmi was tapped for the last group.

The Jordanian parliamentarian, Ishaq al-Farhan, gave attendants a pep talk. He discussed the activities of al-Kutla al-Islamiya in Jordan. Al-Kutla al-Islamiya, which Hidmi initially joined, is the same youth movement that serves as a greenhouse for Hamas indoctrination in Palestine.

Another Palestinian explained that everyone would go through training in improvised explosives, hand grenades, and the engineering of car bombs.

Salah summed up the meeting and gave everyone passcodes.

The following March they met again at the Kansas City Ramada Inn. This time, different lectures were given to the future Hamas commandos. Salah introduced Najib al-Ghosh again, who lectured on methods of interrogation of Israeli intelligence, then about different types of hand grenades and bombs. “The purpose of all this,” Salah interjected, “is so that everyone will go home and plant explosives in the area where he lives.”

Throughout his stay in the United States, Hidmi had a pen pal in Gaza who was also a Hamas operative. Their correspondence continued, even after the friend was thrown in prison by the Israelis. Prison monitors learned of Hidmi through these letters. Upon his return to Israel in March 1993, he was arrested and ultimately convicted. His five year prison sentence was commuted as part of a massive prisoner release.

The training sessions Hidmi attended were only one of many American-based Hamas military activities in which Salah was engaged. According to Israeli military papers, Salah made several surreptitious trips in 1991 and 1992 to the territories, unbeknownst to Israeli authorities, during which he gave operational instructions and transferred monies from abroad directly to Hamas military operatives. En route to Israel he stopped in London, as instructed by Bridgeview Imam Jamal Sa’id, to meet with Abu ‘Ubaada. (As a lark, Abu ‘Ubaada had recruited Hidmi.) Salah now enjoys freedom of operation in London, where he is a high-ranking international Hamas leader still directing operations as well as dispensing couriers to smuggle cash into Israel.

Hamas in Chicago

American law enforcement officials confirm Palestinian Hamas testimony that Sheikh Jamal Sa'id, Imam of the Mosque Foundation in Bridgeview, Illinois, is a principal leader of Hamas in the United States who has directed operatives like Salah and Jarad. He regularly represents the Palestinian community in Chicago at conferences, conventions, and rallies.

One rally at which Sheikh Sa'id spoke was the Jerusalem Festival 1994, held at the Bogan High School on West 79th Street in Chicago on October 30, 1994. Sponsored by the IAP and billed as a celebration of the "eighth year of *intifadah*," the Jerusalem Festival drew a largely local Palestinian American crowd of at least 700 people. Besides a bazaar, where merchants sold radical pro-Hamas publications, food, and religious ornaments, the main auditorium featured songs of revolution and speeches by Hamas leadership based in the United States and abroad.

Brother Sa'eed Abdur-Raheem opened festivities with a traditional *tajweed*, a chanting from the Qur'an. The verse, fittingly chosen was,

O you who believe, what is the matter with you that when you are asked to go forth and fight in the cause of Allah, you cling so heavily to the earth. Do you prefer the life of this world to the hereafter? How little is the comfort of this world compared to the hereafter.... And you shall wage *jihad* for the sake of Allah with your wealth and your lives.

The Master of Ceremonies was a slim bearded man who appeared to be in his early 30's named Sabri Ibrahim, a board member of the IAP Chicago branch, which operates under the name American Muslim Society. "In Chicago," Ibrahim blared,

which we will permit ourselves to call the Muslim capital of America...and in the shadows of the memory of the martyrs who gave their blood for Palestine...and in the passage of six years' imprisonment of the Sheikh of the *intifadah*, Ahmed Yassin [the founder of Hamas imprisoned for directing the kidnapping and killing of Israeli soldiers] in almost the second year following the arrest of a member of our own community, Muhammad Salah...we the Islamic Association for Palestine send them a deeply felt greeting, and to...the mujahideen...all of you have gathered here today.

Ibrahim proceeded to attack the "American Zionist community and media" for its vilification of Islam.

