

# CAIR

## **Council on American-Islamic Relations**

453 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20003-2604  
Tel: 202-488-8787  
Fax: 202-488-0833

September 9, 2003

The Honorable Senator John Kyl  
Chairman  
Senate Subcommittee on Terrorism, Technology and Homeland Security  
c/o Daniel Saterlee  
325 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Kyl and Subcommittee Members:

On behalf of our organization and the American Muslim community, I would like to thank you for inviting me to testify at your subcommittee hearing entitled "Two Years After 9/11: Connecting the Dots" on September 10, 2003.

As you know, the hearing in question is one day before the anniversary of the September 11 attacks on America. I will not be able to personally attend the hearing on September 10 because CAIR is the organizing sponsor for an interfaith memorial vigil to be held at the Capitol reflecting pool the same day.

I would like to make it perfectly clear that CAIR is a national civil rights organization and we do not claim to be experts on terrorism. However, I realize the importance and timeliness of such a hearing and because the American Muslim community has not been adequately represented at congressional hearings in the past, I felt obligated to present written testimony to be submitted for the record. **For the record, I would also like this letter submitted as part of my testimony for the hearing.**

Looking at the witness list and theme for this hearing, I can say with great confidence that this hearing will be used to vilify and defame the American Muslim community. Because CAIR and the American Muslim community have nothing to hide, we happily submit this testimony dealing with many of the predictable fallacies that will be advanced by the Investigative Project, headed by Steven Emerson.

Regardless, I would like to thank you for this opportunity and please let me know if we can be of any assistance in the future.

Most Sincerely,

Nihad Awad  
Executive Director, CAIR

**Written Testimony of**

**Nihad Awad**

**Before the**

**Senate Subcommittee on Terrorism, Technology and Homeland Security**

**“Terrorism: Two Years After 9/11, Connecting the Dots”**

**“American Muslim Community under Siege”**

**September 10, 2003**

**\*\*PRELIMINARY TESTIMONY\*\***

Nihad Awad  
Executive Director  
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)  
453 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington DC, 20003

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## **NIHAD AWAD** **A Biographical Sketch**

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Nihad Awad is the Executive Director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a Washington DC-based grassroots civil rights and advocacy organization which seeks to empower the North American Muslim community through political and social activism.

Mr. Awad and CAIR's experts are frequently interviewed on national and international media such as *CNN*, *BBC World Service*, *PBS*, *C-SPAN*, *National Public Radio*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *Al-Jazeera* and its news releases are disseminated to hundreds of thousands worldwide.

After the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, Mr. Awad flew to Oklahoma to aid in the relief effort. He personally met with Governor Frank Keating and gave the governor a check for \$21,000 for the relief effort and victims' fund on behalf of the American Muslim community.

In 1997, Mr. Awad was invited to join Vice President Al Gore's Civil Rights Advisory Panel to the White House Commission on Aviation Safety and Security.

Mr. Awad has also personally met with former Secretary of State Madeline Albright and current Secretary of State Colin L. Powell to discuss the needs of Muslim communities worldwide.

Mr. Awad has been invited by Fortune 500 companies, including Nike and DKNY, to conduct sensitivity training for their employees.

Mr. Awad has welcomed dignitaries who are visiting the President of the United States for official state visits through the sponsorship of the Department of State's International Visitors Program.

A few days after September 11, Mr. Awad was invited by the White House to stand next to President Bush at the President's press conference at the Islamic Center of Washington, the oldest mosque in the metropolitan area built in 1949.

## **Executive Summary**

As the global community attempts to regain its collective equilibrium in the wake of the attacks on our country two years ago, all Americans share in the responsibility of mending the wounds of our society. The Muslim community in America has taken significant steps in ameliorating strained relations both within our borders and abroad. With close to seven million adherents of Islam in the United States today, American Muslims are a vibrant, diverse and contributing segment of our society. Unfortunately, there are forces seeking to unravel Islam's integration into the fabric of American society and working to silence the voice of American Muslims.

Since September 11, 2001, there has been a notable increase in the number of hate crimes against those of Muslim, Arab and South Asian descent. At a local level, incidents of mosque damage, employment discrimination and physical assaults are frequent occurrences. At the national level, the secret detention of 762 Muslim and Arab males<sup>1</sup> without due process by the Justice Department and unfortunate legislation like the USA PATRIOT Act, have brought the debate on constitutional liberties and anti-terrorism enforcement measures to a zenith. Like our neighbors, American Muslims desire our country to be safe and to protect the interests of its citizens. In our national quest to instill harmonious relations domestically and abroad, there are those polemicists who promote Islamophobia and seek to divide our nation along racial, religious and ethnic lines. In order to further their own political, theological or special interest agendas, these voices of division have dedicated their lives to slandering Muslim organizations and leaders in their attempt to advance their own interests.

CAIR is a true American success story for its adherence to true democratic principles, including life, liberty and property. Since its incorporation in 1994, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) has been at the forefront of Muslim civil rights issues in America. CAIR makes a difference in the lives of American Muslims on a daily basis by promoting positive relations within our diverse nation. Headquartered in Washington DC, CAIR has met with local, national and international leaders to discuss issues of importance to Muslims in America. Although there are those who seek to marginalize CAIR's efforts, CAIR's track record is evident in the advances that the American Muslim community has seen politically and socially since our creation.

Because of its reputation within, and beyond, the Muslim community, CAIR has also become the primary contact for most major national and international media outlets seeking an American Muslim perspective for news stories.

Just as the number of interfaith dialogues have increased since 9/11, there has also been an astonishing increase in the volume of anti-Muslim rhetoric in the media and politics today. This new wave of Islamophobia is being led by a camp of racially prejudiced pundits and special interest mercenaries who advance their own political or theological schema by spreading lies about Islam and American Muslims. These so-called "experts," led by Steven Emerson of the Investigative Project, use innuendo, conjecture and outright lies to confuse Americans into believing that mainstream Muslims are somehow complicit with terrorism.

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<sup>1</sup> Rept. by the Office of the Insp. Gen., "The September 11 Detainees: A Review of the Treatment of Aliens Held on Immigration Charges in Connection with the Investigation of the September 11 Attacks," Ch. 10 (June 2003).

These Islamophobic “usual suspects” attack all Muslims by using recycled and specious accusations and have been repeatedly discredited by respected academics and media outlets, including *The Los Angeles Times* and *The New York Times*. Using McCarthyist tactics and “guilt by association”, these Islamophobes are trying to manipulate public policy. The national Islamophobic camp, led by Emerson, director of The Investigative Project, whose group is represented on the witness panel today, attribute quotes out of context and chronology on a regular basis. As director of the Investigative Project, Emerson’s well-documented history of recklessly false forgeries against CAIR and other Muslim organizations, in the attempt to disenfranchise American Muslims, will be shown to be a concrete example of how Islamophobes are attempting to turn the “war on terror” into a war on Islam.

CAIR’s principled position on terrorism has always been evident and should not allow Emerson’s use of “guilt by association” to mislead the respected senators and the American public on where CAIR and the American Muslim community stoically stands on these issues.

As the nation’s largest Muslim advocacy group, we would like to state, for the record, that we are concerned that this hearing is being misused to further the Islamophobes’ agenda. I would like to make it clear that the reason that I am unable to testify in person for this hearing today is because CAIR is the organizing sponsor of a multi-group interfaith September 11th memorial taking place at the Capitol reflecting pool on this day and are committed to this event; in the same way that we are fully committed to protecting and strengthening our nation.

The Investigative Project officials, including Emerson, are juxtaposing this hearing to coincide with the second anniversary of the attack on our nation to advance their chronic personal vendettas with the American Muslim community. As we honor the memory of those innocent souls who lost their lives two Septembers ago, Islamophobes like Emerson are attempting to emotionally exploit this anniversary in order to settle their personal vendettas. These vendettas against CAIR and American Muslims date back to 1994, when American Muslim organizations’ effectively exposed inaccuracies in Emerson’s documentary, *Jihad in America*. Since that time, Emerson’s has become reckless in his obsession with besmirching American Muslims and CAIR. Since Emerson has archived over eight years of false accusations against CAIR, it would be impossible to mention each one in this testimony. However, I have included some of Emerson’s favorite and most predictable accusations against CAIR and other Muslim organizations.

In the event this testimony does not address all of the accusations brought forth by the other panelists, CAIR will submit an amended testimony after the hearing to address additional accusations not already discussed herein.

CAIR and the Muslim community are proud Americans who continue to stand for justice in the face of intolerance and prejudice. Even though there are those in the world that espouse hatred and try to divide our country, we will continue to stand with our fellow Americans in solidarity, peace and justice for all.

## **The Purpose of CAIR and its Accomplishments**

History has shown that civil rights groups such as NAACP, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) are absolutely necessary to protect the rights and interests of minority populations in America. Since the American Muslim community has only started to become more significantly involved in the political and social arena within the last forty years, there was a clear need to form public service organizations to aid the growing number of Muslims in America.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) is a nonprofit 501(c)(4), grassroots civil rights and advocacy group founded in 1994. CAIR is America's largest mainstream Muslim civil liberties group, with its national headquarters located in Washington D.C. Affiliated chapters of CAIR are located in more than twenty major metropolitan areas throughout the United States. CAIR is a non-sectarian and non-partisan group who protects the rights of all American Muslims.

CAIR's overall mission is to promote an accurate image of Islam and Muslims to our fellow Americans. Through education, advocacy, media relations and lobbying, CAIR puts forth an Islamic perspective to ensure that the Muslim voice is represented in America. In offering this perspective, we seek to empower the American Muslim community and encourage their participation in American political, social and civic activities.

CAIR's Communications Department works in conjunction with local, national and international media outlets to ensure an accurate portrayal of Islam and Muslims is presented to the public. CAIR monitors local, national and international media in part, to challenge negative stereotypes, but also to applaud and encourage accurate representations of Islam and Muslims. Over the years, CAIR has become a respected and credible source for journalists and other media professionals; CAIR representatives have made appearances on *CNN*, *BBC World Service*, *FOX News*, *Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times* and hundreds of other print and broadcast outlets.

CAIR's Civil Rights Department has worked tirelessly to aid Muslims claim their legal rights in the workplace, schools and government. With regard to employment claims, CAIR has helped in reaching favorable settlements with dozens of powerful companies, including JC Penney, McDonald's, Sears and Office Depot. CAIR's Publications Department also distributes handbook guides, including the "Employer's Guide to Islamic Religious Practices" and an "Educator's Guide to Islamic Religious Practices," which are designed to inform educators and employers as to the rights of Muslim students and workers both in educational institutions and in the workplace.

