

BROADCASTING HATE: MPAC'S MEDIA WING

Taking a page from the Muslim Brotherhood,¹ and recognizing that any effective political action committee would need an effective media arm; MPAC has teamed up with the ICSC to build a campaign touting their policies. ICSC created and has maintained *de jure* control over its media outlet-Multimedia Vera International (“MVI”). Despite the apparent control of ICSC, in reality, MVI has served as a consistent outlet for MPAC and its media wing. This is particularly true of *The Minaret* magazine, a monthly publication that was in operation from 1985 to 2005.² In fact, MPAC officials have served in both MVI and *The Minaret* while employed by MPAC.³

While in operation, *The Minaret* published countless articles and editorials, including those by MPAC members, downplaying the threat posed by Islamic extremists,⁴ propagating inflammatory rhetoric about Jews and Zionism,⁵ and reiterating conspiracy theories about 9/11 and the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.⁶

A. Downplaying the Threat Posed by Islamic Extremists

As part of a long-standing practice to sanitize acts of terrorism, *The Minaret* has been used as a mouthpiece for those seeking to downplay the threat posed by Islamic extremists. In an article in the March 2004 issue of the magazine, Dr. Javeed Akhter discussed the emergence of divisions and different strands of thought within Islam.⁷ When discussing suicide bombings, he downplayed Islamic extremism and terrorism, saying that suicide bombings were merely responses to justified anger at oppressive powers. If those oppressive conditions were rectified, suicide bombings as a phenomenon would cease:

“The suicidal militant springs from young men with seething and legitimate anger towards the oppressors of Muslims all over the world ... Their suicidal missions are reactive to the injustice they are faced with and not the result of an accepted

¹ Muslim Brotherhood, “An Explanatory Memorandum: On the General Strategic Goal for the Group in North America,” May 22, 1991 at 14 (explaining the importance of media for civil engagement and political discourse).

² See Multimedia Vera International, IRS Form 990 (1998). From 1993, *The Minaret* was distributed and circulated by MVI, a “non-profit organization dedicated to the needs of Muslims and others in the field of education and information.” *Id.* At first, MVI was described as a “non-profit organization affiliated with the ICSC from 1993.” See *The Minaret*, Vol. 15, issue 1 (Jan./Feb. 1993) at 4. Then in mid-1994, MVI was listed as a “Department” of the ICSC. See *The Minaret*, Vol. 16, issue 4 (July/Aug. 1994) at 6. Finally, from 1996 onwards MVI was listed as “owned by” the ICSC. See *The Minaret*, Vol. 18, issue 3 (March 1996) at 6.

³ See Appendices A, B, and C (detailing the overlap in employment between MPAC, MVI, and *The Minaret*).

⁴ See *infra* Part II, A.

⁵ See *infra* Part II, B and II, C.

⁶ See *infra* Part II, D.

⁷ Dr. Javeed Akhter, “Schisms and Heterodoxy,” *The Minaret*, Vol. 26 Issue 3, March 2004, p. 38.

theology or philosophy. Restoration of justice and fair play within nations and in international relations will largely vaporize the motivation for a suicidal mission.”⁸

More than simply rationalizing Islamic extremism, *The Minaret* has openly supported designated foreign terrorist organizations. In the June 2000 issue of *The Minaret*, an article titled “World Celebrates Israeli Retreat” was penned by a *Minaret* staff writer.⁹ The author praised Hezbollah for forcing Israel’s withdrawal from Lebanon saying the determination and will shown would lead to the liberation of occupied land and called Hezbollah a “freedom fighter” organization:

“[The Israeli withdrawal] is a clear sign that determination and will can lead to the liberation of an occupied homeland. Hezbollah, the Lebanese freedom fighter group that led the effort to drive Israel out, is being widely praised through the world.”¹⁰

These statements of support were made despite the fact that Hezbollah has been designated by the U.S. State Department as a Foreign Terrorist Organization.¹¹ Among the countless attacks involving Hezbollah were the April 18, 1983 car bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut which killed 63 people and the June 14, 1985 hijacking of TWA flight 847.¹²

In July 1995, *The Minaret* published an article by Suleman Ahmer, an official with the Benevolence International Foundation, which was shut down by the U.S. government in December of 2001 for its connections to Al Qaida.¹³ Ahmer said he had returned from a trip

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Staff Writer, “World Celebrates Israeli Retreat,” *The Minaret* June 2000 Vol. 22 Issue 5, p. 19

¹⁰ *Id.* See also Larry Mantle, Salam Al-Marayati, and Rabbi Mordecai Finley, “Lebanon, Israel and Hezbollah: Southern California's Perspective” KPCC “AirTalk” Radio, August 3, 2006. http://www.publicradio.org/tools/media/player/kpcc/news/shows/airtalk/2005/08/20050831_airtalk1?start=00:00:00&end=00:28:15 Accessed August 11, 2008 (Marayati states that “The Israeli war machine is targeting civilians in Lebanon; regardless of their claim or why their doing it or what happened to their soldiers...Human Rights Watch found no cases in which Hezbollah deliberately used civilians as shields to protect them from retaliatory [IDF] attacks. In none of these cases of civilian death documented in this report is there evidence to suggest that Hezbollah forces or weapons were in or near the area that IDF targeted during or just prior to the attack...And I think we’re all victims of getting these lies and propaganda that we’re subjected to”); Salam Al-Marayati, “Muslims in America.” PBS: *NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, November 24, 1999 (“If the Lebanese people are resisting Israeli intransigence on Lebanese soil, then that is the right of resistance and they have the right to target Israeli soldiers in this conflict. That is not terrorism. That is a legitimate resistance. That could be called liberation movement, that could be called anything, but it's not terrorism”).

¹¹ See *Background Information on Foreign Terrorist Organizations*, United States Department of State, available at <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/rpt/fto/2801.htm> (showing that Hezbollah was designated in 1999, prior to the statements of support made in *The Minaret*). See also *Current List of Designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations*, United States Department of State, available at <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm>

¹² See “Timeline of Hezbollah Violence,” Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in the Middle East, (July 17, 2006), available at, http://camera.org/index.asp?x_context=2&x_outlet=118&x_article=1148

¹³ Press Release: Treasury Designates Benevolence International Foundation and Related Entities as Financiers of Terrorism, United States Department of the Treasury, available at, <http://www.ustreas.gov/press/releases/po3632.htm> (Nov. 19, 2002) (last accessed Nov. 2, 2009). See also

to Chechnya where he provided relief to families in the war torn region.¹⁴ Ahmer also said he spoke to Chechen families and “freedom fighters” while he was there.¹⁵ Ahmer described their struggle in glowing terms, saying that they were fighting in the spirit of jihad and that they were devout Muslims:

“The Russian onslaught has not deterred Muslims from pursuing their path to freedom. Chechniyans are born fighters and a great majority of them are engaged in the struggle to achieve independence and human rights under the spirit of jihad...The freedom fights display their commitment to their faith by offering five daily prayers on schedule in the battlefield.”¹⁶

Meanwhile, the Chechen rebels that MPAC defends have engaged in numerous acts of terrorism, including an August 1999 bombing of a shopping arcade and a September 1999 bombing of an apartment building in Moscow that killed sixty-four people, and the October 2002 seizure of Moscow’s Dubrovka theater, where approximately 700 people were taken hostage.¹⁷ Nearly 40 terrorists were killed, along with at least 120 hostages, when Russian security forces stormed the theater in a rescue attempt.¹⁸

B. Inflammatory Rhetoric About Jews and Zionism

Rather than criticize acts of violent jihad, *The Minaret* has been used as a means of blaming the victims of terrorism—most notably Israelis.¹⁹ Rooted in a desire to justify acts of

“Feds Close Two More Muslim Groups,” *CBS News*, December 14, 2001; *BIF v. Ashcroft* (NDIL) 02-CV-763 Plaintiff’s Memorandum in Opposition to Defendant’s Motion to Stay Proceedings.” May 9, 2002;

¹⁴ Suleman Ahmer, “Chechniyans Freedom Fighters,” *The Minaret* Vol. 17 Issue 4, July 1995, p. 29.

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ See *Backgrounder: Chechen Terrorism*, Council on Foreign Relations (Aug. 5, 2008), available at <http://www.cfr.org/publication/9181/> (last accessed Oct. 30, 2009).

¹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹ See e.g., Joel Beinin, “Thought Control for Middle East Studies,” *The Minaret* Vol. 26 Issue 6, June 2004, p. 37-38 (accusing neoconservatives with close ties to Israel of trying to stifle freedom of expression); Editorial: “Zionism is Racism,” *The Minaret* Vol. 23 Issue 8, September 2001, p. 7 (“The Zionist movement is a colonial movement that used, and is still using, Judaism to serve its unlawful purposes ... Zionism is an apartheid philosophy ... the Zionist state could only emerge by denying the majority its rights or by becoming the majority, either through immigration, or in reducing the number of Palestinians by ethnic cleansing which is what is happening now”); Adil Khan, “When Will Injustice End?” *The Minaret* Vol. 23 Issue 7 July/August 2001 p. 10 (“In spite of skewed reporting and in defiance of the long arm of opposing lobbies ... No one can deny that an oppressed population has the right to speak out and act out against violent occupation and encroaching settlements ... Genocide, oppression, and injustice are wrong ... Furthermore, the systematic slaughter of victimized civilians is a heinous crime that cannot continue unchecked”); “Zionist Extremism: What Will it Lead To?” *The Minaret* Vol. 23 Issue 1, January 2001, pp. 7, 10 (“It is obvious that the Zionists are perturbed with the growing effectiveness of MPAC’s stance on domestic and international issues. They feel threatened and are apprehensive that if such voices are not silenced. Their monopoly of power may be in jeopardy. This amounts to a campaign of hatred against American citizens to preserve the interests of a foreign country. The extremists intend to create a climate of hate against MPAC and its leadership in order to prevent it from playing any role in public policy. This is a dangerous trend and it deserves the full attention of anyone who upholds American values of justice and liberty”); *Press Conference: The Crisis in Gaza*, Muslim Public Affairs Council (Dec. 30, 2008) (Edina Lekovic arguing that “the actions that are taking place today only guarantee

terrorism, the anti-Zionist rhetoric which has graced the pages of *The Minaret* ranges from comparing Israel to apartheid South Africa,²⁰ claiming that U.S. Jews are attempting to undermine Muslim participation in the democratic process,²¹ and alleging that Israel is engaged in genocide.²²

further bloodshed on all sides and instead of eliminating the threat of Hamas and the rockets into Israel, as we are seeing today, there are more rockets that are going into Israel than few. This campaign is counterproductive and it is only crating more extremism and militancy on the ground and recruits for Hamas”).

