



# An IPT Rebuttal: CAIR's Internet Myths and Facts



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*The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) recently [posted a document](#) on its web site that seeks to debunk what the organization considers “Internet disinformation” about it. In doing so, CAIR engaged in the very behavior it claims to be victimized by – the spread of disinformation.*

*CAIR offers no specific examples of the “disinformation” it claims. Rather, it summarizes the allegations by “a small but vocal group of anti-Muslim bigots” in words that best fit its purposes.*

*To set the record straight, the Investigative Project on Terrorism is reproducing the report and challenging its claims with specific references that contradict CAIR’s claims. When they exist, links to original source material are included. IPT content appears in bold typeface.*

### **[CAIR’s claim] Top Internet Disinformation About CAIR**

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) has a record of exemplary social and political activism stretching back to 1994. The organization is arguably the most visible and public representative of the American Muslim community. Because of CAIR’s high profile and very public record of principled advocacy of civil liberties, interfaith relations and justice for all people, a small but vocal group of anti-Muslim bigots has made CAIR the focus of their misinformation campaign. Internet hate sites then recycle these attacks using a template-like style without verifying the authenticity of the information.

This document summarizes the most common of these attacks and offers a fuller picture of these issues for your evaluation.

**IPT Fact-Check: CAIR also has roots in a Hamas support network dating back to 1994 and a consistent record of criticizing terror and terror-financing investigations that will be documented in this report. Those who detail that record or subject to *ad hominem* attacks as a diversion from the facts presented. Any critic is labeled a bigot or an Islamophobe, from [Daniel Pipes](#) and IPT Executive Director [Steven Emerson](#), to free speech and civil liberties advocate [Nat Hentoff](#). The labeling of all CAIR opposition as being Islamophobic is an effort to portray CAIR, a political organization, as a legitimate representative of the faith of Islam and of all American Muslims. CAIR ignores the factual evidence used to support the criticism. We are glad to take up the challenge. Readers can determine which side of the debate fails to verify its claims.**

**[CAIR’s claim] Internet Disinformation #1:** CAIR is “the Wahhabi lobby,” a “front-group for Hamas,” a “fund-raising arm for Hezbollah,” or “...part of a wider conspiracy overseen by the Muslim Brotherhood....”

CAIR was born out of a desire on the part of its founders to “concentrate on combating anti-Muslim discrimination nationwide.” The organization’s advocacy model—work closely with media and provide direct services to local Muslim communities—was developed when Nihad Awad and Ibrahim Hooper worked as community activists.

In a March 14, 2007 New York Times article, Michael Rolince, a retired F.B.I. official who directed counterterrorism in the Washington field office from 2002 to 2005, said, “Of all the groups, there is probably more suspicion about CAIR, but when you ask people for cold hard facts, you get blank stares.”

The article also reported, “Government officials in Washington said they were not aware of any criminal investigation of the group. More than one described the standards used by critics to link CAIR to terrorism as akin to McCarthyism, essentially guilt by association.”

CAIR is not is “the Wahhabi lobby,” a “front-group for Hamas,” a “fund-raising arm for Hezbollah,” “...part of a wider conspiracy overseen by the Muslim Brotherhood...” or any of the other false and misleading associations our detractors seek to smear us with. That we stand accused of being both a “fundraising arm of Hezbollah” and the “Wahhabi lobby” is a significant point in demonstrating (sic) that our detractors are hurling slander not fact. Hezbollah and the Salafi (Wahhabi) movement represent diametrically opposed ideologies. CAIR’s origin story is simple. In the February-March 2000 edition of “The Link,” a newsletter published by Americans for Middle East Understanding, Nihad Awad wrote the following:

“After the Gulf War was over, I was offered a job with the Islamic Association of Palestine (IAP) as their public relations director. Since many Americans had been exposed to only one side of the story, my responsibility was to explain the Palestinian experience to the public and the media. In this effort I worked closely with IAP president Omar Ahmad.

“Omar, however, had the insight to realize that the central issue facing the Muslim community in the United States was not being addressed. The core challenge, that of stereotyping and defamation, was having a devastating effect on our children and paralyzing adults from taking their due roles in civic affairs.

“Omar suggested to me that we leave IAP and concentrate on combating anti-Muslim discrimination nationwide. He proposed that I move to Washington, D.C., where any effective national effort would have to be based, while he tried to raise seed money for the project.

“I contacted my friend Ibrahim Hooper, a professional journalist and communications genius, and tried to persuade him to move to Washington and join the project.

“Omar’s vision and concern for Muslims in America coincided with Ibrahim’s and my desire to take up the task. Ibrahim and I had worked together for years to help our local community reach out to its neighbors and we understood that individual initiatives were

essential, but that they would never be as effective as a coordinated national effort.

“So the three of us took a chance.”