In wake of the 9/11 attacks on America, CAIR has also organized town hall meetings all around the country to help our friends and neighbors learn more about our faith and cultures. CAIR works regularly with local and federal law enforcement agencies on numerous issues and CAIR publishes a "Law Enforcement Official's Guide to the Muslim Community;" a handbook designed to inform law enforcement officials as to Muslim religious practices and customs.

## **American Muslim Community Under Siege**

Since the day two fateful Septembers ago when our country was attacked, Muslims and Arabs have been assailed on almost every front. The Muslim community in America has been besieged by those seeking to divide our great nation along religious, racial and cultural lines. As Americans, we are here to state categorically that we have always been, and always will be, condemn all acts of terror and will remain contributing members of this great society.

Many Americans are unaware of the strides the Muslim community has taken in reaching out to our neighbors of other faiths, races and cultures since the attacks on our country. American Muslim organizations have loudly condemned the acts of September 11 in dozens of media outlets, organized blood drives at mosques and community centers across the nation and collected hundreds of thousands of dollars for the victims of September 11. For example, the Turkish American Muslim Cultural Association raised \$1,000 for the Red Cross 9-11 Fund. All Dulles Area Muslim Society in Sterling, Virginia announced that the mosque had raised \$6,000 for the American Red Cross and organized a blood drive.<sup>2</sup> Another Muslim charity, Mercy-USA for Aid and Development, reported in its 2001 annual report the disbursement of \$65,000 in cash grants to six major relief organizations involved in the provision of assistance to the victims of the attacks.<sup>3</sup> The groups include the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army, funds set up by New York Governor George Pataki and New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, and two firefighter associations.<sup>4</sup>

### ***Condemnations of September 11 by the American Muslim Community***

There are those Americans who have falsely claimed that Muslims did not effectively condemn the acts of September 11. In fact, we were one of the first demographic groups to issue a categorical condemnation in a nationwide press release. CAIR has also regularly issued news releases condemning suicide bombings in the Middle East<sup>5</sup>, the murder of Daniel Pearl<sup>6</sup>, church bombings in Pakistan<sup>7</sup> and acts of terrorism in Iraq, just to name a few.

At 1:43 PM Eastern Standard Time on September 11, the American Muslim Political Coordination Council (AMPCC),<sup>8</sup> an umbrella organization of the major American Muslim

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<sup>2</sup> CAIR publication "American Muslims: One Year After 9-11" September 5, 2002 at 10 available at <http://www.cair-net.org/downloads/911report.doc>

<sup>3</sup> 2001 Annual Report of Mercy-USA available at <http://64.7.199.45/images/annualReport01.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> For example, see CAIR Press Release, *CAIR condemns attacks on civilians*, March 28, 2002 available at <http://www.cair-net.org/asp/article.asp?id=693&page=NR>

<sup>6</sup> Larry Witham, *Pearl's slaying denounced by Muslims*, The Washington Times, February 23, 2002.

<sup>7</sup> CAIR Press Release, "U.S. Muslims condemn church attack in Pakistan," March 17, 2002 available at <http://www.cair-net.org/asp/article.asp?id=688&page=NR>

<sup>8</sup> The American Muslim Political Coordination Council (AMPCC) consists of the following major American Muslim political and social services organizations: American Muslim Alliance (AMA), the American Muslim

political and social services organizations, issued a national press release which stated in categorical terms: "...American Muslims utterly condemn what are apparently vicious and cowardly acts of terrorism against innocent civilians. We join with all Americans in calling for the swift apprehension and punishment of the perpetrators. No political cause could ever be assisted by such immoral acts."<sup>9</sup> (see Appendix A)

This initial condemnation was followed by dozens of subsequent condemnations on behalf of the American Muslim community. In the first few days where major national newspapers began to run opinion pieces again, CAIR representatives again condemned the terrorist attacks in the same resounding manner. In the September 14 edition of *The New York Times*, another condemnation was published by a CAIR representative, stating that American Muslims "...utterly condemn the vicious and cowardly acts that transpired Tuesday in our nation's capital and in New York City."<sup>10</sup> In the first eight days following the attacks, over 108 different statements of condemnation were carried by American newspapers and wire services, including *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *Associated Press* and *Chicago Sun-Times*.<sup>11</sup>

In addition, CAIR took out a full-page advertisement in the *Washington Post* (Appendix B) on September 16, 2001 which states, in part: "...American Muslims unequivocally condemn these vicious and cowardly acts of terrorism..."<sup>12</sup>

Since then, CAIR has spent endless human and financial resources to dispel stereotypes and myths about Islam. CAIR has sponsored a yearlong "Islam in America" ad campaign in *The New York Times* which features American Muslims from all ethnic backgrounds to show all Americans that there is no such thing as a "standardized" Muslim.<sup>13</sup>

The CAIR Library Project<sup>14</sup> is designed to provide local public libraries accurate and scholarly books on Islam. Over half of the books in the set are written by non-Muslim academics and thanks to Americans of all faiths; over 6,893 libraries have been sponsored.

Unfortunately, these numerous and resonant condemnations were not enough for those seeking to marginalize the entire Muslim community in America.

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Council (AMC), the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC).

<sup>9</sup> Press Release, AMPCC, *U.S. Muslims Condemn Terrorist Attacks*, September 11, 2001 available at [http://www.nexis.com/research/home?\\_key=1062968365&\\_session=29c328aa-e176-11d7-8224-c0a8645eaa77.1.3240421165.340768.%20.0.0&\\_state=&wchp=dGLbVlb-zSkBW&\\_md5=c0439b2ce26b18336df821a8b9f562e1](http://www.nexis.com/research/home?_key=1062968365&_session=29c328aa-e176-11d7-8224-c0a8645eaa77.1.3240421165.340768.%20.0.0&_state=&wchp=dGLbVlb-zSkBW&_md5=c0439b2ce26b18336df821a8b9f562e1). See Appendix A

<sup>10</sup> Arsalan T. Iftikhar, *We Condemn This Act*, THE NEW YORK TIMES, September 14, 2001, at 54.

<sup>11</sup> See Lexis-Nexis search on "Muslims condemn" available at [http://www.nexis.com/research/home?\\_key=1062968365&\\_session=29c328aa-e176-11d7-8224-c0a8645eaa77.1.3240421165.340768.%20.0.0&\\_state=&wchp=dGLbVlb-zSkBW&\\_md5=c0439b2ce26b18336df821a8b9f562e1](http://www.nexis.com/research/home?_key=1062968365&_session=29c328aa-e176-11d7-8224-c0a8645eaa77.1.3240421165.340768.%20.0.0&_state=&wchp=dGLbVlb-zSkBW&_md5=c0439b2ce26b18336df821a8b9f562e1).

<sup>12</sup> CAIR September 11 condemnation on behalf of American Muslim community, *Washington Post*, September 16, 2001 available at <http://www.cair-net.org/downloads/911report.pdf> at 56-7. See Appendix B

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix C.

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix D.

## ***Anti-Muslim Rhetoric in Media and Politics***

Although these are only a fraction of the statements made against Islam and Muslims since 9/11, the documented list below gives a revealing assessment into the hate-filled rhetoric of individuals with significant influence within American politics and media outlets:

### **Ann Coulter, Syndicated Columnist**

- "...We should invade their countries, kill their leaders and convert them to Christianity." (Town Hall, September 14, 2001)<sup>15</sup>

### **Representative (now Senator) Saxby Chambliss (R-GA)**

- "Just turn [the sheriff] loose and let him arrest every Muslim that crosses the state line..."<sup>16</sup> (Associated Press, November 20, 2001)

### **Representative John Cooksey (R-LA)**

- "...If I see someone come in and he's got a diaper on his head and a fan belt around that diaper on his head, that guy needs to be pulled over and checked..." (Houston Chronicle, September 20, 2001)<sup>17</sup>

### **Reverend Jerry Falwell**

- "I think Mohammed was a terrorist..." (60 Minutes, October 6, 2002)<sup>18</sup>

### **Pat Robertson**

- "...[Prophet Muhammad] was an absolute wild-eyed fanatic. He was a robber and a brigand. And to say that these terrorists distort Islam, they're carrying out Islam..." (Hannity & Colmes, September 18, 2002)<sup>19</sup>

### **Reverend Franklin Graham**

- Reverend Graham called Islam, "wicked, violent and not of the same god." (*NBC Nightly News*, November 16, 2001)<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Available at <http://www.townhall.com/columnists/anncoulter/ac20010914.shtml>.

<sup>16</sup> Jeffrey McMurray, *U.S. Congressman Says He Regrets Joke bout Arresting Muslims*, ASSOCIATED PRESS, November 20, 2001 available at [http://www.nexis.com/research/home?\\_key=1062968365&\\_session=29c328aa-e176-11d7-8224-c0a8645eaa77.1.3240421165.340768.%20.0.0&\\_state=&wchp=dGLbVlb-zSkBW&\\_md5=c0439b2ce26b18336df821a8b9f562e1](http://www.nexis.com/research/home?_key=1062968365&_session=29c328aa-e176-11d7-8224-c0a8645eaa77.1.3240421165.340768.%20.0.0&_state=&wchp=dGLbVlb-zSkBW&_md5=c0439b2ce26b18336df821a8b9f562e1).

<sup>17</sup> *Lawmaker regrets 'diaper' comment*, HOUSTON CHRONICLE, September 20, 2001 available at <http://www.chron.com/cs/CDA/story.hts/special/terror/aftermath/1056615>.

<sup>18</sup> CBS 60 Minutes, Interview with Rev. Jerry Falwell, *Zion's Christian soldiers; how conservative Christians see Israel's role in bringing on the Second Coming of Christ*, October 6, 2002 available at [http://www.nexis.com/research/home?\\_key=1062968365&\\_session=29c328aa-e176-11d7-8224-c0a8645eaa77.1.3240421165.340768.%20.0.0&\\_state=&wchp=dGLbVlb-zSkBW&\\_md5=c0439b2ce26b18336df821a8b9f562e1](http://www.nexis.com/research/home?_key=1062968365&_session=29c328aa-e176-11d7-8224-c0a8645eaa77.1.3240421165.340768.%20.0.0&_state=&wchp=dGLbVlb-zSkBW&_md5=c0439b2ce26b18336df821a8b9f562e1).

