



DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

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July 4, 2008

The Honorable Judge Leonie Brinkema
U.S. District Court Judge
Eastern District of Virginia
Albert V. Bryan Courthouse
401 Courthouse Square
Alexandria, Virginia, 22314-5798

Dear Judge Brinkema,

I write to vouch for the moral character of Professor Sami A. Al-Arian, a fellow scholar whom I have known for 15 years, and to plead that he be allowed to be free on bail during his forthcoming trial. In all of my dealings with Mr. Al-Arian, I have found him to be utterly trustworthy and reliable. Everything I know of him and all of the contacts I have had with him go against the allegations formerly brought against him – allegations of which, as you know, a jury of his peers ruled he could not be found guilty. Please allow my letter to serve as part of the record about the person and activities of Sami Al-Arian.

My acquaintance with Mr. Al-Arian stems from the WISE institute that was based at the University of South Florida. Like many other scholars who focus on Islam – its faith, politics, and culture – I attended conferences sponsored by WISE and hold it in high esteem, especially because of Sami Al-Arian's excellent management of it. I learned much from the institute's conferences and have used its publications to study contemporary Islamic issues with students and in other learned settings.

Since that first meeting, my relationships with Sami Al-Arian multiplied and extended through many other organizations devoted to the study of Islam today. In all of our meetings, interactions, telephone conversations, and e-mail exchanges, he manifested the same dedication to freedom and learning that first impressed me so. Moreover, I have now come to know two of his older children – Laila and Abdullah – as well as his wife. If the moral character of children are any indication of the moral character of a parent, and if the dedication of a loving wife testifies in any manner to the character of her husband, then Sami Al-Arian is surely the example that all fathers and husbands would do well to imitate.

Sami Al-Arian has suffered much during his incarceration the last 5 years. He has done all that he could to comply with governmental regulations while fighting desperately for his right to be heard. And during these long years, he has never conducted himself in any manner that would call his trustworthiness or commitment to his word into question. Now that this new indictment has been brought against him, it is only fair that he be accorded the privilege of being

free on bail while awaiting trial. Indeed, it would be in keeping with the highest principles of our judicial system to grant him that freedom. In addition, it would allow him to be in contact with his family – especially his younger children who have suffered immensely during his long incarceration.

Precisely because our judicial system rests on the principle that the accused is deemed innocent until proven guilty, it would be fitting and just to allow Sami Al-Arian to remain free on bail while awaiting trial in your court.

For the record, I write as a concerned citizen of the United States, who has demonstrated citizenship commitment through military service (officer, US Army 1967-69) among other things. I write, as well, as a recently retired university professor who has taught about political justice and moral conduct in the context of courses on the history of political philosophy.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles E. Butterworth". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized script.

Charles E. Butterworth
Emeritus Professor