**IPT Fact-Check: The 2007 quote from retired FBI official Michael Rolince about a lack of cold, hard facts about CAIR is trumped by two recent letters from the FBI. In one, the Agent in Charge of the Oklahoma City field office [advises](#) that the Bureau has broken off communication with CAIR until “certain issues” are addressed by CAIR national leaders. Special Agent in Charge James E. Finch explained the importance of taking the time to address the issues surrounding CAIR:**

“As you know, members of the United States Government, especially those serving in a law enforcement capacity, have a duty to be judicious in our activities as representatives of the Federal Government.”

**In the [second letter](#), from FBI congressional liaison Richard C. Powers to U.S. Sen. Jon Kyl dated April 28, 2009, Powers makes it clear that the FBI is unsure whether CAIR’s relationship to Hamas ever was severed:**

“[U]ntil we can resolve whether there continues to be a connection between CAIR or its executives and HAMAS, the FBI does not view CAIR as an appropriate liaison partner.”

**As for Rolince’s CAIR assessment, he apparently never asked FBI Special Agent Lara Burns or anyone else involved in the investigation against the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development (HLF) about CAIR. That investigation covered the years Rolince was running counter terrorism at the Washington field office. Prosecutors included CAIR on a list of [unindicted co-conspirators](#) in the HLF case and Burns labeled CAIR [a front group](#) for Hamas during sworn testimony last fall.**

**These assessments were based on internal documents Burns and other FBI agents seized from Hamas supporters during the HLF investigation.**

**As CAIR acknowledges above, its founders Nihad Awad and Omar Ahmad were previously involved with the Islamic Association for Palestine. Evidence from the HLF trial shows that the IAP was a [founding member](#) of the Palestine Committee, which an internal IAP report described as a Muslim Brotherhood creation “[whose job](#) is to make the Palestinian cause victorious and to support it with what it needs of media, money, men and all of that.” The memo also called on Committee members to "increase the financial and the moral support for Hamas" and to "fight surrendering solutions."**

The IAP published Hamas communiqués announcing attacks as well as publishing the virulently anti-Semitic Hamas charter. [This booklet](#), published by the IAP, labels “The Jew” as “America’s Greatest Enemy.”

In addition to spreading Hamas propaganda, the IAP repeatedly organized fundraisers with HLF that featured Hamas leaders, and [songs](#) and [skits](#) praising Hamas.

Independent reviews have concluded there was a nexus between the IAP and Hamas. In November 2004, a federal magistrate determined the IAP was liable for damages in the 1996 murder of an American teenager by a Hamas gunman. Judge Arlander Keys found “[an abundance of evidence](#)” that “IAP...desired to help Hamas’ activities succeed, and...engaged in some act of helping those activities succeed.” She added, “If IAP has never outrightly cheered on Hamas’ terrorist activities, it has come awfully close.”

**[CAIR’s claim] Internet Disinformation #2:** The organization condemns terrorism and extremism in a broad sense, but at the same time the group is laying groundwork for anti-American extremism.

CAIR’s advocacy model is the antithesis of the narrative of anti-American extremists. Indeed, our track record of success solidly repudiates extremist arguments that Muslims cannot get fair treatment in our nation.

CAIR advocates for American Muslims through the media, government and all legal, traditional avenues available to public interest groups. CAIR staff and volunteers proactively train our community in strategies to improve grassroots ability to take their due roles in civic affairs and redress grievances.

Our moral position is clear. We unequivocally condemn terrorism. Any group that hurts civilians deserves condemnation. As recently as January, 2009, CAIR’s vigorous condemnation of violence committed in the name of Islam was acknowledged by the United States Institute of Peace in its report “Islamic Peacemaking Since 9/11.”

We are proud of our principled advocacy for just and peaceful resolutions to conflicts even when that advocacy requires stances that are not viewed as politically correct.

In truth, however, condemnations alone do not solve problems. That is why CAIR’s moral position, which is prompted by the basic Islamic principle that no one has the right to take innocent life, is backed by action. CAIR has its sent staff to Baghdad to appeal for the release of a kidnapped American journalist; produced anti-terror public service announcements in English, Arabic and Urdu; coordinated an Islamic anti-terror religious ruling (fatwa); raised money for rebuilding churches in the wake of Middle East violence and called on Islamic religious leaders to deliver anti-terror messages in their sermons.

CAIR has condemned specific terrorist actions against Muslims, Christians, Jews, Hindus, Americans, Spaniards, Turks, Israelis, Saudis, Russians, Egyptians, Jordanians, Iraqis, British, and so on.

CAIR has condemned specific terrorist groups by name. On 3/11/2009, the 5th anniversary of the tragic Madrid attacks, CAIR issued a statement saying, “We unequivocally condemn all acts of terrorism, whether carried out by al-Qa’ida, the Real IRA, FARC, Hamas, ETA, or any other group designated by the U.S. Department of State as a ‘Foreign Terrorist Organization.’

In 2007, CAIR Executive Director Nihad Awad joined 137 other Muslim leaders and scholars from around the world in sending a first-of-its-kind open letter designed to promote understanding between Muslims and Christians worldwide. The letter, entitled "A Common Word Between Us and You," was sent to Pope Benedict XVI, Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams and more than 20 other Christian leaders. Awad is also an original endorser of the Amman Message and its three points of tolerance.