<sup>19</sup> Hannity and Colmes, Interview with Pat Robertson, September 18, 2002, available at [http://www.nexis.com/research/home?\\_key=1062968365&\\_session=29c328aa-e176-11d7-8224-c0a8645eaa77.1.3240421165.340768.%20.0.0&\\_state=&wchp=dGLbVlb-zSkBW&\\_md5=c0439b2ce26b18336df821a8b9f562e1](http://www.nexis.com/research/home?_key=1062968365&_session=29c328aa-e176-11d7-8224-c0a8645eaa77.1.3240421165.340768.%20.0.0&_state=&wchp=dGLbVlb-zSkBW&_md5=c0439b2ce26b18336df821a8b9f562e1).

## ***Muslim Civil Rights in America***

On July 15, 2003, CAIR issued its eighth annual civil rights report entitled “The Status of Muslim Civil Rights in the United States 2003: Guilt by Association.” According to the report, in 2002, Muslim community members in the United States reported 602 complaints of discrimination to CAIR.<sup>21</sup> According to past reports, this represents a fifteen (15) percent increase over the previous year, and a sixty-four (64) percent increase from the year preceding September 11, 2001.<sup>22</sup> These incident reports include: hate crimes, employment discrimination, unfair prejudice at schools, vandalism to mosques and homes and racial profiling by local and federal authorities.

Post-September 11 law enforcement measures also had a severely disparate impact on the lives of innocent Americans of Muslim, Arab and South Asian descent. In the aftermath of 9/11, 762 men, predominantly Muslim and Arab, were rounded up by the Justice Department as part of their “war on terror.”<sup>23</sup> In summarizing a Justice Department report on the treatment of Muslim and Arab detainees, Glen A. Fine, Inspector General of the Department of Justice, conceded that “...we found significant problems in the way the detainees were handled...”<sup>24</sup> These detentions, completely secret in many cases, not only violated due process guarantees granted by the Constitution; the mass round-up of Muslim and Arab men did not result in any charges of “terrorism” against the detainees. Most of the detainees were being held on minor immigration violations and many were subsequently deported to their country of origin.

Many laws and directives proposed since September 11 slowly dissolve certain inalienable rights guaranteed to all Americans by the Constitution. The most unfortunate legislation passed in recent history, USA PATRIOT Act of 2001, has allowed law enforcement officials to circumvent hallmark Fourth Amendment protections of due process and probable cause. It took the efforts of both Republican and Democratic privacy advocates to defeat the proposed Terrorism Information and Prevention System (TIPS), a system which would create a citizen spy network.

Although our nation attempts to regain a sense of collective security, let us remember that Benjamin Franklin said “...they who would give up an essential liberty for temporary security, deserve neither liberty nor security.”<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> “Franklin Graham has some harsh words for Islam as feast of Ramadan begins,” NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw, November 16, 2001. Transcript *available at* [http://www.nexis.com/research/home?\\_key=1063040541&\\_session=3611020a-e21e-11d7-933e-8a0c593caa77.1.3240493341.340768.%20.0.0&\\_state=&wchp=dGLbVlz-zSkBB&\\_md5=ab2d7ca70ef67b0922ec4055142f6bdc](http://www.nexis.com/research/home?_key=1063040541&_session=3611020a-e21e-11d7-933e-8a0c593caa77.1.3240493341.340768.%20.0.0&_state=&wchp=dGLbVlz-zSkBB&_md5=ab2d7ca70ef67b0922ec4055142f6bdc)

<sup>21</sup> Council on American-Islamic Relations, *The Status of Muslim Civil Rights in the United States 2003: Guilt by Association*, July 15, 2003 at 1.

<sup>22</sup> *Id.*

<sup>23</sup> *Supra* note 1.

<sup>24</sup> Press Release, U.S. Department of Justice - Office of the Inspector General, *Department of Justice Inspector General Issues Report on Treatment of Aliens Held on Immigration Charges in Connection with the Investigation of the September 11 Terrorist Attacks*, June 2, 2003 *available at* <http://216.239.39.104/search?q=cache:NcEzFW1LJ9EJ:www.usdoj.gov/oig/special/03-06/press.pdf+%22office+of+the+inspector+general%22+report+detainees&hl=en&ie=UTF-8>.

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.wisdomquotes.com/000958.html>.

## **The Rise of Islamophobia**

### **Introduction**

The Pluralism Project, an independent religious think tank based at Harvard University, cites the *2000 World Almanac* as saying that there are approximately 5.5 Muslims living in America today.<sup>26</sup> With the recent influx of immigrants from Muslim countries constituting a significant population of new Americans, the increased social and political importance of the American Muslim community would be a natural correlation to make. In the post-September 11 world that we live in today, Muslim political and social activities have taken on heightened importance. However, there are those who see the empowerment of the American Muslim community as a direct threat to their political, theological and special interest agendas. The most exemplifying of these polemicists, and sadly, a regular witness before Congress, The Investigative Project and its executive director, Steven Emerson.

Whereas healthy and vigorous debate is an essential part of any civilized democratic society, those who dedicate their lives to the marginalization of an entire demographic group should be taken to task for their actions. Revelations of their continuing frauds will only help to foster honest debate within people of different faiths and cultures in the amelioration of global wounds from which we all suffering.

### ***The Investigative Project***

The Investigative Project, headed by Islamophobe Steven Emerson, is probably the best example of Islamophobia today. As a self-appointed “expert” on terrorism, Mr. Emerson recently cited in his latest congressional testimony that he has testified at more than sixteen (16) congressional hearings in the past.<sup>27</sup> Mr. Emerson’s history of innuendo and conjecture has effectively discredited his veracity among many in media and law enforcement agencies in the United States; and it is essential for the true pursuit of investigative endeavors to prevent representatives from the Investigative Project, especially Mr. Emerson, from testifying at future congressional proceedings. Unfortunately, Mr. Emerson’s animosity towards Arabs and Muslims began as early as 1991 and before he, his representatives or other Islamophobes are given the platform to address a congressional hearing yet again, it is essential to offer documented and mainstream refutations of Mr. Emerson’s self-proclaimed “expertise.” We will also see that many of today’s Islamophobes simply regurgitate many of Mr. Emerson’s claims.

Below is a chronological timeline of false assertions on significant international acts and how mainstream media and political leaders have discredited Mr. Emerson and why future congressional committees should take this into serious consideration before extending any future invitations to The Investigative Project and Steven Emerson.

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<sup>26</sup> See Pluralism Project available at <http://www.pluralism.org/resources/statistics/tradition.php#Islam>. The *2000 World Almanac* figure of 5.5 million is based, in part, on the *1999 Yearbook on American and Canadian Churches*.

<sup>27</sup> *Progress since 9/11: The Effectiveness of U.S. Anti-terrorist Financing Efforts*, House Committee on Financial Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, 2003 Leg., 108th Cong. (March 11, 2003) (testimony of Steven Emerson, Executive Director of The Investigative Project).

## Reviews of Emerson's Book *Terrorist* (1991)

In 1991, Mr. Emerson wrote a book entitled *Terrorist*, a chronicle of the life of an Iraqi defector, Adnan Awad (no relation to the author of this testimony), and of alleged Iraqi government ties to terrorist activity. An April 28, 1991 *Los Angeles Times* book review of Mr. Emerson's book stated that, "... 'Terrorist' is a difficult book to assess because the authors are so coy about documenting their claims.... This lack of documentation reduces a potentially significant critique of U.S. foreign policy to a potboiler that reads like a bad Robert Ludlum novel..."<sup>28</sup>

Adrienne Edgar, reviewing the book for the *New York Times*, wrote a scathing review of *Terrorist*. In a letter to the editor to the *New York Times* on June 16, 1991, Mr. Emerson concedes that Ms. Edgar said in her review that his book was marked by "a pervasive anti-Arab and anti-Palestinian bias."<sup>29</sup> He also concedes that she states that he has lost "all journalistic objectivity."<sup>30</sup> This lack of journalistic integrity is something that is consistent throughout Mr. Emerson's notorious career and has no place testifying in sixteen congressional hearings.

## PBS Documentary *Jihad in America* (1994)

In December 1994, Mr. Emerson produced a documentary for PBS entitled *Jihad in America*. The one-hour long documentary included scenes depicting Muslims meeting in Oklahoma City allegedly to "wage war" on this country, as proof that Islamic terrorist groups were involved [in the Oklahoma City bombing]."<sup>31</sup>

In reviewing the film, investigative reporter Robert Friedman notes that "...the film's fundamental deceit is that the speakers are not referring to America but to [Soviet occupied] Afghanistan and Israel [s pursuit of the Occupied Territories]."<sup>32</sup> Friedman goes further and examines the funding for the documentary and the special interest agenda of Mr. Emerson in promoting this film.

According to Friedman, prior to its airing on PBS, Emerson screened *Jihad in America* for officials at the New York headquarters of a major national Jewish organization. He wanted their public endorsement of the film to increase pressure on Clinton for tougher laws to combat Arab terror. While the Jewish leaders weren't shy about using the film to press Clinton for laws to increase federal police powers, they didn't want to be publicly identified with the video, for fear of harming interfaith relations.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Charles Solomon, *Paperbacks: Terrorist*, LOS ANGELES TIMES, April 28, 1991 at 14.

<sup>29</sup> See also, Steven Emerson, *A Defector's Story – Letter to the Editor*, THE NEW YORK TIMES, June 16, 1991 at § 7, page 30, column 2.

<sup>30</sup> *Id.*

<sup>31</sup> *One Man's Jihad*, THE NATION, May 15, 1995, Vol. 260, No. 19, Pg. 656.

<sup>32</sup> *Id.*

<sup>33</sup> *Id.*

As Friedman continues, the Israeli government was less concerned about stereotyping Arabs. Emerson also gave a sneak preview for Israeli officials in Washington. Emerson's film not only helped them press their case with the Administration--"that Islam is our common enemy"--but it also helped to rehabilitate Emerson with the Labor government.<sup>34</sup> Friedman states that the Labor party was angry with Emerson for helping Likud undermine the peace process under assassinated Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Yigal Carmon is a former high-ranking Likud government official, and a member of Israel's Mossad intelligence agency.<sup>35</sup> Prime Minister Rabin had dubbed him as part of the "Gang of Three," after a Mossad trio started lobbying Capitol Hill against the Israeli-P.L.O. accord, which Rabin was endorsing. Carmon has frequently stayed in Emerson's Washington DC apartment on his frequent visits to the United States. Carmon was also credited as an adviser on *Jihad In America*<sup>36</sup> and openly endorsed the use of torture as state practice in a May 4, 1995 *Washington Post* article.<sup>37</sup>

Writing in a June 14, 1990 opinion editorial in *The Wall Street Journal*, noted commentator Alexander Cockburn writes about Mr. Emerson's agenda and that "Mr. Emerson's prime role is to whitewash Israeli governments and revile their critics."<sup>38</sup>

### Oklahoma City Bombing (1995)

On April 19, 1995, around 9:03 a.m., just after parents dropped their children off at day care at the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in downtown Oklahoma City, the unthinkable happened.