²⁰ See “Editorial: Zionism is Racism,” *The Minaret* Vol. 23 Issue 8, September 2001, p. 7 (“This is a biased verdict [against the conference] because Zionism is based on the concept of ethnic superiority, and cultural and political domination ... the Zionist state, Israel, is built on a racist foundation”). See also Dr. Maher Hathout, “Jerusalem Day Rally,” Lafayette Park, Washington D.C., October 28, 2000 (“We did not come here to condemn the condemned atrocities committed by the apartheid state of Israel. Because butchers do what butchers do and because what is expected from a racist apartheid is what is happening now. ... You [U.S.] have been manipulated. You are financing an apartheid state ... They say Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East. This is a lie. Israel is not a democracy, Israel is a theocracy, and is an apartheid state, against every fiber of the modern world”); Dr. Maher Hathout, “Rally for Palestine – Juma and Khutba” MPAC, Los Angeles, California, October 6, 2000 and Susan Schwartz, “After Witnessing the Brutal Murder of a Child, The People Speak Up.” *The Minaret*, November/December 2000 p. 29 (I would like to make it very clear. We are not making any statement to the government of Israel. We have no business with the government of an apartheid regime. We have no calls on the government of Israel, we have no expectations. They are doing what they used to do best, killing people and stealing their land. We have no addressing to the government of Israel”).

²¹ See e.g., “Zionist Extremism: What Will it Lead To?” *The Minaret* Vol. 23 Issue 1, January 2001, p. 10 (“Obviously, the Zionists have a different perspective. They feel that if the U.S. followed even-handed policy and adopted a balanced position in the Middle East, Israel would not be able to subdue the Palestinians and pursue its apartheid policies ... The Zionists want to silence voices of moderation”); “Threats to American Democracy” *The Minaret* Vol. 21 Issue 9, September 1999, pp. 25-29 (“Racist and hate groups do exist among Muslims. however, those groups are marginal and condemned by Muslims in general ... Unlike other groups, Muslim hate groups emerged as a result of their interactions with colonialism, Zionism, and imperialism ... We should never deny that there are groups among Muslims, who have twisted their religion to react to the atrocities of colonialism and imperialism”); “Threats to American Democracy” *The Minaret* Vol. 21 Issue 9, September 1999, pp. 25-29 (“The hate groups want to silence voices that are opposed to their views and to eliminate any opposition from the political scene. For instance, extreme Zionist groups have been orchestrating a campaign of hatred against Muslims and their organizations in this country for many years ... Their activities are in direct violation of the constitutionally guaranteed freedoms and the First Amendment. Obviously, they would like to introduce changes in our constitution to curtail our freedoms”).

²² See e.g., “Threats to American Democracy” *The Minaret* Vol. 21 Issue 9, September 1999, pp. 25-29 (“Indeed, recent surveys show that ever more Israeli Jews support, or are at least willing to seriously consider, the most brutal measures against the Arabs living under their control, including genocidal forced mass expulsion from the land of ‘greater Israel’”); MPAC Press Conference: *The Crisis in Gaza*, Islamic Center of Southern California (Dec. 30, 2008) (statement of Dr. Maher Hathout) (“The Israeli war machine is executing an operation that is totally unacceptable by world standards. It is disturbing to us that our administration is really not only giving a green light but refusing to do the reasonable thing—to join the world in calling for a cease fire”); MPAC Convention, *Rebuilding U.S.-Muslim World Relations*, (Dec. 5, 2009) (Statement of Laila al-Marayati, Spokesperson, Muslim Women’s League, Chairperson, KinderUSA) (“we need to stop talking about Israelis and Palestinians as if they are equals, because they are not”); Salam al Marayati, *Op-ed Playing Local Politics with Gaza*, Los Angeles Times (Jan. 19, 2009), available at <http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/la-oe-almarayati19-2009jan19.0.6606647.story> (“the dehumanization of Palestinians and the demonization of Islam are now linked to the collateral damage in Gaza, that is, the killing of innocent civilians in this conflict. Until we as Americans demand that our government values human life equally for both Palestinians and Israelis, our public officials will continue to deny human dignity to Palestinians and therefore fuel anti-Americanism around the world”).

Although the public record is replete with *The Minaret's* anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic rhetoric, arguably most demonstrative of the overarching theme of the magazine is an article penned by Pejman Novin, former Assistant Program Director of the Muslim Student Association at UCLA.²³ In the 1998 article entitled, "Anti-Semitism and Muslims," Novin said that Zionism was based on racism, expansionism, and colonialism.²⁴ He also said that the Israeli state rested on stolen Palestinian land and that Israel was systematically slaughtering Palestinians to territorially expand even further:

"The Zionist ideology can be characterized with three qualities, settler colonialism, expansionism and racism. It is an ideology much like Apartheid in South Africa that has bred hate and violence ... Why is Zionism equal to colonialism? The history of Zionism has striking similarities to the first European settlers in America and their attempt to annihilate native Americans ... Since 1948, over four million Palestinians have been either systematically killed or forced to flee the country ... Why does Zionism equal expansionism? There are at least two methods by which an ideology is propagated, expansion by colonization and expansion by ideology ... Israel has now accomplished the first stage of its conquest by stealing the land from the Palestinians."²⁵

Claims that Palestinians were displaced en masse have been largely debunked as gross exaggeration. Prior to the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, a 1945 British census found approximately 1.2 million Arabs in Palestine.²⁶ A report by the UN Mediator on Palestine found that following the Israeli war of independence, there were approximately 360,000 refugees.²⁷ Although even these numbers are high, they fail to identify the reason why many Palestinians fled their homes—they were encouraged to by Arab leaders. For instance, in his memoirs, former Syrian Prime Minister Haled al Azm stated,

"[s]ince 1948 we have been demanding the return of the refugees to their homes. But we ourselves are the ones who encouraged them to leave. Only a few months separated our call to them to leave and our appeal to the United Nations to resolve on their return."²⁸

²³ Patrick Marantal, "Muslim Students Rally for Freedom," *The Daily Bruin*, February 20, 1996. <http://beta.dailybruin.com/articles/1996/2/20/muslim-students-rally-for-free/>

²⁴ Pejman Novin, "Anti-Semitism and Muslims," *The Minaret* Vol. 20 Issue 1, January 1998, pp. 19-20. Novin wrote a similar article a year prior for *The Daily Bruin*, UCLA's student newspaper. See Pejman Novin, "Zionist Ideology Equal to Colonialist Expansionism," *The Daily Bruin*, April 29, 1997. <http://beta.dailybruin.com/articles/1997/4/29/zionist-ideology-equal-to-colo/>

²⁵ *Id.*

²⁶ See Arieh Avneri, *The Claim of Dispossession*, (NJ: Transaction Books, 1984) at 272.

²⁷ Progress Report of the United Nations Mediator on Palestine, Submitted to the Secretary General for Transmission to the Members of the United Nations, General Assembly Official Records: Third Session, Supplement No. 11 (A/648), Paris, 1948, at 47.

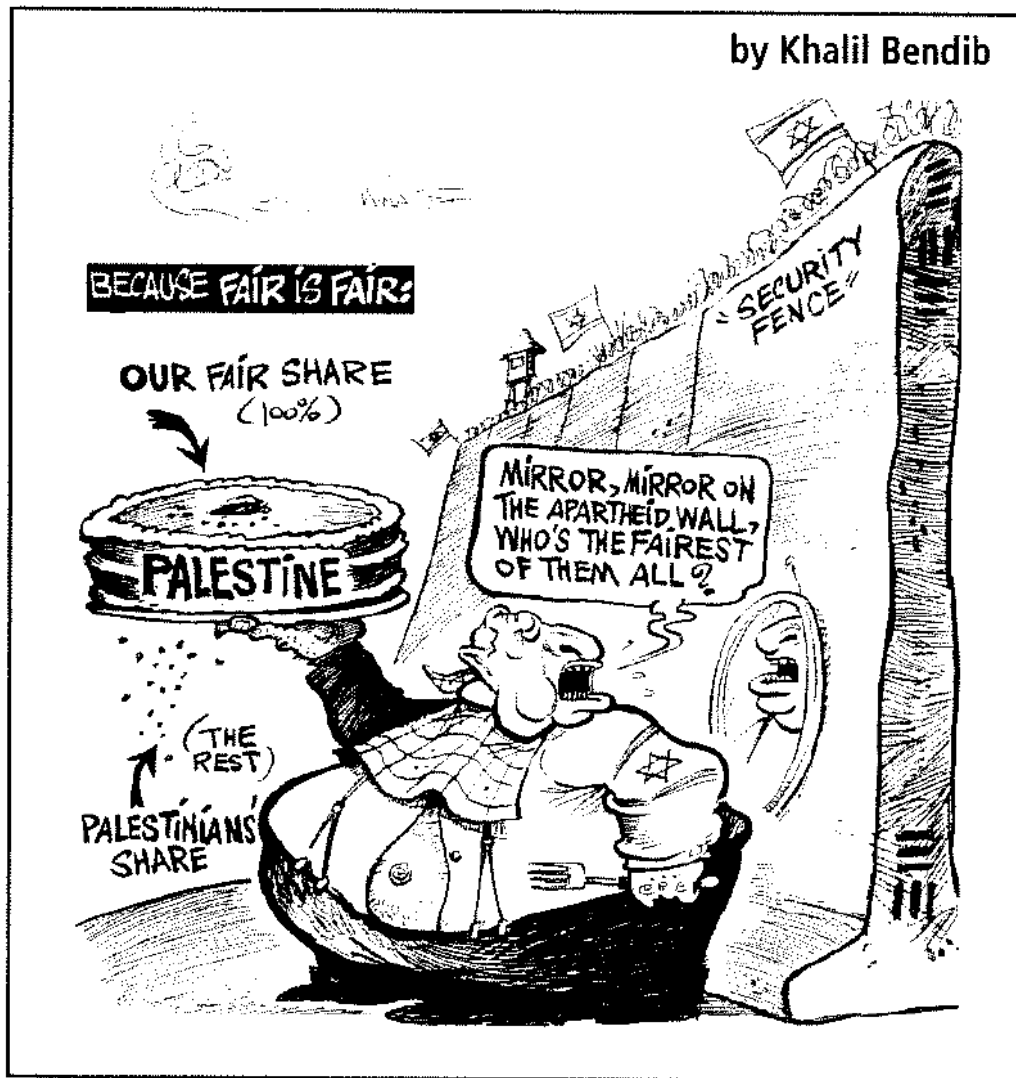
²⁸ "The Memoirs of Haled al Azm," (Beirut, 1973), Part 1, pp. 386-387. See also Myron Kaufman, *The Coming Destruction of Israel*, (NY: The American Library Inc., 1970), pp. 26-27 (quoting Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri as saying, "we will smash the country with our guns and obliterate every place the Jews seek shelter in. The Arabs should conduct their wives and children to safe areas until the fighting has died down").