Surely you will not turn back even now, as we are subject to scurrilous defamatory attacks in the media and elsewhere...upon Islamic foundation and organizations.... O brothers and sisters, in these critical times, at this historic period through which our Ummah is passing, they do not permit us to help one another...until [we] completely surrender to the project of the American Zionist organizations.

Following a song by the band, a section of the audience broke into a popular Hamas chant that glorified the Iz ad-Din al-Qassam military squads—the very same death squads that carried out the series of four suicide bombings in Israel during the past four weeks.

The next speaker was Rafiq Jaber, head of the Chicago IAP branch. He railed at the Israeli-PLO accords.

This kind of conspiracy...will never succeed until they fight all the Muslims. So with their help from supporters in Washington and other Arab countries and governments, they are trying so hard...to make us submit. They want us to surrender. We'll have to let them know that it's clear with no mistake about it, that we will not submit or surrender or kneel except to Allah Subhannahu Wata'ala.

Later in the rally, Ibrahim Muzayyin, director of the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development (Hamas' charitable arm), took the podium to solicit funds for his organization. He had flown to Chicago that morning from Newark, where IAP and his group have developed a large infrastructure among the immigrant Palestinian community. After pitching the charitable activities of the Holy Land Foundation, he denounced both CBS News and myself for a broadcast in which his group and the IAP were identified as supporters of Hamas in the United States. (I was interviewed in the CBS *Eye on America* story.) Muzayyin said, "Are we going to let Steve Emerson and the Zionists put an end to the activities of the Holy Land Foundation? Yes or no?"

The crowd shouted, "No!"

"I can't hear you!" Muzayyin said.

"No," the crowd roared.

Assistants went up and down the aisles collecting cash, checks, and even jewelry. One member of the crowd brought a few gold bracelets toward the stage and tossed them up to Jamal Sa'id, who gracefully caught them and put them together with the checks. Tens of thousands of dollars were raised that night.

Sabri Ibrahim, who spoke earlier that evening, has also led several summer retreats for local Muslim children. In one such retreat—filmed on videotape—the children, several wearing T-shirts with American basketball team insignias, sat around a campfire singing Arabic chants praising Hamas leader Ahmed Yassin, *jihad*, and armed struggle against the Jews. The words of one chant: "With daggers in our hands we burst forth to strike...[against] our enemies." Another stanza simply listed the names of Hamas heroes Ahmed Yassin, Abdullah Azzam, and Iz ad-Din al-Qassam. At another point in the film, a child walked up to the camera, and blurted in Arabic, "Butcher the Jews."

Conclusion

Although Hamas and other extremist movements have anointed themselves the custodians of Islam, the reality is that they no more represent mainstream Islam—which does not support violence—than radical Jewish settlers represent Judaism.

Nevertheless, according to Ahmed Said Nasr, a former Egyptian diplomat and now a journalist living in Washington, DC, “Hamas and other radical movements justify their terrorism and belief in violence by wrapping themselves in Islam, falsely claiming that their activities are mandated by their subservience to Islam. In fact, their support of violence proves exactly what they are trying to deny—that a militant wing of Islamic fundamentalists does exist.”

At another point in the film, a child walked up to the camera, and blurted in Arabic, “Butcher the Jews.”

One of the arguments made by Hamas’ defenders is that the great majority of Hamas activities—as many as 95%—are concerned with social welfare and religious work, while only 5% are terrorist in nature. The notion that Hamas can be neatly compartmentalized into water-tight divisions separating its social-charitable-political wing from its terrorist wing is a blatant fallacy, designed to play upon Western naiveté. Hamas is a well-integrated organization—its violent ideology permeates all of its activities. Pervasive throughout the Hamas system of hospitals, schools and charities is the ideology of fanaticism and hatred. On the walls of one Hamas youth league I visited last year were the pictures of young martyrs—i.e., suicide bombers—whose posters were adorned with Islamic calls to kill all Jews. Similarly, the hospitals and other social welfare institutions are designed to indoctrinate and recruit.