A massive bomb inside a rental truck exploded, blowing half of the nine-story building into oblivion. A stunned nation watched as the bodies of men, women, and children were pulled from the rubble for nearly two weeks. When the smoke cleared and the exhausted rescue workers packed up and left, 168 people were dead in the worst terrorist attack on American soil.<sup>39</sup> Mr. Emerson saw an open opportunity to personally avail himself of this terrible tragedy.



Courtesy KOCO

This resulted in Mr. Emerson's most notorious gaffe to date, which occurred on April 19, 1995 at 11:15 AM on CNBC's show *Rivera Live*. Less than two hours after the

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<sup>34</sup> *Id.*

<sup>35</sup> *Id.*

<sup>36</sup> *Id.*

<sup>37</sup> See Barton Gellman, *Fatality Puts Focus On Israeli Methods; Violent Interrogation Blamed in Death*, THE WASHINGTON POST, May 4, 1995, at A31.

<sup>38</sup> Alexander Cockburn, *Israel's Democratic Image vs. The Harsh Truth*, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, June 14, 1990, § A, page 15, column 13.

<sup>39</sup> CNN Interactive, *Oklahoma City Tragedy*, available at <http://www.cnn.com/US/OKC/bombing.html>.

attack, even though the FBI had no leads or evidence to assign culpability to anyone, Mr. Emerson had no hesitation in using his “expertise” to surmise who had committed the bombing. During the interview, Mr. Emerson claimed that “it was Islamic extremists who mounted this attack.”<sup>40</sup>

The next day, while speaking to co-host Harry Smith of *CBS This Morning* Emerson made the absurd statement that, “Oklahoma City, I can tell you, is probably considered one of the largest centers of Islamic radical activity outside the Middle East.”<sup>41</sup> In the two days following the Oklahoma City bombing, Mr. Emerson was interviewed for over 43 news outlets,<sup>42</sup> each and every time asserting that “Islamic extremists” had mounted the attack. Even though Timothy McVeigh was subsequently arrested for the crime, the fact that Emerson received so much airtime to discharge lies of which he had no proof, many Americans began to search for Arab and Muslims as suspects.

In the first forty-eight hours after the Oklahoma City bombing, CAIR received over 220 reports of hate crimes against American Muslims and Arabs. That total includes 133 hate calls, 50 incidents of verbal threats, 15 bomb threats, seven beatings, four shootings and the suspected destruction by arson of an Islamic Center in North Carolina.<sup>43</sup>

One of these stories is of a pregnant Iraqi refugee, Sahar al-Muwsawi. Ms. Al-Muwsawi hid in her bathroom as a group of unknown attackers shattered the windows and pounded on the doors of her home, screaming anti-Islamic epithets. She felt a pain in her abdomen and began to bleed uncontrollably. Even though federal authorities arrested Timothy McVeigh the next day, that knowledge came too late for Sahar al-Muwsawi. She miscarried her near-term baby, who was buried a few days later.<sup>44</sup> This is only one of the hundreds of painful scenarios that American Muslims went through, in part due, to Mr. Emerson’s reckless disregard for the truth.

After it was revealed that Emerson was completely wrong in his claim, news organizations appeared less interested in Emerson’s pronouncements. A CBS contract expired and was not renewed.<sup>45</sup> Emerson had been a regular source and occasional writer for *The Washington Post*; his name doesn’t turn up once in Post archives after January 1, 1996. *USA Today* mentioned Emerson a dozen times before September 1996 and never after

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<sup>40</sup> CNBC Rivera Live, *Terrorism Experts Richard Marcinko, and Steven Emerson and Investigator Michael Cherkasky discuss the Oklahoma City Explosion*, April 19, 1995.

<sup>41</sup> CBS This Morning, *Hunt for Survivors Continues in Oklahoma City*, April 20, 1995.

<sup>42</sup> See Lexis-Nexis search on Steven Emerson, available at <http://www.nexis.com/research/home? key=1062857206& session=59bacbca-e073-11d7-8726-c0a8645eaa77.1.3240310006.340768.%20.0.0& state=&wchp=dGLbVlb-zSkBl& md5=cecf6a69846c6d5478e795498a70bdbd>.

<sup>43</sup> *United States: Anti-Muslim Crimes Higher than Gulf War Period*, INTER PRESS NEWS SERV., May 24, 1995. See also Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), *The Status of Muslim Civil Rights in the United States: Unveiling Prejudice*, 1997 Annual Report, at 4.

<sup>44</sup> *Id.*

<sup>45</sup> John Sugg, *Steven Emerson’s Crusade*, *Extra!* Magazine (published by Fairness and Accuracy In Reporting [FAIR]), January/February 1999 available at <http://www.fair.org/extra/9901/emerson.html>

that.<sup>46</sup> According to a *Boston Globe* column by Jeff Jacoby, in 1998, National Public Radio (NPR) banned Mr. Emerson from appearing on their network as a future guest on Islamic groups.<sup>47</sup> When asked about how Emerson is perceived by fellow journalists, noted investigative author Seymour Hersh summed it up succinctly:

“He’s poison.”<sup>48</sup>

*American Jihad: The Terrorists Live Among Us* (2002)

In 2002, The Investigative Project’s executive director wrote a book entitled *American Jihad: The Terrorists Live Among Us*. It outlined the “history” of nine “terrorist support networks” based in America: Muslim Arab Youth Association, the American Islamic Group, Islamic Cultural Workshop, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the American Muslim Council (AMC), Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA), the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), the American Muslim Alliance (AMA) and the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA). It is fascinating that Mr. Emerson implicates every single major American Muslim umbrella organization in the “list” in the book. By conveniently placing all the major Muslim organizations on his “terrorist networks” list, he has effectively proclaimed that representatives of the entire American Muslim community are complicit with terrorism. Even though these groups operate transparently, have met with several U.S. Presidents and have been featured on international media as voices of “moderate Islam,” Mr. Emerson recklessly labels any organization that disagrees with his worldview as “supporting terrorism.” Many other anti-Muslim commentators use false allegations from this book in their commentaries, interviews and press releases in their attempt to attack Islam.

A *Los Angeles Times* book review called Emerson’s book “suspicious.”<sup>49</sup> The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* wrote a book review which stated that “...what he [Emerson] has uncovered about the groups’ [including CAIR] role in terrorism seems largely speculative.”<sup>50</sup> The *Post-Gazette* reviewer continues to say that “...these [American Muslim] groups [that Emerson has targeted] appeared to be operating legally...[and]...he connected none of them to any direct role in Osama bin Laden’s Sept. 11 attacks [or any other terrorist attack].” The reviewer concludes by saying that overall the book was “... [a] frequently dull overview...”<sup>51</sup>

The most significant rebuke came from a past executive of the Central Intelligence Agency. When asked about Mr. Emerson’s theses on American Muslim organizations fronting for international terrorist groups, especially pro-Palestinian groups, Vincent

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<sup>46</sup> *Id.*

<sup>47</sup> See J. Bottum, *American Cassandra: Steven Emerson’s Prophetic Warning* THE WEEKLY STANDARD, February 25, 2002, vol. 7, no. 23, pg. 39. “You have my promise he won’t be used again,” producer Ellen Silva wrote to Ali Abunimah of the American Arab Action Network. “It is NPR policy.” *Id.*

<sup>48</sup> *Supra* note 43.

<sup>49</sup> Teresa Watanabe, *Compelling Overview of Islamic World Covers Middle Ground Well*, THE LOS ANGELES TIMES, January 26, 2002, Part 2, Pg. 16.

<sup>50</sup> Bob Hoover, ‘*American Jihad: The Terrorists Living Among Us*’ by Steven Emerson, PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE, March 3, 2002 available at <http://www.post-gazette.com/books/reviews/20020303review943.asp>.

<sup>51</sup> *Id.*

Cannistraro, a former director of counterterrorism for the CIA, did not mince his words in an interview with Eric Boehlert of Salon.com.

"It's total bulls--t," he says. "He's say[ing] people who move to this country and set up charities and think tanks...are associated with Hamas and Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah, that there's some kind of connection between them and Sept. 11, that there's a liaison or support network. He doesn't know what he's talking about."<sup>52</sup> He continues by saying that, "...Neither Hamas [n]or Islamic Jihad, which have an infrastructure in the U.S...has ever targeted Americans here...It would be counterproductive to their cause. [T]heir focus is Israel and occupied territories."

He is not alone in his disdain for Emerson's self-righteous claims. Robin Wright, chief diplomatic correspondent for the *Los Angeles Times*, agrees, noting that Palestinian groups, "...don't target the American embassy or consulate in Jerusalem. That's not what their goal is. Their focus is on Israel."<sup>53</sup>

In his article for Salon.com, Eric Boehlert explained that although Mr. Emerson considers himself an expert, "...[t]his sensationalistic, poorly reasoned book will do nothing to enhance Emerson's stature among serious scholars..."<sup>54</sup> Finally, Boehlert states "...there [i]s nothing in 'American Jihad' to suggest any American-based Muslim organization had anything to do with, or had any advance knowledge of, the [9/11] attacks..."<sup>55</sup>

Like other Islamophobes, Mr. Emerson tries to legitimize his hatred by claiming that he only takes issue with "radical Muslims" and not those he personally considers to be "moderate." It is hard to imagine what Mr. Emerson's definition of "moderate" would be, since he has placed every single major Muslim organization on his "terrorist support" list in *American Jihad*.

His duplicity is no better epitomized than his statement at a hearing of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States on July 9, 2003. He states, on the record, "...it is critical to point out that militant Islam does not equal Islam. ***Islam as a religion, like Christianity and Judaism, does not endorse violence*** (emphasis added)."<sup>56</sup>

His true feelings on Islam came out in the March 1995 issue of *Jewish Monthly*. "...We don't want to accept it because to do so would be to acknowledge that ***(Islam)...sanctions genocide, planned genocide, as part of its religious doctrine*** (emphasis added)."<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Eric Boehlert, *Terrorists Under the Bed*, SALON.COM, March 5, 2002, at 2, available at <http://www.salon.com/books/feature/2002/03/05/emerson/index.html>.