Articles like the one penned by Novin, while virulent in their own right, are part of a larger media campaign undertaken by MPAC and the ICSC through *The Minaret*. Indicative of this broader anti-Semitic mindset are the cartoons which frequently appeared in the magazine.

C. *The Minaret's Anti-Semitic and Radical Cartoons*

In addition to their inflammatory and virulent articles and essays, each month *The Minaret* would provide its readers with a “political cartoon.”²⁹ What follows is a compilation of the cartoons which were published in *The Minaret*, a magazine which leaders of MPAC played a hand in putting out each month.

In the September 2003 issue cartoon, a grotesque looking Ariel Sharon is shown talking to a mirror on an “apartheid wall” holding a fork in preparation to devour “Palestine” to take it over, with only the crumbs going to the Palestinians.³⁰



²⁹ These cartoons were originally drawn by Tarik Trad, however in 1995 Khalil Bendib, an Algerian-American artist and political cartoonist took over the drawings. See Biography: Khalil Bendib, *Studio Bendib*, available at <http://www.studiobendib.com/bio.html>. His first cartoon for *The Minaret* was published in Vol. 17, issue 1 (Jan./Feb. 1995) at 11.

³⁰ Khalil Bendib, “Because Fair is Fair,” *The Minaret* Vol. 23 Issue 8, September 2003, p. 14.

In a February 2003 cartoon, Osama Bin Laden representing Al Qaida, Ariel Sharon representing Likud Israel, Jerry Falwell representing the Christian Right, and Atal Vajpayee representing the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) are shown linking hands and singing the song, "We are the World." Each are shown with Swastikas on their jackets above the cartoon title of "Religious Fascists of the World, Unite!"³¹



³¹ Khalil Bendib, "Religious Fascists of the World, Unite!" *The Minaret* Vol. 25 Issue 2, February 2003, p. 13

Bendib's January 2003 cartoon in *The Minaret* was entitled, "What Would Jesus Do?"³² It depicts President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney at the head of the table, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and a man representing the Christian Right.³³ Praying before eating, each asked themselves what would Jesus do?³⁴ According to Bush, incinerate Iraq, according to Cheney, Iran was added.³⁵ Rumsfeld went a step further thinking that Jesus would nuke Iraq, Iran, and Saudi Arabia while the Christian Right, supporting Rumsfeld's idea added destroying the rest of Palestine through ethnic cleansing.³⁶



³² Khalil Bendib, "What Would Jesus Do?" *The Minaret* Vol. 24 Issue 10, January 2003, p. 13.

³³ *Id.*

³⁴ *Id.*

³⁵ *Id.*

³⁶ *Id.*

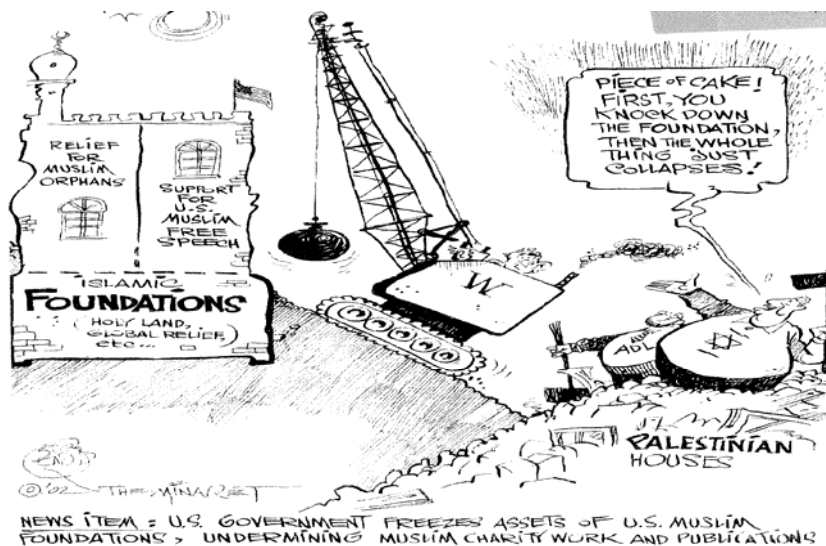
A September 2002 cartoon in *The Minaret* depicted Vice President Dick Cheney representing the Bush Administration, fooling his stupid American audience with puppets of Saddam Hussein and Osama Bin Laden saying that Muslims and Arabs were the real threat deflecting attention away from the administration's illegitimacy, war mongering, and theft of American constitutional freedoms.³⁷



³⁷ Khalil Bendib, "Bush Administration/Saddam and Osama/U.S. Public Opinion," *The Minaret* Vol. 24 Issue 8, September 2002, p. 17.

The March 2002 *Minaret* cartoon shows an impish George W. Bush driving a wrecking ball at Muslim charitable foundations such as the Holy Land Foundation (HLF) and the Global Relief Foundation (GRF) and Muslim free speech at the behest of Ariel Sharon and the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), standing atop the rubble of bulldozed Palestinian houses.³⁸

The HLF was an Islamic charity based in Richardson, Texas whose assets were frozen in December 2001 and found on November 24th, 2008 *guilty on all counts* of providing financial support to Hamas.³⁹ The GRF was an Islamic charity based in Bridgeview, Illinois,⁴⁰ that had ties with an Al Qaida precursor organization in Pakistan, and other known terrorist groups.⁴¹ In December 2001, GRF's assets were frozen⁴² and its offices were raided.⁴³ Following the raid, GRF sued the Treasury Department for release of its assets in January 2002.⁴⁴ That suit was dismissed and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit refused to reverse the Treasury seizure.⁴⁵



³⁸ Khalil Bendib, "News Item: U.S. Government Freezes Assets of U.S. Muslim Foundations, Undermining Muslim Charity Work and Publications," *The Minaret* Vol. 24 Issue 3, March 2002, p. 16.

³⁹ *United States v. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development et al.*, (NDTX) 3:04-CR-240 "Jury Verdict," November 24, 2008. Defense attorneys have indicated an intent to appeal the verdicts.

⁴⁰ Global Relief Foundation. Form 990, 1993.

⁴¹ "Monograph on Terrorism Financing." *National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States*, August 21, 2004, p. 91 http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/staff_statements/911_TerrFin_Monograph.pdf

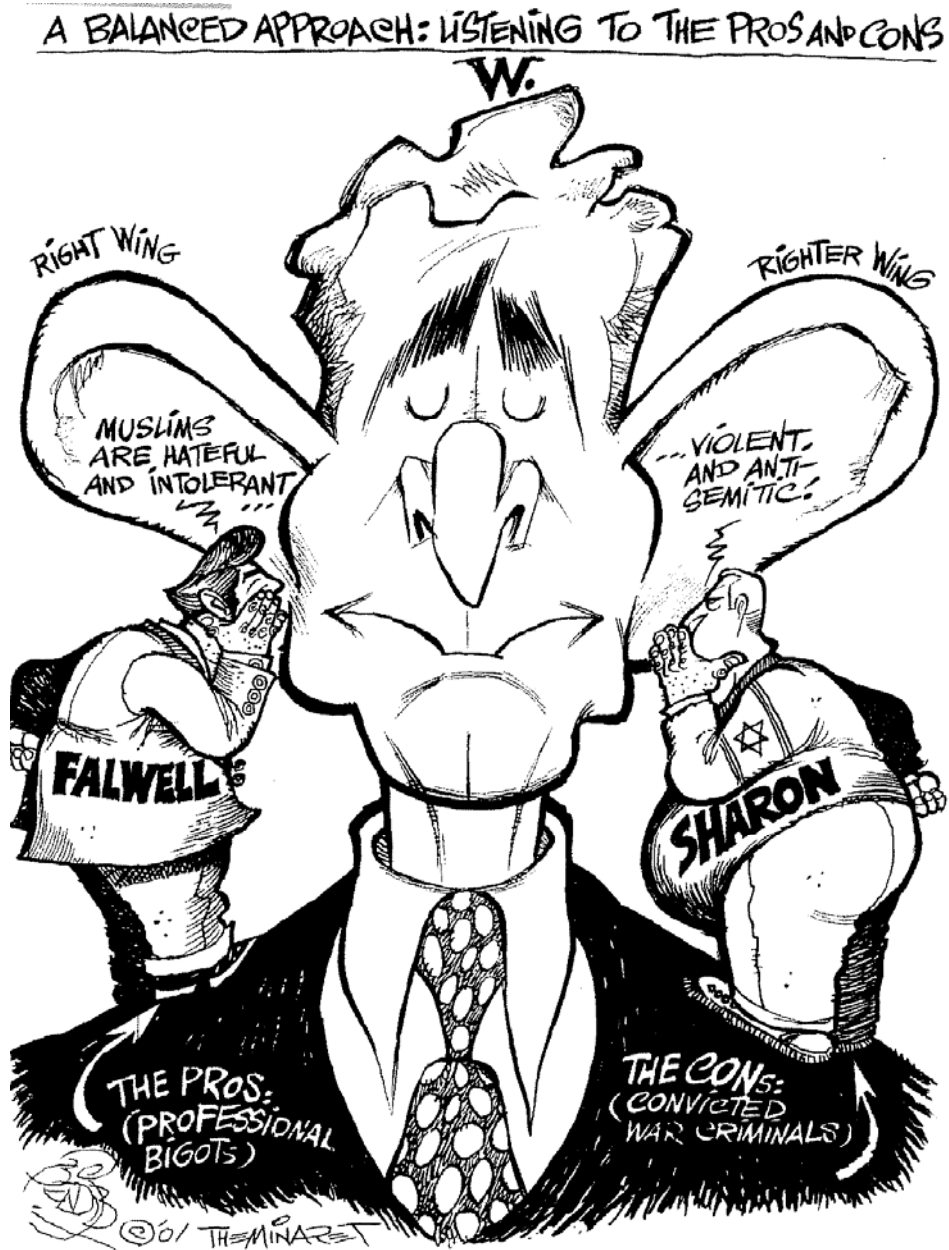
⁴² *Global Relief Foundation, Inc. v. New York Times Company, et al.*, (NDIL) 01-C-8821, "Memorandum Opinion and Order." February 19, 2003.

