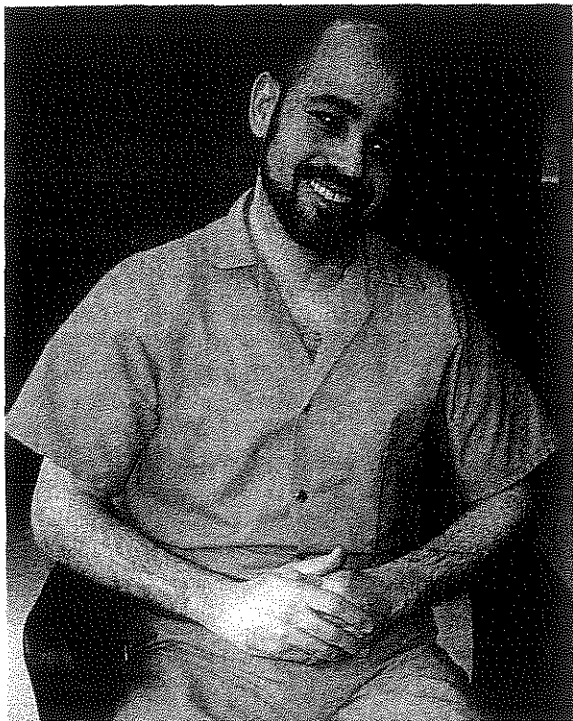




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AN OPEN THANK YOU LETTER FROM MOUSA ABU-MARZOOK FORMER CHIEF OF HAMAS POLITICAL BUREAU

I would like to thank all of the American organizations that have supported me throughout my ordeal. In particular, I thank the following organizations which stood firm in defending my civil rights:



American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
American Muslim Council (AMC)
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
Arab American Institute (AAI)
Dar Ul-Hijrah Islamic Center
International Association for Muslim
Women and Children
Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP)
Islamic Public Affairs Council (IPAC)
Islamic Society of North America (ISNA)
Muslim American Society (MAS)
Muslim Students Association (MSA)
National Association of Arab Americans (NAAA)
Solidarity International for Human Rights (SIHR)
United Association for Studies and Research (UASR)

Your efforts on my behalf consoled me over the twenty-one months of solitary confinement.

Dr. Mousa Abu Marzook
Amman, Jordan
June 6, 1997

STATEMENT OF DR. MOUSA ABU MARZOOK

OVER HALF OF MY ADULT LIFE WAS SPENT IN THE WEST. The circumstances that have brought me here to the U.S. are not much unlike those of many other Palestinians who because of the Diaspora found themselves in the unlikelyst of places. We seek only to better ourselves through education and a moral foundation that allows us to continue to redress the injustices committed against our people. I do not acquiesce in the theory that human beings are inherently evil, violent or have fallen from grace due to man's nature. Yet, the innocent Palestinians have been assailed based on such pretenses. Stereotyping of Muslims and Palestinians in the West has desensitized the public and policymakers alike. It is such ill treatment of Palestinians that led to my unjust incarceration in solitary confinement for nearly two years.

I leave the ordeal of my imprisonment behind me to resume the lawful and internationally sanctioned activities that will lead to a redress of Palestinian rights. In so doing I leave U.S. policymakers to grapple with their collective conscience over my wrongful imprisonment.


While the INS, for example, sought to exclude me on the pretext that I am a terrorist it nevertheless negotiated a written agreement with me and conceded to allowing me to emphatically deny the charges in the agreement.

As the coiners of "Manifest Destiny," I believe that Americans may find it difficult to relate to the oppressed Palestinians. However, that does not begin to explain direct American bias in favor of Israel as manifested in such recent actions as the U.S. veto of a U.N. resolution that would have condemned Israeli settlements in East Jerusalem as a violation of international law and a threat to peace in the region. Similarly, the lack of U.S. neutrality toward Palestinian-Israeli negotiations has alienated the spectrum of Palestinian public opinion.

The Justice Department has immorally characterized me as a terrorist and pursued my case at the behest of the Israelis with impunity. I cannot say that I am not disappointed but I expected no less considering the U.S. relationship to Israel and the influence of Zionist lobbies here.

However, the real disappointment has come from the judiciary on which the U.S. prides itself, and the branch of government that has been entrusted to apply the rule of law free of political considerations and partisan interests.

The federal district court judge, Kevin T. Duffy, bent over backwards and manipulated the law to find me extraditable. In so doing he has compromised his integrity. His blindness and hatred of people has led him to describe hundreds of



thousands of Palestinians as participants in a criminal conspiracy. Judge Duffy insisted in his written opinion that my extradition was not politically motivated, nor was I a political person. He was proven wrong, however, when Prime Minister Netanyahu made a political decision to withdraw Israel's extradition request (as did the late Prime Minister Rabin make a political decision to seek my extradition in the first place).