<sup>53</sup> *Id.* at 1.

<sup>54</sup> *Id.* at 3.

<sup>55</sup> *Id.*

<sup>56</sup> Panel III of a hearing of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, *Federal News Service*, July 9, 2003.

<sup>57</sup> *Supra* note 4. See also Press Release, Institute for Public Accuracy, TERRORISM 'EXPERTS': WHAT'S THEIR RECORD?, August 19, 1998, available at [http://www.accuracy.org/press\\_releases/PR081998.htm](http://www.accuracy.org/press_releases/PR081998.htm).

**Other notable figures' thoughts on The Investigative Project's executive director:**

***Leslie Gelb, President Emeritus and Board Senior Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations:***

Mr. Gelb called Emerson a "grand inquisitor" for trying to censor a CFR publication. ("Forward" Magazine, 5/10/96)<sup>58</sup>

***Center for National Security Studies:***

"...Steven Emerson has asserted that the FBI is severely restricted in infiltrating known extremist groups, that it has no terrorism data base like the CIA's, and that it is powerless to stop extremist groups from masquerading as "religious" groups. All of these claims are incorrect."<sup>59</sup>

***Charles W. Hall and Robert O'Harrow, Jr. of the Washington Post, August 8, 1995:***

Called Mr. Emerson a "...pro-Israel researcher and author..."<sup>60</sup>

***The Jerusalem Post, September 17, 1994***

Stated Mr. Emerson as having "close ties to Israeli intelligence."<sup>61</sup>

***Former United States Congressman Paul Findley (R-IL, 1961-83)***

"Because many Israelis see Islam as an enemy, Emerson seems constrained to see Islam as his own enemy..."

"...[And] deserts the truth in his zeal to misrepresent Islam as a barbaric, underground movement."<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> See also <http://www.blythe.org/Intelligence/readme/85sum>.

<sup>59</sup> Center for National Security Studies, THE FBI DOMESTIC COUNTERTERRORISM PROGRAM, April 26, 1995 available at <http://nsi.org/Library/Terrorism/terpolcy.html>.

<sup>60</sup> Charles W. Hall and Robert O'Harrow Jr., *Virginia Man Suspected of Terrorism Known for Anonymity*, WASHINGTON POST, August 8, 1995 at B1.

<sup>61</sup> Richard H. Curtiss, *Anti-Arab McCarthyism Heavy-Handed Intimidation Fails to Deter Palestinian-American Charity*, WASHINGTON REPORT ON MIDDLE EAST AFFAIRS, July 2000 at 23-25.

<sup>62</sup> Congressman Paul Findlay, *Emerson's Jihad in America*, WASHINGTON REPORT ON MIDDLE EAST AFFAIRS, March 1995 at 20, available at <http://www.washington-report.org/backissues/0395/9503020.htm>.

## **The Truth About CAIR**

Since CAIR was specifically invited to testify at this hearing, we can only assume that the respected panelist from The Investigative Project may level some of the same fabrications that have been declared by their Executive Director. We feel as though it is necessary to document some of the recurring and recycled smears by Mr. Emerson and his likes against CAIR and American Muslims.

The following attacks are examples of the most common and widely disseminated false attacks on American Muslims by Islamophobes. For purposes of this hearing, CAIR has offered documented refutations of a few of the recurring defamatory, false and bigoted statements made to date.

Since Islamophobes dedicate their careers to maligning Muslims, this is not a comprehensive list of all the lies spread about the American Muslim community; however, since we were not extended the courtesy of receiving the other witnesses' testimony prior to submitting our own for this hearing today, we would be happy to submit an addendum to this testimony to address those lies as well.

Most of the following false statements can be found directly in an August 5, 1996 *Wall Street Journal* commentary<sup>63</sup> by The Investigative Project's director and noted Islamophobe, Steven Emerson.

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**MYTH:** Mr. Emerson stated in the *Wall Street Journal* article that, "...A recent CAIR report listed as a 'hate crimes against Muslims' the conviction of Mr. [Omar] Abdul-Rahman<sup>64</sup> [for 1993 World Trade Center bombing] and the arrest of Mr. [Mousa Abu] Marzuk..."<sup>65</sup>

**FACT:** In this commentary, Mr. Emerson is regurgitating the lies of his close friend and fellow Islamophobe, Daniel Pipes. In an April 24, 2002 piece for *The Jerusalem Post*, Pipes made virtually identical assertions as Emerson makes here.<sup>66</sup> The same Pipes' piece also appeared in the April 22, 2002 edition of the tabloid *New York Post*.<sup>67</sup>

The only CAIR material that both Pipes and Emerson could possibly be referring to is CAIR's 1996 civil rights report entitled "The Status of Muslim Civil Rights in America." There one paragraph in the 1996 report mentioning both Sheikh Abdul-Rahman and Dr. Abu-Marzuk is the only mention of the two in the entire annals of official CAIR released literature.

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<sup>63</sup> See Steven Emerson, "Stop Aid and Comfort for Agents of Terror," *The Wall Street Journal*, August 5, 1996, section A, page 18, column 3 available at

[http://www.nexis.com/research/home?\\_key=1062968365&\\_session=29c328aa-e176-11d7-8224-c0a8645eaa77.1.3240421165.340768.%20.0.0&\\_state=&wchp=dGLbVlb-zSkBW&\\_md5=c0439b2ce26b18336df821a8b9f562e1](http://www.nexis.com/research/home?_key=1062968365&_session=29c328aa-e176-11d7-8224-c0a8645eaa77.1.3240421165.340768.%20.0.0&_state=&wchp=dGLbVlb-zSkBW&_md5=c0439b2ce26b18336df821a8b9f562e1) Also available at [http://www.freeman.org/m\\_online/sep96/emerson.htm](http://www.freeman.org/m_online/sep96/emerson.htm)

<sup>64</sup> Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman was one of those convicted for the 1993 World Trade Center Bombing in October 1995.

<sup>65</sup> See *supra* note 43.

<sup>66</sup> Daniel Pipes, "Why Care about CAIR?" *Jerusalem Post*, April 24, 2002 at 8.

<sup>67</sup> See also Arsalan T. Iftikhar, "Pipes Poisons Post's Pages," *The New York Post*, April 27, 2002 at 18.

Regarding Dr. Abu-Marzuk's trial, CAIR quoted his attorney, Stanley Cohen, as saying that he thought "...the case against his client is political rather than criminal."<sup>68</sup> The only mention of Sheikh Abdul-Rahman was that the "...lawyers defending Shaykh Omar Abdel Rahman complain that his trial was far from free and fair."<sup>69</sup>

Nowhere in the report does it refer to these cases either as a "travesty of justice" or a "hate crime." Mr. Emerson's reliance on his friend Daniel Pipes' false statements show the veracity of his journalistic scholarship.

To prove that this is an outright lie, CAIR would be happy to provide a copy of the page in question from the 1996 CAIR civil rights report to any interested parties.

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**MYTH:** In a recent congressional hearing, Mr. Emerson proclaimed that, "...[CAIR] received some of its initial seed money from the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development (HLFRD)..."<sup>70</sup>

**FACT:** This is an outright lie. Our organization did not receive any seed money from HLFRD. CAIR raises its own funds and we challenge Mr. Emerson to provide even a shred of evidence to support his ridiculous claim. In fact, it is known that our DC headquarters was funded largely by a loaned grant mortgage from the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), a multinational financial institution similar in nature to the World Bank.

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**MYTH:** "... [CAIR] has disseminated Hamas communiqués..."<sup>71</sup>

**FACT:** This may be one of the most ridiculous charges ever made by Emerson. This is a *prima facie* defamatory statement and since our incorporation in 1994, CAIR has never voiced support for Hamas, let alone "disseminate" its "communiqués."

CAIR's communications director contacted James Taranto of *The Wall Street Journal* editorial page to demand that the *WSJ* and Emerson produce evidence of these absurd claims. Not surprisingly, no evidence or explanation was ever provided

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Although this is not a comprehensive documentation of all the fallacious claims made by Islamophobes, it was meant to show that The Investigative Project, led by Mr. Emerson, is part of a greater problem. The continuous slander of American Muslim organizations by so-called "experts" will do nothing to improve our country or the international political arena. There only goal is to make certain that their myopic worldview is not challenged by anyone; and anyone who does challenge their political beliefs will be dishonored by any malicious means necessary.

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<sup>68</sup> See Council on American-Islamic Relations 1996 Report, "The Status of Muslim Civil Rights in the United States," 1996 at 8-9.

<sup>69</sup> *Id.*

<sup>70</sup> See Testimony of Steven Emerson with Jonathan Levin before United States Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, "Terrorism Financing: Origination, Organization, Prevention: Saudi Arabia, Terrorist Financing and the War on Terror," July 31, 2003 at 39 available at <http://www.senate.gov/~govt-aff/files/073103emerson.pdf>

<sup>71</sup> See *supra* note 43.

By attacking the more established and respected civil rights organizations within the American Muslim community, these political instigators' hatred and bigotry is, in effect, unraveling a portion of the social fabric of America.

## **Conclusion**

As a community, we fully realize that every minority group who has sought political and social empowerment in America has endured difficult periods in their history in this country.

We, the American Muslim community do not seek any special treatment; all that we ask of our government is that we are afforded the same rights and privileges as any other lawful citizens. To be unjustly targeted and attacked solely based on our religion or culture is against everything that this country was founded upon. While we support legitimate efforts at law enforcement and protecting America from future attack, the constitutional protections which have been in place for centuries must remain stoically intact. The forefathers of this country fled their native land because of religious persecution and for a population to be maligned because of their faith in the United States is completely antithetical to the principles for which America stands.

The American Muslim community is a thriving and contributing portion of our society. A Zogby International poll conducted in November 2001 showed that 58 percent of Muslims in America are college graduates and 50 percent of Muslims earn in excess of \$50,000 annually.<sup>72</sup>

Even though we feel as though we are a community under siege at this time, American Muslims would like to remind our fellow Americans that in the great legacy of civil rights movements; those who seek to divide our nation on racial, religious or cultural lines will fail miserably.