⁴³ "Feds Close Two More Muslim Groups," *CBS News*. December 14, 2001.

⁴⁴ Allan Dodds Frank, *Islamic Charity Fights Asset Freeze*, CNN.com (Jan. 28, 2002).

⁴⁵ *Global Relief Foundation, Inc. v. O'Neill*, 315 F.3d 748 (7th Cir. 2002)

The April 2001 cartoon showed Jerry Falwell, a “professional bigot,” speaking into President George W. Bush’s left ear and Ariel Sharon, the “convicted war criminal” speaking into his right ear defaming Muslims as hateful and anti-Semitic.⁴⁶



⁴⁶ Khalil Bendib, “A Balanced Approach: Listening to the Pros and Cons,” *The Minaret* Vol. 23 Issue 4, April 2001, p. 14.

In Bendib's September 2000 Minaret cartoon, he depicts what he thinks of American evenhandedness in the Middle East. President Bill Clinton is shown shaking Israeli Prime Minister Barak's hand, while crushing and strangling Yasir Arafat representing Palestine with the other.⁴⁷



⁴⁷ Khalil Bendib, "Evenhandedness in the Middle-East," *The Minaret* Vol. 22 Issue 8, September 2000, p. 14.

Bendib's January 2000 cartoon for *The Minaret* shows a bunch of men in suits representing the West carting money and heaping apologies on to a older Jewish woman representing the "Jewish Holocaust."⁴⁸ Ignored by the West are the crippled figures of Palestine, Indian Genocide, and African Slavery.⁴⁹



⁴⁸ Khalil Bendib, "The Jewish Holocaust/The West/Palestine – Indian Genocide – African Slavery," *The Minaret* Vol. 22 Issue 1, January 2000, p. 15.

⁴⁹ *Id.*

In a July/August 1999 cartoon a “U.S. Congress” marionette is being manipulated by a stereotypical figure called the “Israel Lobby” while leaning against a table which says “National Committee on Terrorism.”⁵⁰ “Muslims” are gagged and bound next to the table as the “Israel Lobby” states, “OK, NOW we can have a serious discussion about religious fanaticism and intolerance ...”⁵¹



⁵⁰ Khalil Bendib, “National Committee on Terrorism: Ok, Now We can Have a Serious Discussion About Religious Fanaticism and Intolerance ...” *The Minaret* Vol. 21 Issue 7-8, July/August 1999, p. 13.

⁵¹ *Id.*

The June 1999 Minaret cartoon by Bendib shows President Clinton representing NATO holding two boxes of detergent labeled “ethnic cleansing.”⁵² While Kosovo is labeled “Bad Ethnic Cleansing,” Israel is accused and singled out as a “Good Ethnic Cleansing” with endorsements on the box saying, “Whiter Whites” and “Turns Muslim Lands Jewish!”⁵³



⁵² Khalil Bendib, “Compare Shop,” *The Minaret* Vol. 21 Issue 6, June 1999, p. 15.

⁵³ *Id.*

Bendib's May 1999 cartoon depicts a Hotel USA where a gigantic man, with money lining his pockets, representing the Zionist Lobby is using an elevator to crush the Muslims in the basement.⁵⁴



⁵⁴ Khalil Bendib, "Hotel USA: (Zionist) Lobby; (Muslim) Basement." *The Minaret* Vol. 21 Issue 5, May 1999, p. 13.

In his October 1998 *Minaret* cartoon, Bendib shows two frames.⁵⁵ In the top frame, Congress and the media are shouting at Bill Clinton over his affair with Monica Lewinsky as being immoral.⁵⁶ In the bottom frame however, they are clapping for Clinton regarding the “brutal rape” of the “innocent” Muslim countries of Sudan and Afghanistan.⁵⁷ The cartoon was published after the American missile strikes in Afghanistan and Sudan against Osama bin Laden.⁵⁸



⁵⁵ Khalil Bendib, “Morality in the 90ies” *The Minaret* Vol. 20 Issue 10, October 1998, p. 12.

⁵⁶ *Id.*

⁵⁷ *Id.*

⁵⁸ *Id.*

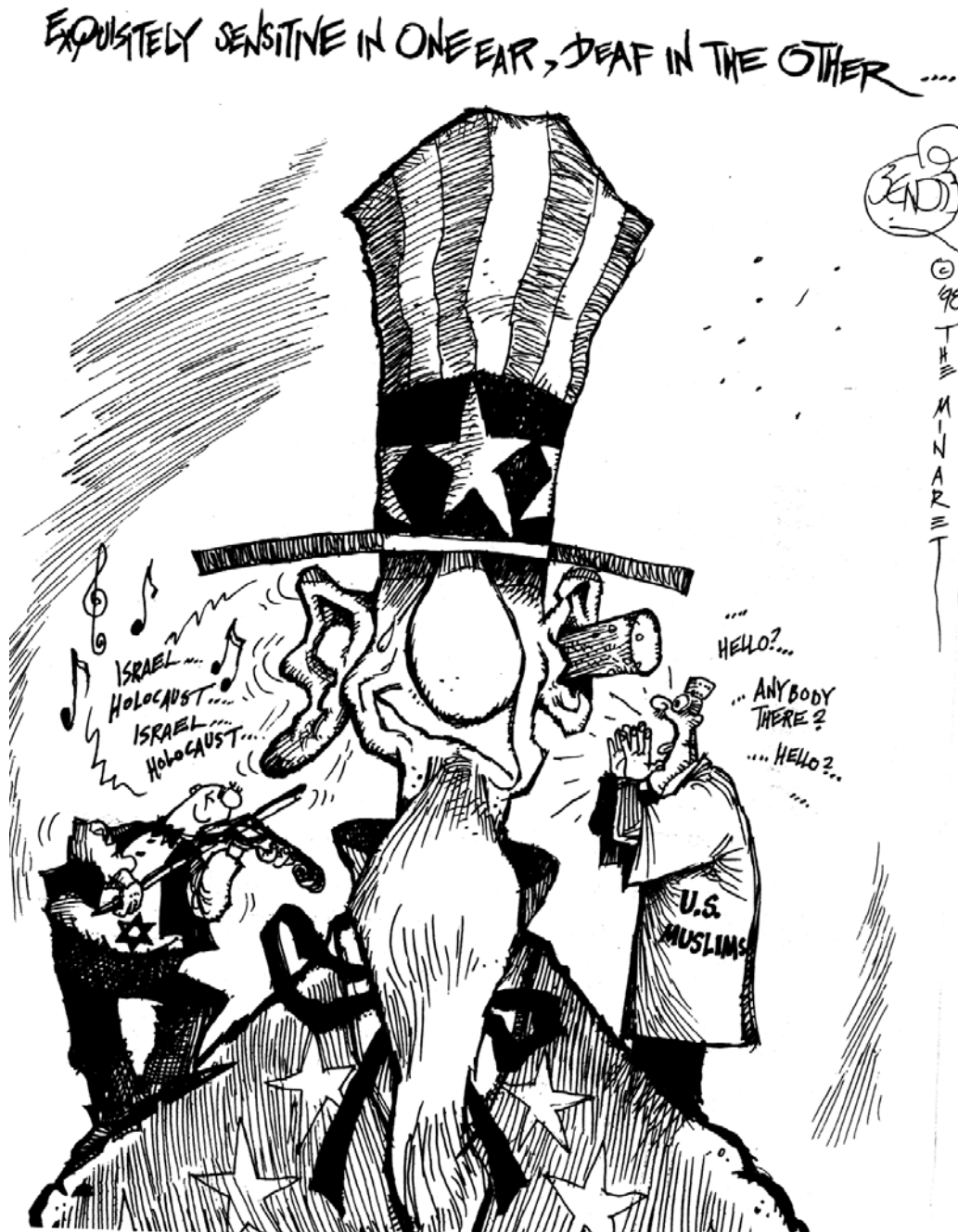
In the June 1998 cartoon, Bendib drew a grotesque looking Ariel Sharon devouring a turkey representing what was left of the West Bank, with a smaller, frightened, kaffiya wearing Palestinian looking on helplessly.⁵⁹ Near Sharon's feet are empty bottles and human bones, suggesting that Israel represented by Sharon had cannibalized and were cannibalizing Palestinians.⁶⁰



⁵⁹ Khalil Bendib, "13%? Why so Greedy? What's the Big Rush?" *The Minaret* Vol. 20 Issue 6, June 1998, p. 13.