As for the supposed separation between Hamas “charities” and Hamas terrorism, Ghassin Siyyam, a Palestinian Hamas terrorist arrested in 1994, has revealed how Gaza Hamas charities have been used to finance terrorism and to enlist new military recruits.⁶ Unfortunately, all too often, gullible American reporters fall into the trap of separating Hamas ideology from its social activities. One egregious example of this type of journalism was a story on National Public Radio in which the reporter and Georgetown University Professor John Esposito praised the social activities of Hamas as if it operated like the United Way, but never once mentioned a word of its extremist ideology or its terrorism or the fact that in the “wonderful” Hamas schools, children are taught to count by reciting the names of dead Jews.

The bottom line is that the different components of Hamas—from its schools to its death squads—are tied together by a fanatic ideology that sees Jews, the West and even secular Muslims as engaged in a diabolical conspiracy to oppress Islam. One of the more dangerous developments in the evolution of Hamas in the United States is how some of the radical groups have begun to masquerade under false cover—pretending to be “civil rights” or “human rights” groups in order to legitimize militant Islam.

The organization that has been most brazen in attempting to falsely define itself is CAIR. Although it says it is concerned with “promoting human rights for American Muslims,” CAIR’s real agenda is to silence critics of militant Islam. Why? Because, according to federal law enforcement sources and internal documents, CAIR is a radical Islamic fundamentalist front group for Hamas. The executive director of CAIR, Nihad Awad, served for several years as a senior official of the IAP. CAIR, the stepchild of the IAP, was created in 1993 with radical Islamic fundamentalist “donations”. In Washington, CAIR, besides rationalizing Hamas terrorist attacks and criticizing negotiations with the “Zionist” entity, has hosted, sponsored or arranged visits and press conferences of leading Islamic fundamentalist militant officials from the Sudan, Malaysia and Jordan, who have articulated rabid anti-Semitic and anti-Christian views. One visiting Islamic fundamentalist leader from Jordan, whom CAIR hosted in Washington, was recorded in a speech given to fellow fundamentalists in the U.S. as encouraging Islamic militants to kill any Jew they see.

Notes

1. When Marzuk was detained at Kennedy airport, he was found with wire credit worth up to 10 million dollars. Although he claims he is only an innocent businessman who advises clients on investments, law enforcement and intelligence officials—as well an independent analysis of his financial enterprise—show that his financial empire has been used to launder for Hamas and to park millions of dollars in cash that ordinarily would come under scrutiny.

2. That claim was apparently good enough for the Post, which not only accepted Yousef's assertion at face value, but also endorsed Yousef's claim that his institution, and Marzuk as well, were the unfair targets of a "public relations" campaign by Israel. Despite the availability of voluminous material showing Marzuk and UASR to be key members of the Hamas underground, the Post's uncritical acceptance of the Hamas party line helps to understand why Hamas has been able to operate so long in the U.S. without any scrutiny.

3. See the Washington Post for the official Hamas version.

4. In radical Islamist circles, Kansas was already on the map. Throughout the 1980s, large funds were raised there for the anti-Soviet Afghan *mujahideen* (holy warriors), and also for numerous Islamist militant movements all over the Middle East, including Hamas. In 1989, *al-Bunyan al-Marsus*, a radical anti-American, anti-Semitic, anti-Christian, pro-Afghan *jihād* publication was distributed in the United States from Kansas. Numerous Hamas militant leaders visited Kansas frequently to raise money and recruit volunteers for the Jihad. For example, in 1988 and 1989, Abdullah Azzam, the Palestinian Islamic leader and founder of the Arab anti-Soviet *jihād* movement and his top lieutenant, Tamim al-Adnani, both made several stops in Kansas to raise money, recruit holy warriors, and even produce bilingual recruitment videos for distribution throughout the United States.

5. On the local level, Hamas organizes itself in triangles, thus limiting its vulnerability in the case of penetration by the "enemy". After chatting awhile and striking up a friendship, Abu Ubaada asked Hidmi if he would like to join Hamas.

6. Mousa Marzuk's claim that he had no connection to terrorism is as believable as the head of an organized crime family saying that he only engages in charitable support for the local community.