Let it be known that whether it is slander in the media, hate crimes, unjust law enforcement measures or unfortunate legislation, Muslims in America will persevere; and when this chapter of American history finally concludes, our nation will be a better place because of it.

Looking back at the historic legacies of the women's rights movement, the tragic internment of 150,000 Japanese Americans during World War II, and culminating with the African-American civil rights movement of the 1960s, we realize that the reason that we have our freedoms today is because there were those before us who were willing to endure great struggles to protect those rights. We, the American Muslim community, would like all of our fellow Americans to know that we hope to follow in the brave footsteps of these dignified communities and make America a better place to live for all.

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<sup>72</sup> Jane Lampman, *Muslim in America*, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, January 10, 2002 available at <http://www.csmonitor.com/2002/0110/p15s1-lire.html>.

# Appendix A

## Text of initial September 11<sup>th</sup> condemnation by American Muslim community

Copyright 2001 PR Newswire Association, Inc.  
PR Newswire

September 11, 2001, Tuesday

**SECTION:** STATE AND REGIONAL NEWS

**DISTRIBUTION:** TO NATIONAL EDITOR

**LENGTH:** 231 words

**HEADLINE:** U.S. Muslims Condemn Terrorist Attacks

**DATELINE:** WASHINGTON, Sept. 11

**BODY:**

The American Muslim Political Coordination Council (**AMPCC**)\*, today condemned the apparent terrorist attacks in New York and Washington and offered condolences to the families of those who were killed or injured.

The **AMPCC** statement read in part:

**"American Muslims utterly condemn what are apparently vicious and cowardly acts of terrorism against innocent civilians. We join with all Americans in calling for the swift apprehension and punishment of the perpetrators. No political cause could ever be assisted by such immoral acts."**

\* The **AMPCC** consists of American Muslim Alliance, American Muslim Council, Council on American-Islamic Relations, and Muslim Public Affairs Council.

## **Appendix B**

### CAIR Full Page Advertisement

Washington Post, September 16, 2001

We at the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), along with the entire American Muslim community, are deeply saddened by the massive loss of life resulting from the tragic events of September 11th.

American Muslims unequivocally condemn these vicious and cowardly acts of terrorism.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the families, friends and loved ones of those who have been killed or injured.

We also extend our gratitude to all the heroic firefighters, police officers and emergency medical workers who continue to risk their lives in the ongoing rescue and relief efforts.

We join with all Americans in calling for the swift apprehension and punishment of the perpetrators of these crimes.

May we all stand together through these difficult times to promote peace and love over violence and hate.

# **CAIR**

**Council on American-Islamic Relations**

New York • Washington DC • San Francisco • Los Angeles • Dallas • St. Louis • Columbus  
Detroit • Raleigh • Minneapolis • Miami • Ottawa

[www.cair-net.org](http://www.cair-net.org)

## Appendix C

Sample from CAIR “Islam in America” campaign in *The New York Times*

Available at <http://www.americanmuslims.info/>



### **I'M AN AMERICAN AND I'M A MUSLIM**

**MY NAME IS MANAL OMAR.** I've earned a Masters degree from Georgetown University, and I've won several national public-speaking awards. I'm a development researcher for an international corporation. I vote. I'm active in politics, and I belong to several civic organizations.

I'm an American Muslim woman and I wear hijab.

I choose to wear hijab – a head scarf and modest attire – because the practice is integral to my religious beliefs, and because I am proud to be a Muslim woman. In Islam, both women and men are encouraged to dress modestly, thereby allowing a person to be judged on the content of his or her character, and not on physical appearance.

To me, hijab is a symbol of my confidence and self-respect.

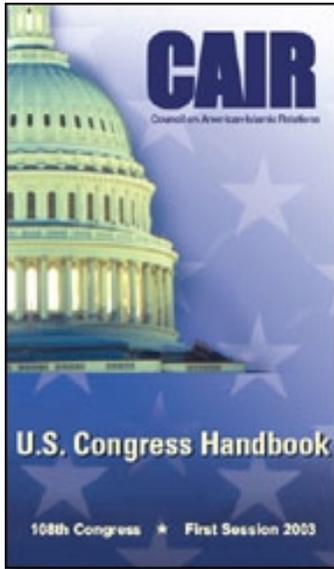
### **I'M AN AMERICAN MUSLIM**

Number three of fifty-two in the *Islam in America* series.  
To learn more about the series, visit [www.americanmuslims.info](http://www.americanmuslims.info)

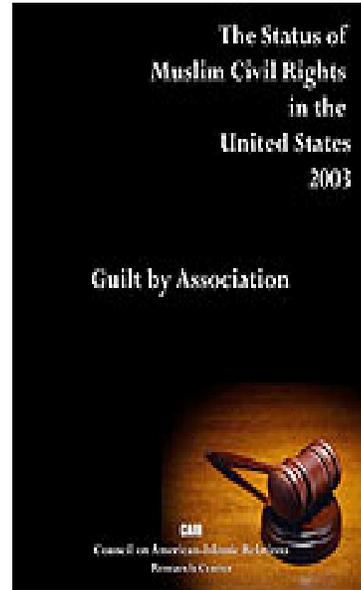
**CAIR**  
COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS

## Appendix D

### Samples of CAIR publications



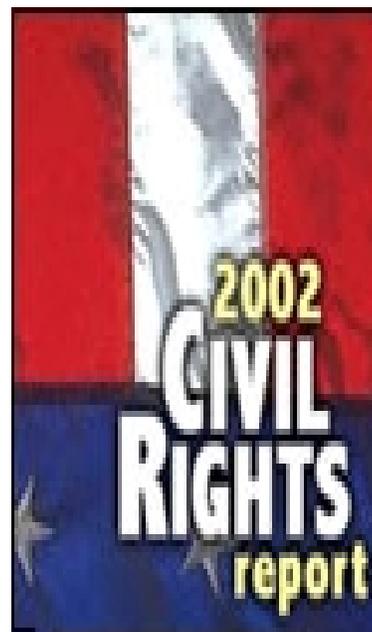
**2003 Congressional Handbook**



**2003 Civil Rights Report**



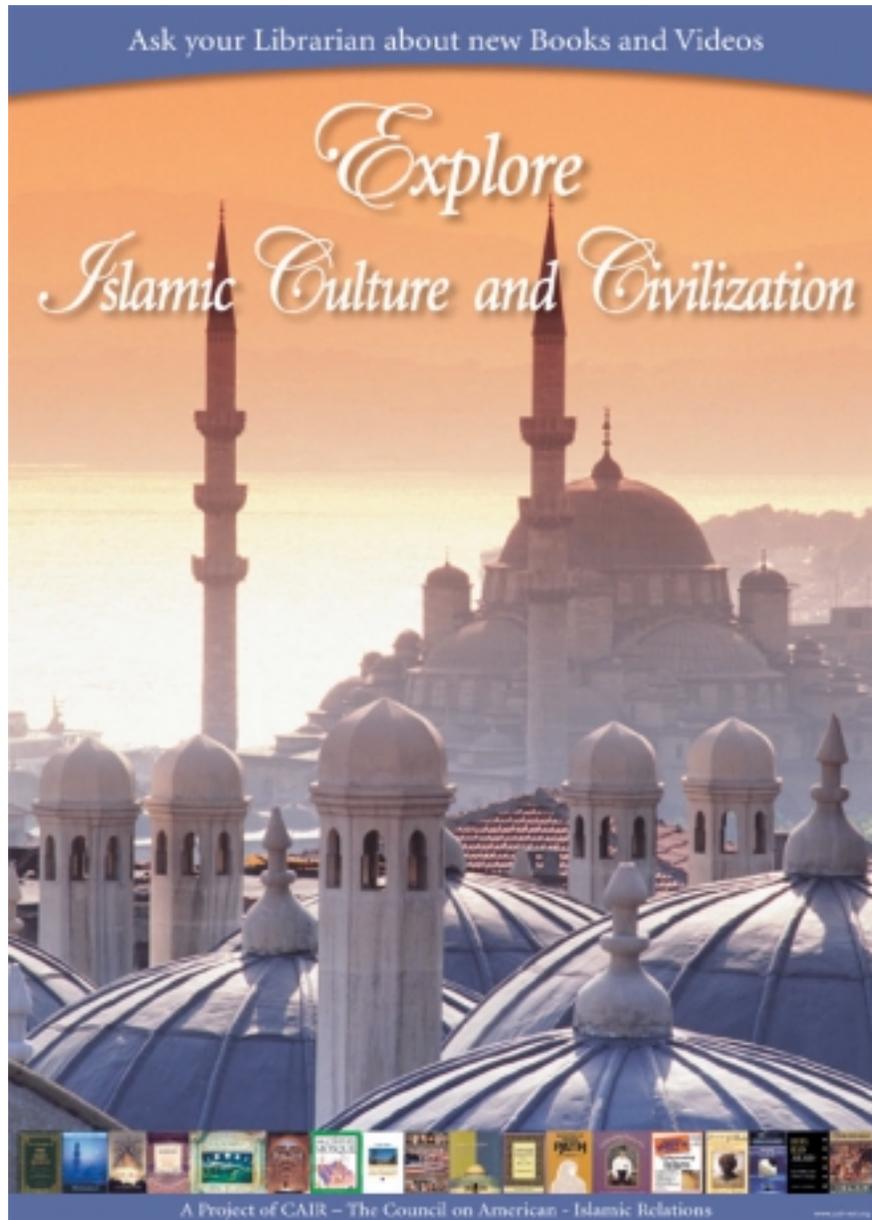
**Muslim Community Safety Kit**



**2002 Civil Rights Report**

## **Appendix E**

Ad poster for CAIR Library Project



# CAIR

## **Council on American-Islamic Relations**

1050 17th Street, N.W., Suite 490

Washington, D.C. 20036

Tel: 202-659-CAIR (2247)

Fax: 202-659-2254

Page: 202-490-5653

E-mail: [cair1@ix.netcom.com](mailto:cair1@ix.netcom.com)

URL: <http://www.cair-net.org>

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **MUSLIMS CONDEMN ATTACK ON CALIFORNIA JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER**

(WASHINGTON, DC, 8/10/99) – The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a Washington-based Islamic advocacy group, has issued a statement condemning today’s shooting at a California Jewish community center.

According to media reports, a young white male wearing a black shirt wounded at least five people, including children, at the North Valley Jewish Community Center in the Granada Hills area of the San Fernando Valley. (Some reports say the gunman may have had an accomplice.)