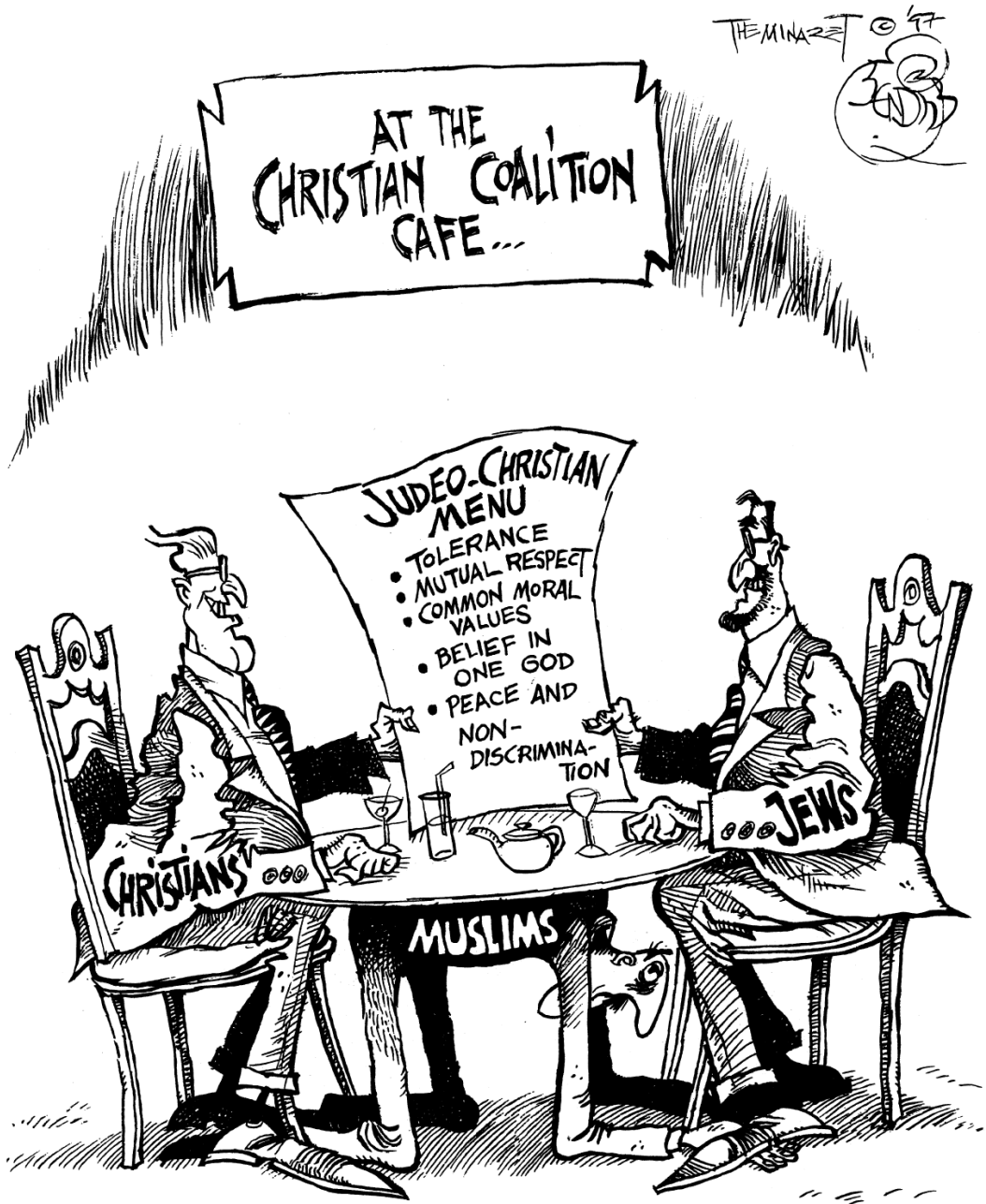
⁶⁰ *Id.*

In the April 1998 *Minaret* cartoon, Bendib shows Uncle Sam listening in his left ear to a Jew sing songs about Israel and the Holocaust, while his right ear is corked and ignoring Muslim Americans.⁶¹



⁶¹ Khalil Bendib, "Exquisitely Sensitive in One Ear, Deaf in the Other ..." *The Minaret* Vol. 20 Issue 4, April 1998, p. 13.

The June 1997 *Minaret* cartoon, depicts an imaginary meal at the “Christian Coalition Café” where a man representing the Christians and man representing the Jews are holding a Judeo-Christian Menu listing tolerance, mutual respect, and other values at a table on top of a Muslim on the floor.⁶²



⁶² “At the Christian Coalition Café ...” *The Minaret* Vol. 19 Issue 6, June 1997, p. 13.

D. Conspiracy Theories about the 1993 World Trade Center Bombings and 9/11

The Minaret frequently published articles questioning the well-documented events surrounding both the 1993 World Trade Center bombing as well as the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Perhaps unsurprisingly based upon the other rhetoric espoused by the magazine, these conspiracy theories often took the form of blaming America and Israel for the attacks.

The 1993 World Trade Center bombing, which occurred on February 26, 1993, killed six people and wounded 1,042 others. The perpetrators of the attack were eventually found, arrested, prosecuted, and convicted for their participation. Despite that, in the July/August 1993 issue of *The Minaret*, Editor in Chief Aslam Abdullah wrote an article entitled “On the New York Arrests.”⁶³ Although the investigation remained ongoing at the time the article was written, by March 4, 1993, the FBI had already arrested Mohammad Salameh and was beginning to unravel the terrorist conspiracy.⁶⁴ Abdullah, ignoring the evidence that had been put forth by the government, used the pages of *The Minaret* to spread conspiracy theories regarding the attacks. In the article, Abdullah claimed that the eight suspects arrested for the crime were set up and that the bombing might have been at the behest of those wanting to paint Islam and Muslims as enemies of the United States:

“There is another version of the story, which is circulating....Defense lawyers say that there are elements in the law enforcement agencies and political parties who are keen to project Islam and Muslims as enemies of the United States. Their concern is even shared by some government officials....Defense lawyers also suggest that [one of the conspirators] Emad Saleh was the brain behind the alleged plot and not all eight members of the group knew what they were framed for until they found themselves handcuffed by the FBI.”⁶⁵

Eight years later, following the attacks of September 11, *The Minaret* again published articles questioning Osama bin Laden’s role in the attacks and suggesting instead that the events were undertaken by the American or Israeli governments.⁶⁶

In the October 2001 issue of *The Minaret*, Ahmed Nedim urged his readers to “reach their own conclusions,” but then went on to reiterate conspiracy theories about the attacks.⁶⁷ The article quoted a Hezbollah *al Manar* television report and Jordanian *al Watan* newspaper which claimed that Jews working at the World Trade Center in New York stayed home from

⁶³ Aslam Abdullah, “On the New York Arrests,” *The Minaret*, Vol. 15, issue 4 (July/Aug. 1993) at 13.

⁶⁴ *First Strike: Global Terror in America*, Federal Bureau of Investigation (Feb. 26, 2008) available at http://www.fbi.gov/page2/feb08/tradebom_022608.html (last accessed Nov. 2, 2009).

⁶⁵ *Id.*

⁶⁶ Ahmed Nedim, “Conspiracy Theories Abound,” *The Minaret*, Vol. 23, issue 9 (Oct. 2001) p. 13-14.

⁶⁷ *Id.*

work on 9/11 because they had been warned in advance of the attack.⁶⁸ Nedim wondered why no investigation had been launched:

“Furthermore, there is a report about the arrest of five Israeli citizens for puzzling behavior near the World Trade Center within hours of the attacks...They reportedly were caught videotaping the disaster and shouting in what was interpreted as cries of joy and mockery. What is puzzling is that the American media which has been so quick to report all kinds of breakthroughs chose to overlook these significant arrests.”⁶⁹

Although this was a common conspiracy theory propagated by anti-Semites, it has been widely disproved. For instance, a September 21, 2001 *ABC News* report detailed how at least 130 Israeli nationals were killed in the attack.⁷⁰

In the same issue, *The Minaret* published an article by Australian journalist and documentary filmmaker John Pilger titled “Inevitable Ring to the Imaginable.”⁷¹ In an attempt to justify the attacks of 9/11, Pilger argued that the U.S. was the greatest source of terrorism and that the Islamic world was its principle victim:

“Far from being the terrorists of the world, the Islamic people have been its victims—primarily the victims of U.S. Fundamentalism, whose power in all its forms, military strategic, and economic, is the greatest source of terrorism on earth.”⁷²

Pilger went on to argue that 9/11 was the end of a long line of betrayal by the West and the U.S. of the Islamic World and that the U.S. was to blame because:

“Inevitably terror breeds terror and more fanaticism. But how patient the oppressed have been. It is only a few years ago that the Islamic fundamentalist groups, willing to blow themselves up in Israel and New York were formed, and only after Israel and the U.S. had rejected outright the hope of a Palestinian state, and justice for a people scarred by imperialism. Their distant voices of rage are now heard; the daily horrors in faraway brutalized places have at last come home.”⁷³

Even as additional evidence came in and it became clear who perpetrated the attacks, *The Minaret* continued to publish conspiracy theories. In its November/December 2001 issue,

⁶⁸ *Id.*

⁶⁹ *Id.*

⁷⁰ *Foreign Nationals Add to List of Missing in Terror Attack*, ABCNews.com, (Sept. 21, 2001) available at http://web.archive.org/web/20010921204336/http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h/abc/20010921/wl/wtc_rescue010921_1.html.

⁷¹ John Pilger, “Inevitable Ring to the Imaginable,” *The Minaret*, Vol. 23, issue 9 (Oct. 2001) p. 30-31.

⁷² *Id.*

⁷³ *Id.*

Marghoob Quraishi penned an article titled “Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy.”⁷⁴ In the article, Quaraishi said that an examination of U.S. foreign policy should be conducted to determine the cause of the attacks:

“The most prudent way of dealing with this tragedy demands that we first ask the basic question: who are the real perpetrators of this tragedy, and what are their motives? Then, find the possible root causes of these attacks, and reexamine those overt or covert domestic and foreign policies of the United States that may have contributed to the armed conflicts that have been raging in Third World countries for several decades.”⁷⁵

ANTI-SEMITIC HATE SPEECH

Lest MPAC claim that the virulently anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist propaganda published by *The Minaret* is not representative of the views of the organization, MPAC itself has put out similar material. In fact, MPAC routinely makes allegations that perpetuate anti-Semitic stereotypes and incite hatred towards Jews. The results have been consistent criticism of the creation of the state of Israel, the continued existence of that state, and U.S. support for what is viewed as anti-Islamic actions undertaken by Israel.

Most recently, and demonstrative of its anti-Semitic ideology, MPAC recently attempted to stoke a new “blood libel” that Israelis were indiscriminately killing Palestinians in order to harvest their organs.⁷⁶ Highlighting an editorial in a Swedish newspaper which claimed that the Israeli army kidnapped and killed young Palestinians to harvest their organs,⁷⁷ MPAC misconstrued the facts of the case to fit a pre-set narrative. Contrary to the “story” published by MPAC, Israel admitted to a program operated by a state-run forensic laboratory in the 1990s which harvested organs from bodies in its labs without consent from surviving relatives. This program involved both Israelis and Palestinians, and when news of it came to light, the program was immediately stopped.

E. Anti-Israeli Rhetoric

MPAC frequently argues against the establishment of the state of Israel. In a July 2006 radio interview, MPAC Executive Director Salam al Marayati said that the Holocaust was no excuse for Israeli “dehumanization” of Arab peoples:

⁷⁴ Marghoob Quraishi, “Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy,” *The Minaret*, Vol. 23, issue 10 (Nov./Dec. 2001) at 21-24.