Israel has exploited Judge Duffy and the judiciary by forgoing the opportunity to prosecute me. Given Israel's staunch position of never giving in to "terrorists," such a concession undermines the very notion that the beleaguered Israeli state has been perceived to be founded upon and relies on for its continued existence. Furthermore, such a position is conspicuously out of tune with a government that has not denied assassinating Palestinian Islamic leaders and activists in the occupied territories and abroad such as Dr. Fathi Shiqaqi, the Engineer Yehya Ayash, and Abu Jihad before them. Most importantly, anyone who knows the personal history of Prime Minister Netanyahu and has read his book can vouch for the inconsistency of the Israeli position. Is it possible that the Israelis recognized me for what I am, a political man? Certainly they had no credible evidence to pursue my prosecution. Nevertheless, there is no doubt in my mind that I have been vindicated.

As for district court Judges Kimba Wood and Denise Cote, they both missed an opportunity to follow their consciences and do the right thing. This lack of trust in the American judicial system prompted me to withdraw my appeal. In the end I could not assume the risk of allowing the Second Circuit to rule against me and forever set a precedent that closes the door to the political offense exception for future political prisoners. The political offense exception was embedded in extradition treaties for the very purpose of preventing the surrender and prosecution of a person when the offense is regarded by the requested party (here the U.S.) as one of a political character or if the person sought proves that the request for his extradition has, in fact, been made with a view to trying or punishing him for an

offense of a political character.

To the U.S., which has willingly allowed itself to forgo neutrality in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I call your attention to the reality that Hamas is a major voice of the Palestinian people whose rights have been ignored since the creation of Israel. Why else have a "peace process" now (no matter how inadequate) that is begrudgingly giving land to the Palestinians? Didn't they deserve it 30 years ago when it was taken illegally and by force? To propound the notion that Hamas is nothing more than a terrorist organization can only damage the future relations this country will have with the Palestinians. There is an underlying danger of constantly equating Hamas with the buzz word of "terrorism." The insinuation is that Islam condones terrorism, or that the Palestinians are inherently violent.

The alternative, and viable, explanation is that Hamas, which enjoys support among millions of Muslims and Palestinians throughout the world, seeks to legitimately redress wrongs committed and rights usurped.

The oppression of the Palestinians, and the inability of the world to speak out, will not continue for long. Nor will the status quo in the area persist at the expense of the Palestinian people and the attempt at their division.

To Israel and the Israelis I say that you cannot make a false peace while usurping Palestinian rights.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who have stood by me in this ordeal. I thank my attorneys Michael Kennedy and Prof. Cheriff Bassiouni for their expertise and professionalism. Prof. Bassiouni's experience in extradition law and skill in high-level negotiations were determining factors. Michael Kennedy manifested integrity and sensibility so directly in contrast to the prosecution's handling of this case. Both Prof. Bassiouni and Mr. Kennedy conducted this case in a manner that hopefully has opened the eyes of some. Because of them many have come to recognize the political nature of my work and the legitimacy of Hamas' struggle. I thank Simone Monasabien who tirelessly coordinated all aspects of this case. I also thank Stanley Cohen who devotedly conducted the first crucial stages of my defense, eloquently illustrating that the

conflict is not between Arabs and Jews but between right and wrong. And I thank Dr. Anis Qassem, an expert in international law, who carried on the legal struggle from the Middle East.

I thank the Legal Defense Committee that has been with me from beginning to end. Among them I especially thank Abdurahman Alamoudi, president of the American Muslim Council, who despite vindictive attacks against him and his Muslim advocate organization stood firm on my behalf, my dear friends Yasser Bushnaq of Solidarity International and Ahmad Yusuf of the United Association for Studies and Research. I also thank my wife Nadia who has been strengthened and has done things that few would have expected of a Muslim woman.

My experience with the media has been mostly positive and I would like to thank the objectiveness in news reporting that appeared in newspapers such as *The New York Times* and in magazines such as the *New Yorker*.

I thank the Jordanians and the Egyptians, who understood the dynamics of this case and worked to resolve this issue. I thank King Hussein, who exerted his better judgment in bringing this matter to an amiable resolution and invited me back to the Kingdom.

I thank all of those in the U.S. and the world who have written, donated and prayed for me. The thousands of letters of support to the MCC alleviated the harshness of my solitary confinement. I even received copies of the many e-mail messages to me and on my behalf.

To the Muslim and Arab organizations, and to the people involved with them, I owe a debt of gratitude for adopting my cause. Your continued activism for political and social justice will surely place you on the road to becoming permanent and positive contributors to the American mosaic.

Muslims in the U.S. are here to stay and you must be vocal in preserving your rights in a pluralistic society.

Once again my resolve has grown stronger to continue my struggle on behalf of the Palestinian people, because oppression demands justice.

Dr. Mousa Abu Marzook
Metropolitan Correctional Center
May 3, 1997