CAIR’s statement read as follows:

“The American Muslim community condemns this despicable crime and offers its condolences to the families of those injured in the attack. The perpetrator should be apprehended and prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

“Unfortunately, this incident is just the latest entry in a long list of attacks on Jewish, Christian and American Muslim houses of worship and, along with the other incidents, must be seen as a product of prejudice and stereotyping.

“It is the elimination of this religious and cultural prejudice that must be the focus of our educational efforts.”

- END -

# CAIR

Council on American-Islamic Relations

453 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20003  
Tel: 202-488-8787  
Fax: 202-488-0833  
E-mail: [cair@cair-net.org](mailto:cair@cair-net.org)  
URL: <http://www.cair-net.org>

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **MUSLIMS LAUNCH BILLBOARD CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE TOLERANCE** Billboards send messages of goodwill from American Muslims

**WHAT:** On Friday, February 1, the Council on American-Islamic Relations Southern California chapter (CAIR-LA) will launch a billboard campaign designed to promote tolerance, unity and kindness. The first billboard, "Even a smile is Charity - a message from your Muslim neighbor," shows how the simple act of smiling can promote goodwill. (The Prophet Muhammad said: "Your smile for your brother is charity.")

The billboards will be located along major freeways in Los Angeles and Orange counties. Two more billboards are scheduled in San Bernardino for February. Each month, a new positive theme will be displayed on the billboards.

To view the billboard for February, go to: <http://www.cair-california.org/bboard.htm>

CAIR-LA also initiated the "Library Project" in which books on Islam are donated to libraries across California to meet the public's demand for accurate information about Islam and Muslims. For more information on the Library Project, go to: <http://www.cair-california.org/library.htm>

**WHEN:** Friday, February 1, 2002

**WHERE:** Billboard 1: Hwy 5: Garfield exit on the Santa Ana (5) Freeway facing south.  
Billboard 2: Hwy 55: Moulton Parkway exit on the Newport (55) Freeway facing north.  
Billboard 3: Near LAX: Century Blvd. east of Aviation Blvd. facing west.

- END -

**CONTACT:** Sabiha Khan at CAIR-LA, 714-776-1847

E-MAIL: [sabiha@cair-california.org](mailto:sabiha@cair-california.org)

Ibrahim Hooper, 202-488-8787 or 202-489-5108

# CAIR

## Council on American-Islamic Relations

453 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.

Washington, D.C. 20003

Tel: 202-488-8787

Fax: 202-488-0833

E-mail: [cair@cair-net.org](mailto:cair@cair-net.org)

URL: <http://www.cair-net.org>

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### U.S. MUSLIMS CONDEMN CHURCH ATTACK in PAKISTAN

**(WASHINGTON, D.C., 3/17/2002)** – The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a prominent Washington-based Islamic advocacy group, today condemned a grenade attack on a Pakistani church that left five people dead, including two Americans.

In a statement, CAIR Board Chairman Omar Ahmad said:

“We condemn this attack in the strongest terms possible and call for the apprehension of the perpetrators. It is not only an act of terrorism against innocent civilians, but is also an assault on the sanctity of a house of worship. No political or religious cause could justify such horrifying violence.”

- END -

**CONTACT:** Ibrahim Hooper, 202-488-8787 or 202-489-5108 E-MAIL – [cair@cair-net.org](mailto:cair@cair-net.org)

**NOTE:** CAIR offers an e-mail list designed to be a journalist’s window to the American Muslim community. Subscribers to the list, called **ISLAM-INFONET**, receive news releases and other materials dealing with American Muslim positions on issues of importance to the general public.

To SUBSCRIBE to ISLAM-INFONET, go to: <http://cair.biglist.com/islam-infonet/>

# CAIR

Council on American-Islamic Relations

453 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20003  
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Fax: 202-488-0833  
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URL: <http://www.cair-net.org>

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### CAIR CONDEMNS ATTACKS ON CIVILIANS

**(Washington, D.C. 3/28/2002)** - The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a Washington-based Islamic advocacy group, today condemned a bomb attack on a Passover celebration in the Middle East that left 20 people dead and more than 100 wounded.

In a statement, CAIR said:

“We condemn this attack and all other attacks on innocent civilians. Illegitimate and counterproductive tactics must not be used in the legitimate struggle to end Israel’s brutal occupation.

“This attack is of particular concern coming as it did during a religious observance in which the focus is remembrance of God.

“We ask the international community to similarly condemn actions by the Israeli armed forces that also target civilians and impose daily humiliation and suffering on an entire population through blockades, home demolitions, assassinations, indiscriminate shooting, torture, land confiscations and a wide variety of Apartheid-like and oppressive practices.

“To break this cycle of violence and counter-violence, all parties must focus on a political solution based on justice and equality, not force of arms.”

**- END -**

**CONTACT:** Ibrahim Hooper, 202-488-8787 or 202-489-5108 E-MAIL - [cair@cair-net.org](mailto:cair@cair-net.org)

## LIBRARY PROJECT LAUNCHED TO COUNTER ANTI-MUSLIM BIAS

(WASHINGTON, D.C., 9/9/02) – A national Islamic civil rights and advocacy group today launched a major educational initiative designed to counter what it says is a rising tide of anti-Muslim rhetoric in American society.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations' (CAIR) year-long campaign, called **“Explore Islamic Civilization and Culture,”** will encourage Muslim individuals and groups to sponsor 18-item “library packages” of books, videos and audio cassettes about Islam and Muslims, which will then be distributed to as many as 16,000 public libraries nationwide. (A pilot program by CAIR’s Los Angeles office placed more than 2,500 books and videos in 166 libraries.)

The \$150 library packages contain materials such as the PBS documentary “Islam: Empire of Faith,” Prof. Jack Shaheen’s “Reel Bad Arabs” and “The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?” by Prof. John Esposito of Georgetown University’s Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding. Other library package materials include a copy of the Quran, Islam’s revealed text, children’s books on Ramadan and mosque architecture, as well as a book describing the experiences of African-Muslim slaves brought to America. Each item in the package was selected based on the quality of its content, published reviews and the recommendations of Muslim scholars. (To see the complete list of library package materials, go to: <http://www.libraryproject.org>)

“The lack of timely and accurate books about Islam in public libraries is a serious issue nationwide. The resulting knowledge gap leads to increased misunderstanding of Islam and produces unnecessary divisions between people of faith. It’s important that Americans know what Islam stands for – and it’s not terrorism,” said CAIR Executive Director Nihad Awad.

Awad said Muslim communities and individuals will identify local libraries for sponsorship by visiting CAIR’s library project web site, <http://www.libraryproject.org>, or by calling 1-800-392-7876, ext. 20. After the sponsor fills out and submits the necessary forms on the web site, the library is informed of the intention to donate the library package. Materials are then shipped to the library by Astrolabe Islamic Media (<http://www.astrolabepictures.com>). A confirmation letter is sent to the sponsor indicating that the library package has been sent.

To illustrate the kind of anti-Muslim rhetoric that prompted the CAIR campaign, Awad cited Christian evangelist Franklin Graham’s claims that terrorism is part of “mainstream” Islam and that the Quran, Islam’s revealed text, “preaches violence.” Graham also called Islam an “evil and wicked religion.” Other conservative and evangelical commentators such as Jerry Vines, Pat Robertson, Paul Weyrich, William Lind, Ann Coulter, and Chuck Colson have echoed Graham’s Islamophobic smears.

- END -

**CONTACT:** Ibrahim Hooper, 202-488-8787 or 202-744-7726, E-MAIL: [cair@cair-net.org](mailto:cair@cair-net.org)

Ms. Hodan Hassan, 202-488-8787 or 703-861-7294, E-MAIL: [hhassan@cair-net.org](mailto:hhassan@cair-net.org)

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# CAIR

Council on American-Islamic Relations

453 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20003  
Tel: 202-488-8787 Fax: 202-488-0833  
E-mail: [cair@cair-net.org](mailto:cair@cair-net.org)  
URL: <http://www.cair-net.org>

- **MEDIA ADVISORY** -

## **EXPLOSIVE DEVICE DESTROYS ILLINOIS MUSLIM FAMILY'S VAN** CAIR offers reward for info about possible war-related hate crime

(WASHINGTON, D.C., 3/24/2003) – The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) will hold a **news conference** today to call on federal authorities to treat an explosion in a Chicago-area Muslim family's van as a possible war-related hate crime. The Washington-based Islamic civil rights and advocacy group will also announce the offer of a reward for information leading to the apprehension and conviction of the perpetrators.

**WHEN:** Monday, **March 24, 2:30 p.m.** (Central)

**WHERE:** Outside the Burbank Police Department, 5650 West 75<sup>th</sup> Place, Burbank, Illinois

CAIR has learned that a "Class B" explosive device was thrown into the van of the Burbank, Ill., Palestinian Muslim family at about 11 p.m. on Saturday, March 22. (Class B explosives are used in commercial-grade fireworks.) According to the family, the van's door was blown off, shattered glass was thrown up to 30 feet away and a hole was punched in the vehicle's floor. They believe the incident is related to the ongoing war with Iraq. Family members say they also experienced hostility from neighbors following the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

"This incident could have resulted in serious injury or even loss of life. Local and national law enforcement authorities must treat this crime with the seriousness that it deserves in order to reassure the American Muslim community that these types of attacks will not be tolerated. International events should never be allowed to divide our nation along religious or ethnic lines," said CAIR-Chicago Executive Director Omar Haydar. He said CAIR is offering a \$2000 reward for information that results in the perpetrators being brought to justice. Haydar noted that his group recently distributed a "Community Safety Kit" to help protect Muslims in North America during the war with Iraq. SEE: <http://www.cair-net.org/safetykit>

A number of similar incidents have been reported recently across the United States. CAIR attributes these incidents to the pro-war rhetoric leading up to the attack on Iraq, coupled with existing levels of anti-Muslim bias in American society.

In other Illinois incidents, an Evanston resident received a mailed death threat, a Glendale Heights Islamic center received a phoned bomb threat and projectiles were fired at a mosque in Villa Park. In California, four Muslim women from the northern part of that state visiting a Venice restaurant on Sunday say they were verbally assaulted by another patron who made references to raping Muslim women and threatened them with physical assault. Death threats were made against Muslim students at San Jose State University in Northern California. In Michigan, a Muslim father and son report that they were refused service at a Meijer store in Fraser, Mich.