⁷⁵ *Id.*

⁷⁶ See Muslim Public Affairs Council, *Israel Admits Harvesting Palestinian Organs; Int'l Criminal Court Must Intervene* MPACNews (Dec. 21, 2009), available at <http://www.mpac.org/article.php?id=987#axzz0eKEbtWEw>

⁷⁷ Op-ed, *Our Sons are Plundered of their organs*, Adtonbladet (Aug. 26, 2009), available at <http://www.aftonbladet.se/kultur/article5691805.ab>

“[a]s far as the Holocaust is concerned, we’ve come out very clearly saying that the Holocaust is the worst genocide, war crime, in the 20th century. We’re against Holocaust denial, but we’re also against people who exploit that as a way of shoving this kind of war propaganda and dehumanization of the Arab peoples and the Muslim peoples as if they have to pay the price for what Nazi Germany did to the Jews back in the 20th Century.”⁷⁸

More than simply claiming that the creation of the state of Israel was the result of European guilt, MPAC claims that it was done through intentional ethnic cleaning:⁷⁹ Searching for an analogy, MPAC frequently references U.S. actions towards Native Americans:

“We cannot give up on the children of Palestine. They ought to be the children of the whole world because the crime that is being committed in Palestine now is a shame to the human race, regardless of race, color, or creed. This is the second horrible atrocity after the Native Americans, where a population can be displaced, alienated, and reduced to Museums of anthropology. And we ought not to allow this to happen.”⁸⁰

Similarly, MPAC has compared the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to U.S. slavery. Speaking for MPAC at a 2002 Second Annual Palestinian Students Divestment Conference, then-Political Advisor Mahdi Bray,⁸¹ stated:

“[Israel] wants to maintain a certain control, a certain power and there is a certain vested interest, usually its economical interest. We might see it play itself out in religious context but ultimately, but the bottom line is economics...I’ve always said I think that the region has always wanted, and excuse my politeness and my

⁷⁸ Larry Mantle, Salam al Marayati, and Rabbi Mordecai Finley, “Lebanon, Israel, and Hezbollah: Southern California’s Perspective” *KPCC “AirTalk” Radio*, Aug. 3, 2006, http://www.publicradio.org/tools/media/player/kpcc/news/shows/airtalk/2005/08/20050831_airtalk1?start=00:00:00&end=00:28:15

⁷⁹ “Seeking an elusive Peace: Keys for Successfully advancing Middle East Peace” Muslim Public Affairs Council, May 28, 2009 at 4, <http://www.mpac.org/publications/seeking-an-elusive-peace/web.pdf> (“Palestinians see creation of modern Israel as a European settler state set up under the protective shield of the British colonizers. The European Jews that came to Palestine did so uninvited...and the creation of Israel in 1948 was made possible only through the deliberate ethnic cleaning of the Palestinians, which resulted in 700,000 Palestinian refugees. These refugees and their descendants have a legitimate more claim to redress the ethnic cleaning that occurred”).

⁸⁰ Dr. Maher Hathout, “KinderUSA Ramadan Iftar for the Children of Palestine, *KinderUSA Ramadan Iftar*, La Mirada, California, Oct. 8, 2006; *See also*, “Seeking an elusive Peace: Keys for Successfully advancing Middle East Peace” Muslim Public Affairs Council, May 28, 2009 at 4, <http://www.mpac.org/publications/seeking-an-elusive-peace/web.pdf> (“Palestinian use of violence cannot be understood without reference to this basic historical fact. The conventional American view is analogous to criticism of Native American assaults on white settlers while ignoring the underlying disposition”).

⁸¹ Note: Bray now serves as executive director of the Muslim American Society’s Freedom Foundation. MAS was founded by Muslim Brotherhood members in the United States.

bluntness, the Palestinians to be the new niggers of the Middle East. They've always wanted them to be the chief labor force."⁸²

Unwilling to limit their criticism to what they view as the immoral and illegal creation of the state of Israel, MPAC continues to criticize the "occupation."⁸³ In 2008, MPAC published: "A Resource Toolkit on 60 Years of Palestinian Suffering (1948-2008)." In the introduction, al Marayati accuses Israel of apartheid against the Palestinians, of forcing the people of Gaza to live like "caged animals," and trying to erase Palestinian identity by calling Arab citizens of Israel, Israeli Arabs and not Palestinians:

"In addition, those Palestinians who remained in Israel (often referred to as "Israeli Arabs" in an attempt to strip them of their identity as Palestinians) live as second class citizens in Israel. In the West Bank, where Jewish settlers are given rights denied to the local population, Palestinians live under an apartheid system...the common Israeli practice of using collective punishment against innocent people has reached a level that many thought impossible as the siege against Gaza continues unabated. By cutting off supplies of fuel and other basic necessities, Israel has reduced the life of Gazan families to that of caged animals."⁸⁴

While critics often argue that Palestinians in Israel are treated as second class citizens, they fail to consider the conditions in place in other Arab states. According to annual reports compiled by the State Department, most Arab states are ruled by oppressive regimes, which deny their citizens basic freedoms of political expression, speech, press, and due process. The *Arab Human Development Report*, published by a group of Arab researchers from the UN Development Program, concluded that out of the seven regions of the world, Arab countries had the lowest freedom score.⁸⁵

In a speech at the Islamic Center of Irvine in July 2002, MPAC Communications Director Edina Lekovic said that Muslims were being oppressed and massacred everywhere by non-

⁸² Mahdi Bray, "Tactical Lessons from the U.S. Grassroots Struggle Against South African Apartheid," *Students Allied for Freedom and Equality Program: The 2nd Annual Student Conference on the Palestinian Solidarity Movement*, Ann Arbor, MI, Oct. 12-14 (2002).

⁸³ See e.g., Laila al Marayati, "KinderUSA Fundraiser," *KinderUSA*, Bridgeview, Illinois, Aug. 17, 2003 ("But if you go into Palestinian towns in Israel itself, and it is as if they haven't developed since 1950 because they can't get permits to expand...If they do, they're demolished...so we have to remember...Palestinians, inside Israel proper, or occupied Palestine, however, you want to refer to it, are suffering as well"); Dr. Aslam Abdullah, "Iraqi Crisis & 2004 U.S. Elections," *IslamOnline Live Dialogue*, Aug. 23, 2003 ("Israel is an apartheid state...Mr. Bush...is a Zionist and he believes that Israel has a claim over the land from a divine perspective....Moreover, Mr. Bush or no American President is in command of foreign policy issues pertaining to Israel. It is Israel that dictates the policy and not the other way"); Aslam Abdullah, "A New Axis of Evil," *The Minaret*, Vol. 24, Issue 5 (May 2002) at 21 ("the ideology of Zionism is executed by a regime that legitimizes apartheid and racism, through constitutional means. The regime receives support from a superpower that manipulates facts to serve the interests of oppressors...In this new axis of evil, the U.S. power elite, Israel, and the Arab rulers must be charged with denying the people of the region the dignity that they are born with, the democracy that they desire, the equality they struggle for and the peace they strive for").

⁸⁴ "A Resource Toolkit on 60 years of Palestinian Suffering (1948-2008)," MPAC, 2008 at 3.

⁸⁵ Arab Human Development Report 2002, NY: UN, 2002.

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 we feel that injustice is being thrown upon the Muslims left and right in every corner of the globe...We focus on how we’re being oppressed by non-Muslims everywhere. Any corner of the globe that you choose, Muslims have been massacred...In Palestine, for example, we know the history of Zionism...and we point to the Zionists constantly. We can expect that the Zionists will act as Zionists. That’s the equation that we always know will exist...”⁸⁶

It is worth recognizing that criticism of the “occupation” essentially amounts to criticism of Israeli counter-terrorism efforts, something that MPAC has consistently railed upon the state of Israel for. In a later question and answer session at the Irvine event entitled “The Truth Behind America’s War on Terrorism,” Aslam Abdullah claimed:

“The State of Israel is an epitome of terrorism. It uses all its might to suppress the indigenous people of Palestine...some of the world’s powers such as the U.S. and Britain supported terrorist outfits such as South Africa and Israel.”⁸⁷

In response to Israeli military operations around Ramallah and Hebron in March 2001, an MPAC press release accused the U.S. of appeasing Israeli war crimes and massacres of Palestinians:

“The U.S. should realize that its credibility in the region is sinking to new lows because of its appeasement of Israeli war crimes and its silence at the massacre of Palestinians...The United States government, however, consents to Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people on Palestinian lands.”⁸⁸

To this end, MPAC continues to criticize even the existence of the state of Israel. In a khutba, or sermon, delivered at the ICSC on May 8, 1998, entitled “A Lesson From History,” Maher Hathout bemoaned the pending anniversary of Israel’s creation as the birth of terror in the region:

“On the 16 of May there will be a big hoopla in this country celebrating the day in which a wave of terrorists and vulgarity...uprooted the Palestinian people from their home, removed them, either into homeless refugees or a third class citizens in an apartheid state is falsely described as a democracy...Powers of tyranny and terrorists picked our people, slaughtered citizens, killed the babies in the laps of their mothers, to spread a wave of fear that will drive people out of their homes...just to

⁸⁶ Edina Lekovic, “Struggle in the Muslim World,” MPAC and the Islamic Center of Irvine, Irvine, CA (July 14, 2002).

⁸⁷ Dr. Aslam Abdullah, “The Truth behind America’s War on Terrorism,” *IslamOnline*, November 30, 2002.

⁸⁸ “MPAC Condemns Israeli Aggression,” *MPAC News*, March 30, 2001, <http://web.archive.org/web/198/12/12015744/http://mpac.org>

listen to the happy birthday song for an entity based on aggression and stained with blood. An entity that reduced the people into refugees and third class citizenship and...pushed them into utter despair, and when some of them acted desperately, the whole were branded as crazy terrorists.”⁸⁹

Part of the problem, according to the MPAC is that the media doesn’t portray the conflict accurately. In an article in August 2001, then MPAC spokesman Nader Elmakawi compared the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* editorial sections and their reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. *The New York Times*, Elmakawi wrote, was guilty of being “agenda driven” and papering over Israel’s brutality towards the Palestinians:

“The New York Times editorial section is devoid of a substantial existing body of argument rooted in the Palestinian perspective. This perspective offers important insight into colonialism, military occupation, extra-judicial killing, home demolishment and expulsion that forms an integral part of daily Palestinian life and contributes to so much Palestinian frustration...It’s [sic] absence...thus indicates a substantial degree of bias...Though the attitude of the New York Times is clearly lopsided and agenda driven, it is unfortunately not the worst. Many mainstream newspapers perpetrate the same sharp and largely one-sided attacks on Arabs and Muslims and exhibit the same themes found in much anti-Arab sentiment.”⁹⁰

Although MPAC continues to criticize Israel for these actions and the media for failing to cover them, MPAC has also turned its sights on American politicians.⁹¹ In an article entitled “Accomplice in Crimes,” MPAC Vice Chairman Aslam Abdullah said Americans shared responsibility for Palestinian suffering:

“[The United States] is a partner in the killing of people in Palestine. Our administration is responsible for giving the apartheid state a free hand in murdering people and our Congress is supportive of the criminal deeds of the racist state. Our congressmen are accomplice in heinous acts committed in the name of religion and race. The world’s only superpower in coordination with the Zionist State of Israel is

⁸⁹ Maher Hathout, “A Lesson From History,” *Voice of Islam*, Khutba at the Islamic Center of Southern California (May 8, 1998).