Physical assaults against Muslims have been reported in Northern California, Southern California, Georgia, New Jersey, and South Carolina. One incident in Yorba Linda, Calif., left a Muslim teenager badly beaten by a group that allegedly included white supremacists.

CAIR is America's largest Islamic civil liberties group. It is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and has 16 regional offices nationwide and in Canada. Since its founding in 1994, CAIR has defended the civil and religious rights of all Americans.

- END -

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY OFFERED GUIDE TO MUSLIMS**  
New booklet designed to foster cooperation with security agencies

(WASHINGTON, D.C., 5/1/03) - As concerns grow over the profiling of Muslims and as Law Day\* is marked nationwide, a Washington-based Islamic civil rights and advocacy group today announced the publication of a booklet designed to familiarize the law enforcement community with Islamic beliefs and practices. SEE: <http://www.cair-net.org/hdn/LawEnforceGuide/>

The Council on American-Islamic Relations' (CAIR) publication, "A Law Enforcement Official's Guide to the Muslim Community," outlines basic information about Islamic beliefs that are relevant to law enforcement. It also cover issues such as the rights of Muslim law enforcement officers, religiously-sensitive techniques for body searches, proper etiquette for entering Muslim homes, and advice on outreach to the Islamic community. Copies of the booklet may be obtained by contacting: [publications@cair-net.org](mailto:publications@cair-net.org) (\$3+S/H)

"A number of recent interactions between law enforcement agencies and the Muslim community have resulted in misperceptions and miscommunications based on a lack of basic information about Islamic beliefs. We hope this booklet will serve as tool to be used in facilitating cooperation on security issues in an atmosphere of mutual respect," said CAIR Research Director Dr. Mohamed Nimer, the booklet's author. Nimer added that Muslim communities around the United States have organized meetings with local, state and national law enforcement agencies. CAIR helped coordinate these meetings in a number of cities.

The law enforcement officer's guide is the fifth in a series of CAIR publications designed to support the religious rights of American Muslims. Other booklets in this series include "An Employer's Guide to Islamic Religious Practices," "A Health Care Provider's Guide to Islamic Religious Practices," "An Educator's Guide to Islamic Religious Practices," and "A Correctional Institution's Guide to Islamic Religious Practices." Thousands of these booklets are now being used by corporations, schools, hospitals, and other institutions nationwide.

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\* May 1 is Law Day, a national day focusing on America's heritage of liberty under law. Law Day was designated by joint resolution of Congress in 1961. SEE: <http://www.abanet.org/publiced/lawday/>

- END -

**CONTACT:** Ibrahim Hooper, 202-488-8787 or 202-744-7726, E-MAIL: [cair@cair-net.org](mailto:cair@cair-net.org); Ms. Hodan Hassan, 202-488-8787 or 202-439-1441, E-MAIL: [hhassan@cair-net.org](mailto:hhassan@cair-net.org)

# CAIR

Council on American-Islamic Relations

453 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20003  
Tel: 202-488-8787 Fax: 202-488-0833  
E-mail: [cair@cair-net.org](mailto:cair@cair-net.org)  
URL: <http://www.cair-net.org>

## **COMMUNITY SERVICE IS SUBJECT OF NEW MUSLIM AD CAIR ad says serving others is one way to serve God**

**(WASHINGTON, D.C., 5/28/03)** – The importance of community service is the focus in the sixth installment of a national advertising campaign designed to foster greater understanding of Islam and to counter the rising tide of Islamophobic rhetoric in the United States. SEE: [www.americanmuslims.info](http://www.americanmuslims.info)

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a prominent national Islamic civil rights and advocacy group, launched the year-long “Islam in America” campaign February 16 with an ad on the *New York Times* editorial page. (CAIR’s campaign was put on hold during the war in Iraq.) The first five ads featured examples of family values and ethnic diversity in the American Muslim community, a Muslim Girl Scout troop in California, a Muslim woman explaining why modest Islamic attire is both liberating and empowering, and a condemnation of terrorism in the name of any religion.

“There has been a very positive response to our campaign in the Muslim community and with people of other faiths who view the ads and the message of tolerance and diversity they convey,” said CAIR Board Chairman Omar Ahmad. Ahmad said the ads have been used in a variety of creative ways, including as handouts in classrooms and as posters in employee break rooms.

The text of the latest CAIR ad reads: “MY NAME IS DR. J. AISHA SIMON. I attended the Medical College of Virginia, completed my residency at Georgetown University and I’ll be attending Harvard University to earn a master’s degree in public health. I’m a family physician, a wife and a mother. I’m also involved in international relief work, traveling to places like Bosnia and Africa, and coordinating medical volunteers to serve in Guatemala. I was previously a regional coordinator for an anti-tobacco education campaign for elementary school children and I’ve served as an advocate for domestic violence survivors. I’m an American Muslim woman and I believe in the importance of charity and service to my community.

“The values I learned from my family and my religion while growing up in America have led me to a life of service. Islam calls upon us to strive with one another in hastening to good deeds, and to care for the less fortunate as we care for ourselves. The Prophet Muhammad taught us that when we serve our brother or sister, we are serving God.”

The weekly CAIR ads, each explaining one aspect of Islam, are being distributed to Muslim communities around America for placement in local newspapers. All the advertisements are available at:  
<http://www.americanmuslims.info/archive.asp>

CAIR, America’s largest Islamic civil liberties group, is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and has 16 regional offices nationwide and in Canada.

- END -

**CONTACT:** Ibrahim Hooper, 202-488-8787 or 202-744-7726, E-MAIL: [cair@cair-net.org](mailto:cair@cair-net.org)

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453 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20003  
Tel: 202-488-8787 Fax: 202-488-0833  
E-mail: [cair@cair-net.org](mailto:cair@cair-net.org)  
URL: <http://www.cair-net.org>

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **TWO TEENS ARRESTED IN MOSQUE CROSS BURNING CASE**

**(WASHINGTON, D.C., 8/1/03)** - Two teenagers have been arrested for allegedly burning a cross outside a Maryland Islamic school and mosque. The arrests were announced this afternoon at a news conference in Landover Hills, Md., attended by local and national law enforcement officials and representatives of the Muslim community.

Authorities say the 17-years-olds, whose names are being withheld because they are juveniles, have been charged with religious and ethnic crime, defacing property and burning a cross or other religious symbol in violation of Maryland's hate crime statutes. If convicted the suspects could face up to three years in prison and a fine. The cross burning occurred in the early morning hours of July 24th outside the Dar-us-Salaam mosque and Al-Huda school in College Park, Md.

“We will work with juvenile authorities not only to help prosecute this case, but also to assist in the rehabilitation of these young people so they may live lives free of hatred and prejudice,” said Seyed Rizwan Mowlana, executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relation’s Maryland office (CAIR-Maryland). He suggested that if convicted and sentenced to community service, the teens could be assigned to a mosque or Islamic school.

“We thank all the law enforcement agencies involved in this case, particularly the FBI and the Prince George’s County police and fire departments, for moving so swiftly to bring the alleged perpetrators to justice,” said Mowlana. He also thanked the ACLU, Progressive Maryland, the NAACP, as well as the state and national public officials who supported the Muslim community following the incident.

At a news conference on the day of the incident, CAIR announced a \$5,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the perpetrators. At least one lead resulted from that reward offer.

Since the beginning of this year, CAIR has received reports of physical assaults against Muslims or those perceived to be Muslim in California, Georgia, New Jersey, South Carolina and other states. One incident in Yorba Linda, Calif., left a Muslim teenager badly beaten by a group that allegedly included white supremacists. In Arizona, a Sikh man who may have been mistaken for an Arab was shot in Phoenix. In Illinois, an explosive device destroyed a Muslim family’s van. And just last month, a New Bedford, Mass., pizza delivery man was kidnapped, beaten and stabbed, apparently because his attackers thought he was Muslim. Two weeks ago, two Pakistani students were shot to death in the same county as the cross-burning. FBI investigators are looking into the incident to determine if bias was a motive.

CAIR, America’s largest Islamic civil liberties group, is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and has 16 regional offices nationwide and in Canada.

- END -

**CONTACT:** CAIR-Maryland, Rizwan Mowlana, 240-401-4550; CAIR-DC, Ibrahim Hooper, 202-488-8787 or 202-744-7726, E-Mail: [cair@cair-net.org](mailto:cair@cair-net.org); Rabiah Ahmed, 202-488-8787 or 202-439-1441, E-Mail: [rahmed@cair-net.org](mailto:rahmed@cair-net.org)

# CAIR

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453 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20003  
Tel: 202-488-8787  
Fax: 202-488-0833  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **- MEDIA ADVISORY -**

## **MUSLIMS TO HOLD 9/11 VIGIL AT U.S. CAPITOL** “A Day of National Unity” event to promote interfaith relations

**WHAT:** On **WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10**, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a Washington-based Islamic civil rights and advocacy group, will host an interfaith memorial event at the Capitol Reflecting Pool in Washington, D.C., to mark the second anniversary of the 9/11 terror attacks and to challenge those who seek to divide America along religious or ethnic lines.

The event, “**A Day of National Unity**,” will include songs by a children’s choir, speeches from local and national community and religious leaders and a candlelight vigil in memory of those who died in the attacks. (Groups or individuals interested in participating in the vigil should contact Joshua Brockwell at: [jbrockwell@cair-net.org](mailto:jbrockwell@cair-net.org) or call 202-488-8787, ext. 3221) The event will also include presentation of the first annual “**Voice of Unity Award**” to the Hate Free Zone Campaign of Washington, an organization founded in response to the post-9/11 backlash against American Muslims, Arab-Americans and those perceived to be Middle Eastern.

“Now more than ever, we must come together as one nation to challenge the voices of division in our society,” said CAIR Board Chairman Omar Ahmad. “The threat of terrorism, and our response to it, continues to test our ability to live together in a spirit of interfaith harmony and inclusion. This is a test we must pass if America is to maintain the values of religious tolerance we all hold dear.”

CAIR is American’s largest Islamic civil liberties group. It is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and has 16 regional offices nationwide and in Canada.

**WHEN:** **Wednesday, September 10, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**

**WHERE:** Capitol Reflecting Pool (Westside), Washington, D.C.

- END -

**CONTACT:** Ibrahim Hooper, 202-488-8787 or 202-744-7726, E-Mail: [cair@cair-net.org](mailto:cair@cair-net.org); Rabiah Ahmed, 202-488-8787 or 202-439-1441, E-Mail: [rahmed@cair-net.org](mailto:rahmed@cair-net.org)

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