⁹⁰ Nader Elmakawi, “Israel and Palestine in the Media: A Comparison of the New York Times and the Los Angeles Times Editorial Sections,” *MPAC Opinion*, Aug. 24, 2001, http://web.archive.org/web/20020315115714/www.mpac.org/news/opinion_082401.shtml. See also Joyce M. Davis, “Muslim Translators say ‘60 Minutes’ Fabricated Bomber’s Quotes,” *Knight Ridder/Tribune News Service*, Aug. 24, 2001 (“the worst case scenario is that there is a deliberate spinning of the news. It is very fashionable now to present Muslims as particularly susceptible to being crazy of blowing themselves up”).

⁹¹ See e.g., Dr. Aslam Abdullah, “Israeli Mole in the Pentagon” *The Muslim Observer*, Vol. 6, Issue 36 (Sept. 3-9) at 4-5 (“Zionists and Israeli own most congressional members and their staff. Zionists and Israel are in control of the White House as nothing moves about Israel in the highest Executive office without the approval of Israel and AIPAC. Most public officials who are paid by American tax payers owe their allegiance to the State of Israel and its security. Moreover, almost all major media personalities are more Israeli’s than many Israeli media people”).

presiding over the ethnic cleansing of the powerless, resourceless, and unarmed Palestinians.”⁹²

As MPAC explains, the Israeli lobby in the United States is so strong that politicians are afraid to speak out against it.⁹³ At the MPAC Symposium on May 6, 2001, Maher Hathout went so far as to claim that the U.S. Congress was under Israeli occupation:

“It is obvious that, at least from our perspective, that the United States is also under Israeli occupation. And so we have a Congress that beats the Knesset in being pro-Zionist and we have an administration that believes in these superiority/inferiority attitudes and exploitation.”⁹⁴

MPAC frequently states that the United States has not been even-handed in the Arab-Israeli conflict.⁹⁵ In a *khutba* entitled “on Nakba” at the ICSC in May, 2008, Maher Hathout spoke about Israel’s 60th Independence Day, saying that imbalance is a product of people being afraid to criticize Israel:

“I noticed that Americans...are very loud, except when it comes to Zionist injustice. You find old respectable people all of a sudden whisper...What is the whispering about? Be yourself man or woman, and say what you believe is the truth...We know that our president wanted to share the celebration to probably cut the cake there in Israel. That’s fine....he’ll be accountable to history....But we have a problem in our country, as the only major power in the world that can broker a real peace in the area. You cannot broker a peace if you are celebrating with the victorious and ignoring the victims.”⁹⁶

Indicative of MPAC’s constant criticism of U.S. efforts to broker a peace deal between the Israelis and Palestinians was an incident in August of 2001. Then-U.S. Representative Tom Lantos, in a speech to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), criticized Palestinian Chairman Yasser Arafat. Lantos, arguing that Arafat undermined the Oslo accords, drew a parallel to the Treaty of Hudaibiyah in 628 CE between Muhammed and the Quraish tribe of Mecca, which was broken by Quraish two years after the treaty was signed.

⁹² Dr. Aslam Abdullah, “Accomplice in Crimes!” *MSA News.net* Aug. 14, 2001.

⁹³ See e.g., Dr. Maher Hathout, “Facing Humanitarian Crisis in Palestine,” *CAIR, MAS, MPAC, MSA-West, & Shura Council*, La Mirada, California, June 21, 2006 (“another concept that needs to be completely demolished and cleared away is that the Palestinian issue is a remote, foreign, Arab issue; and that it is...that dwelling on that hinders our progress...This is exactly what Zionist extremists want us to believe; because it is false, it is untrue. It is false because the Palestinian issue is not a remote Arab issue. It is...an American issue”); Dr. Aslam Abdullah, “Israeli Mole in the Pentagon,” *The Muslim Observer*, Vol. 6, Issue 36, Sept. 3-9 (2004) at 5 (“it is not a secret that every word of the Presidential speech that relates to Israel has to be first approved by Zionists and Israel. It is not a secret that most congressmen receive their directives from pro-Israeli bosses in Washington...Congress...is already owned by Israel and by its agents in our country”).

⁹⁴ Dr. Maher Hathout, “Dispelling Myths,” *MPAC Symposium on Jerusalem*, California State University—Fullerton, May 6, 2001

⁹⁵ *Id.*

⁹⁶ Dr. Maher Hathout, “On Nakba,” Islamic Center of Southern California, May 16, 2008.

MPAC upbraided Lantos in a letter which cast his remarks as bigoted toward Islam and all but accused him of being a stooge for pro Israel interest groups:

“The offensive, superficial, ignorant, and political viscous nature of these remarks is practically beyond words, and constitutes a clear defamation of Islam...What your remarks also highlight is the increasing propensity of politicians to defame Islam in an attempt to impress interest groups that support Israel...The connection between courting the pro-Israel vote and defaming Islam...is disturbing and grotesque. It is quite distinctly un-American to defame a complex and rich monotheistic religion...for the sake of a special interest group.”⁹⁷

Although MPAC frequently demands public condemnation of what they view as Israeli aggression, it is unwilling to publicly criticize Palestinian suicide bombings. In fact, on numerous occasions, leaders of MPAC have defended acts of terrorism. In April 2002, MPAC Executive Director Salam al Marayati appeared on Alan Keyes’ MSNBC show. Keyes asked al Marayati to comment on a Palestinian Authority statement praising “the effectiveness of the human bombing attacks,” to which al Marayati responded:

“No. I think what you’re doing is you’re distorting the statements. And I’m kind of surprised, Mr. Keyes, because I thought this broadcast is out of Washington not out of Tel Aviv.”⁹⁸

In attempting to defend the Palestinian “resistance” as a spontaneous response against Israeli oppression, MPAC, in its recommendations to U.S. policymakers, explained:

“Terrorism is wrong: Israeli occupation is terrorism and oppression. American policy must be based on the recognition that no people will remain passive under foreign occupation and military aggression. The Palestinian people are no different...The uprising is a spontaneous, collective reaction to the continued illegal and immoral Israeli occupation of the Palestinian people and their land...Once again, the end of Israeli occupation will end the conflict.”⁹⁹

Despite claims to the contrary, more often than not, Palestinian violence has been premeditated and planned by terrorist organizations. For example, in the summer of 2001, Palestinian commanders circulated instructions on confronting Israeli troops.¹⁰⁰ The orders

⁹⁷ “Action alert: Bigoted Comments of Tom Lantos,” *MPAC News*, Aug. 3, 2001; *See also* Sarah Eltantawi, “MPAC Calls for International Intervention in Jerusalem,” *MPAC News*, Aug. 1, 2001 (criticizing a resolution by Rep. Eric Cantor (R-VA) to cut off all aid to the Palestinian Authority until unauthorized excavations ended, “this totally biased and unfair resolution is a provocation to Muslims around the world at the hands of occupation forces that make no secret of wanting to destroy the Haram al Sharif and terrorize Palestinians”).

⁹⁸ “Alan Keyes is Making Sense” *MSNBC*, April 15, 2002

⁹⁹ “MPAC Condemns Israeli Aggression,” *MPAC News*, March 30, 2001, <http://web.archive.org/web/198/12/12015744/http://mpac.org>

¹⁰⁰ “The Palestinians get their orders: hand grenades, Molotov cocktails and suicide bombers vs. US hi-tech,” *Janes Defense*, (July 26, 2001), available at http://www.janes.com/security/international_security/news/fr/fr010726_1_n.shtml

included the preparation of Molotov cocktails, hand grenades and barricades. Explosive "belts" were to be prepared for "hundreds of suicide youths who will be willing to confront the advancing troops." The instructions also suggested conserving ammunition and attacking tanks only with "suitable weapons" and not with light guns. "Forward positions should be established by fighters willing to sacrifice their lives to stop the advancing enemy." From 2000 to 2002, *USA Today* recorded at least 70 of these "spontaneous" suicide attacks.¹⁰¹

MPAC often invites well-known anti-Semites to speak at their events. For instance, MPAC has invited "reverend" William Baker to speak at several of their sponsored and co-sponsored conferences. Baker is the founder and head of Christians and Muslims for Peace, based in Laguna Hills, California.¹⁰² Prior to starting CAMP, Baker was the chairman of the "Populist Party," founded by neo-Nazi Willis Carto in 1984, organizing its national convention that year.¹⁰³ Baker has since attempted to reinvent himself as a Middle East expert. To that end he authored the book *Theft of a Nation*, a stridently anti-Israel book, that calls for the "Zionist state of Israel" to be "dismantled and eventually eliminated."¹⁰⁴

At the United for al Quds Conference in 2002, Baker was featured alongside al Marayati and Hathout. Al Marayati even introduced Baker, discussing the importance of Jerusalem to the Christian, Muslim, and Jewish faiths.¹⁰⁵ During Baker's speech he told the Palestinians not to accept any peace settlement without the right of return, which demographically would mean the end of a Jewish majority in the State of Israel:

"If I give one word of advice to the Palestinians, the Filastini people, it is, do not settle for anything, sign nothing until you have guarantee, the right of every Palestinian whose been driven from that land to return. [Crowd shouts: Allahu Ahkbar] There will be no peace with these people in the Diaspora, forced out, They must have the right to return."¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ Chronology of Suicide Bombings Against Israel, *USA Today*, (June 20, 2002), available at <http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2002/06/19/bombings-glance.htm>

¹⁰² "Welcome to CAMP: Christians and Muslims for Peace," <http://www.campintl.org>

¹⁰³ Stan Brin, "Hour of White Power; Reverend Robert H. Schuller relies on a man with ties to Neo-Nazis to build religious understanding," *O.C. Weekly*, (Feb. 15-21 2002), available at, <http://www.ocweekly.com/2002-02-21/features/hour-of-white-power> The party's platform that year included provisions to allow states to restore Jim Crow segregation laws. *Id.*

¹⁰⁴ Baker, William, *Theft of a Nation*, Las Vegas, NV: Defender's Publishers, 1984. *See also* Stan Brin, "Hour of White Power; Reverend Robert H. Schuller relies on a man with ties to Neo-Nazis to build religious understanding," *O.C. Weekly*, (Feb. 15-21 2002), available at, <http://www.ocweekly.com/2002-02-21/features/hour-of-white-power>.

¹⁰⁵ Salam al Marayati, "Historical Perspectives," American Muslims for Jerusalem United for al Quds Conference: Humanity in Crisis, Buena Park, CA, June 15, 2002.

¹⁰⁶ William Baker, "The Importance of Jerusalem to All Faiths," *American Muslims for Jerusalem United for al Quds Conference: Humanity in Crisis*, Buena Park, CA, June 15, 2002.

MPAC and its officials supported and raised funds for Jamil Al-Amin, formerly known as Black Panther H. Rapp Brown, a career criminal convicted of killing a police officer.¹⁰⁷ Following Al-Amin's conviction, MPAC joined a number of Muslim groups in denying the verdict's validity.¹⁰⁸ At the MPAC co-sponsored event "Justice for Imam Jamil Al-Amin Benefit Dinner," on September 9, 2001 Maher Hathout expressed support for Al-Amin, saying that Al-Amin had more credibility and integrity than the Atlanta police:

"There are two stories for this case. One story, told by our brother Imam Jamil Al-Amin; the other story is a different one, told by the police of Atlanta. It just happened that we believe the story of Imam Jamil Al-Amin, and we don't believe the story told by the police of Atlanta ... we are looking at track records. The track record of our brother is one of integrity and straight-forward speaking and a bold stance, and the track record of the police of Atlanta like the police in so many other places ... is not a very good track record. So we have reasons to believe our brother rather than to believe the story told by the police."¹⁰⁹

A March/April 2000 Minaret cartoon by Khalil Bendib depicts Al-Amin as a victim of racism against African Americans and Muslims. The cartoon also says that the evidence was fabricated and that because Al-Amin was Muslim, charges of secret evidence would be added in stacking the case.¹¹⁰



Following extensive appeals, in May 2004, the Georgia Supreme Court unanimously ruled to uphold Al-Amin's conviction.

F. Support for, and Defense of, Foreign Terrorist Organizations

¹⁰⁷ "Ex black Panther Convicted of Murder," CNN, March 9, 2002; *See also*, "MPAC Protests Imam Jamil's Political Lockdown," MPAC Press Release, Jan. 30, 2002, http://www.mpac.org/news Article_display.aspx?ITEM=179

¹⁰⁸ Dr. Maher Hathout, "Justice for Imam Jamil Al-Amin Benefit Dinner," *Masjid Al-Islam*, U.C. Irvine, California, September 9, 2001

¹⁰⁹ *Id.*

¹¹⁰ Khalil Bendib, "At the Police Academy's Frame Shop," *The Minaret* Vol. 22 No. 1, March/April 2000, p. 14.

Similar to the trends seen in *The Minaret*, MPAC goes further than simply making anti-Semitic statements aimed at justifying acts of terrorism. Despite the fact that groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah have been designated as Foreign Terrorist Organizations, MPAC continues to defend them at public conferences and rallies. The defenses typically take the form of either blaming the victims of terrorist attacks or downplaying the threat of violent extremism.¹¹¹

It is a common theme throughout the public statements of MPAC that acts of terrorism against Israel and the United States are actually the result of Israeli and U.S. aggression.¹¹² At a March 2006 fundraising dinner in Anaheim, Ali Mazrui of the American Muslim Alliance Policy Committee said that Israel's "militarism" prompted the violence committed by terrorist groups like Hamas and al Qaida:

"Israeli militarism, occupation of Arab lands and the repression of Palestinians are the main causes of not only anti-Israeli terrorism but also anti-American terrorism. Israeli repression and militarism provoke suicide bombers and give rise to movements like Hamas and al Qaida. The Israeli atrocities and repression cause terrorism in the United States, and terrorism in turn threatens civil liberties in America...The behavior of the State of Israel threatens not merely democracy within the Jewish state; Israel threatens democracy in America as well."¹¹³

MPAC events also feature arguments that dialogue should be pursued with terrorist groups such as Hamas. At MPAC's 2005 convention, writer Reza Aslan ignored Hamas' absolutist ideology and argued it could "moderate" and become a partner in peace:

"So let's talk about Hamas. Hamas is a terrorist organization...However, if you look at the transformation that has taken place over the last year, in which Hamas has gradually begun to distance itself from its military organization...in which it has had to forgo any notion of creating a Sharia state because of course the vast majority of

¹¹¹ See e.g., Abdurahman Alamoudi, "Jerusalem Day Rally," Lafayette Park, Washington D.C., October 28, 2000 (at this rally, hosted by MPAC, Alamoudi stated, "I have been labeled by the media in New York to be a supporter of Hamas. Anybody supports Hamas here? [*Crowd cheers responsively*]... Hear that, Bill Clinton? We are ALL supporters of Hamas. Allahu Akhbar! [*Crowd cheers*]. I wish they added that I am also a supporter of Hezbollah"); "MPAC Issues Statement on August 8 Bombing in Jerusalem," *MPAC Press Release*, August 9, 2001, http://web.archive.org/web/20010915155303/mpac.org/news/press_010809.shtml, accessed July 12, 2004 ("[The August 9, 2001 Jerusalem bombing] is the expected bitter result of the reckless policy of Israeli assassination that did not spare children and political figures ... MPAC holds Israel responsible for this pattern of violence").

¹¹² See e.g., Dr. Ali Mazrui, "Banquet and Fundraising," *MPAC 2002 Conference*, California, Dec. 21, 2002 ("from an American perspective two ominous trends have been developing since September 11, 2001: a growing American readiness to hurt other people abroad, external sadism, and a growing American readiness to hurt itself at home, internal masochism. In the readiness to hurt other people abroad has been taking the form increasingly of the militarization of American foreign policy, and the readiness to hurt ourselves at home, masochism, is taking the form of the erosion of civil liberties").

¹¹³ Dr. Ali Mazrui, "Sami Al-Arian Banquet Dinner," *Islamic Shura Council of Southern California*, Anaheim, CA, March 12, 2006.

Palestinians do not want such a state...And most importantly, that Hamas has in all of its electioneering had to forgo the very notion of a unified Palestinian state over all of historic Israel. And instead has been pushing...a two state solution is an indication of what happens when we allow these organizations, like the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, like the Islamic Action Front in Jordan, and like Hamas in Palestine to become a part of the dialogue.”¹¹⁴

In another instance, Maher Hathout similarly cast Hezbollah as misunderstood:

“The whole country keeps condemning Hezbollah, I disagree with them on other issues, but on the issue of fighting to liberate their land and attacking only armed forces, this is legitimate, that is an American value—freedom and liberty.”¹¹⁵

Oftentimes, the radical rhetoric of MPAC takes the form of advocating violence.¹¹⁶ At an anti-Israel rally on December 22, 2000, co-sponsored by MPAC and organized by then political director Mahdi Bray in Washington DC, protestors responsively chanted with the emcee in Arabic, “Khaybar, Khaybar oh Jews, the Army of Mohammed is coming for you!” Posters calling for “Death to Israel” and equating the Star of David with the Nazi swastika were openly displayed and anti-Semitic literature calling for the destruction of the Jews and Israel was distributed. Members of the crowd burned the Israeli flag while marching from the White House to the State Department.¹¹⁷

Speakers at this rally included Abdelhaleem al Ashqar, a prominent Hamas member¹¹⁸ who was sentenced to eleven years in prison in November 2007 for refusing to testify for a grand jury about his Hamas ties.¹¹⁹ Al Ashqar told the crowd:

“We have exclusive rights over Jerusalem, over al Aqsa mosque, it is not subject to negotiation.”¹²⁰

¹¹⁴ Reza Aslan, “Role for Muslim Americans in U.S.-World Relations,” *MPAC Annual Convention*, Long Beach, CA, Dec. 17, 2005.

¹¹⁵ “Afternoon Newsmakers: Event: Maher Hathout Speech at the National Press Club,” Thursday, June 18, 1998.

¹¹⁶ See e.g., “Worldwide Day for Jerusalem,” Lafayette Park, Washington, D.C., Dec. 22, 2000; “Subject: CAIR-NET: Muslims Rally for Jerusalem Outside White House,” *MSANews.net*, (Oct. 25, 2000) (At this rally, officially co-sponsored by MPAC, protestors sang “victory comes from Allah and Hezbollah is our model” and “oh dear Nasrallah [head of Hezbollah], we are allied with you in liberation”); “Subject: CAIR-NET: D.C. Area Mosques Rally for Jerusalem/Gore Supporters Use Slurs Against Muslims,” *MSANews.net*, Oct. 5, 2000 (at this rally held in front of the Israeli Embassy in Washington, DC., about 2,000 participants repeatedly shouted “with our blood and soul we will liberate Palestine.” At one point, Mahdi Bray played the tambourine as one of the speakers sang with the crowd, “al Aqsa is calling us, let’s all go into Jihad, and throw stones in the face of the Jews.”

¹¹⁷ “Worldwide Day for Jerusalem,” Lafayette Park, Washington, D.C., Dec. 22, 2000.

¹¹⁸ “Action memorandum, Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development International Emergency Economic Powers Act,” From Dale Watson, Assistant Director FBI Counterterrorism Division to Richard Newcomb, Director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of Treasury, Nov. 5, 2001.

¹¹⁹ *United States v. Ashqar*, 03-CR-978-3 (N.D. Il. Nov. 21, 2007).

¹²⁰ Abdelhaleem al Ashqar, “Worldwide Day for Jerusalem,” Lafayette Park, Washington, D.C., Dec. 22, 2000.

Also speaking at this rally was Imam Mohammed al Asi, Director of the Islamic Education Center in Potomac, MD, and a known supporter of Hezbollah.¹²¹ Introduced by Bray, he exhorted the crowd to violence in the name of Islam:

“Now, all our *khatibs* [speakers], our Imams, our public speakers, should be concentrating on militarizing the Muslim public. This is not a time to make a speaking issue out of this...Muslims have to familiarize themselves with all and every means possible...Rhetoric is not going to liberate al Quds and al Aqsa. Only carrying arms will do this task. And it’s not going to be someone else who is going to carry arms for you and for me. It is you and me who is going to have to carry these arms.”¹²²

¹²¹ See Mohamad al-Asi, The Anti-Defamation League, available at http://www.adl.org/israel/al_asi.asp (last accessed October 30, 2009).

¹²² Imam Mohammed al Asi, “Worldwide Day for Jerusalem,” Lafayette Park, Washington, D.C., Dec. 22, 2000.