See A Common Word Between Us:

<http://www.acommonword.com/>

See the Amman Message:

<http://www.ammanmessage.com/>

Anti-American extremists are well aware of our rejection of their views.

Following CAIR’s criticism of remarks by an extremist leader, a German blogger noted that some within the “jihadi community...issu[ed] angry rants about the apparent treachery of American Muslims, including specifically the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR).”

We find that our detractors prefer to nitpick—to give a facetious example: ‘You did not condemn terror against Brazilians, ergo you must support it’—rather than acknowledge our resoundingly clear words and deeds.

To allow ourselves to focus on promoting a more positive society rather than writing a specific condemnation of every group or addressing murderous behavior toward every ethnic and religious group on the planet, we have adopted a simple, comprehensive message: “We condemn terrorism whenever it happens, wherever it happens, whoever commits it. Period.”

### **IPT Fact-Check:**

**Let’s start with the notion that CAIR “unequivocally condemn[s] terrorism. Any group that hurts civilians deserves condemnation.”**

**CAIR does not produce any example of its unequivocal condemnation of Hamas or Hizballah, despite each group’s bloody legacy of attacks on civilians at [a pizza place](#), living [in their homes](#), [celebrating religious holidays](#), or working at a [community center](#). We couldn’t find one, either.**

**In contrast, it’s easy to find examples of CAIR officials being directly asked about Hamas and Hizballah, only to see them duck the question or stubbornly refuse to condemn either terrorist organization.**

**Among the examples:**



In a 2001 article in Salon magazine, Jake Tapper [recounted his efforts](#) to pin CAIR spokesman Ibrahim Hooper down about Hamas and other terrorist groups:

Questions about whether CAIR would condemn organizations by name unequivocally, instead of qualifying the condemnations, were just “word games from the pro-Israel lobby,” Hooper said. Instead, Hooper said that the very questions were the problem, and part of a Zionist conspiracy. “This is a game they play,” Hooper said, referring to the pro-Israel lobby. “They give me a long list of people to condemn and if you don’t give sufficient condemnation you’re a terrorist. We would condemn any person or any group that kills innocent civilians. But it’s not my duty that when the pro-Israel lobby says ‘Jump’ I say ‘How high?’”

Awad took the same line in an October 2000 [interview](#) with Al Jazeera (translation [here](#)):

“We do not condemn nor will we condemn any liberation movement inside Palestine, or inside Lebanon. If they want us to condemn a liberation movement inside Palestine, or Lebanon, they must condemn Israel dozens of times at all levels at all times. We will not condemn any organization. We are not under anyone’s hammer. We are in the country of freedom. Why should we renounce principles?”

Asked directly for his position on Hamas, Awad blamed “an Israeli viewpoint” for the notion that CAIR supports the terrorist group. Then he refused to condemn it:

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CAIR-Chicago’s Ahmed Rehab refused to condemn Hamas by name in a panel discussion that took place in July of 2007:

[Dr. Zuhdi Jasser]: “Hamas you’ve condemned? I’ve heard you support Hamas’s building of hospitals and institutions as an organization.”

[Ahmed Rehab]: “Of course. Look. You’ve just shifted your question. Are you asking me if I condemn terrorism or if I condemn Hamas?”

[Dr. Jasser]: “Do you condemn organizations which use terrorism as an action?”

[Rafia Zakaria]: “See, but I don’t understand your question.”

**[Ahmed Rehab]: “Then you would condemn the IDF and the Israeli army as well, because they also use, they also [Unintelligible word as people talk over each other] civilians -”<sup>1</sup> [emphasis added]**

**In early 2009, CAIR spokesman Hooper avoided commenting on whether the Palestinian people would benefit by seeing Hamas lose power in the region:**

**Newscaster:**

**"In your view tending to the aspiration desires of the Palestinian people, does that also include making Hamas irrelevant in the region?" [emphasis added]**

**Hooper:**

**"Well what you want to do is give the Palestinians an idea that their future can be better. That their children can actually eat. Can you imagine right now, in the 21st century, that we have a situation where there is a blockade keeping children from eating in any part of the world and America is supporting that blockade. It's outrageous, it's illegal, it's immoral and it's against international law. At a minimum we have to end the siege of the Gaza ghetto."<sup>2</sup> [emphasis added]**

**Similarly, CAIR Legislative Affairs Director Corey Saylor demonstrated during an August 2008 interview with Fox News reporter David Lee Miller that the “unequivocal” condemnation is still something beyond CAIR’s willingness (see it [here](#)):**

**Miller:**

**"Can you sit here now and in just one sentence tell me- CAIR condemns Hamas and CAIR condemns Hezbollah?"**

**Saylor:**

**"I'm telling you in a very clear fashion – CAIR condemns terrorist acts, whoever commits them, wherever they commit them, whenever they commit them."**

**Miller:**

**"That's not the same thing as saying you condemn Hamas and you condemn Hezbollah."**

**Saylor:**

**"Well I recognize that you don't like my answer to the question, but that's the answer to the question."**

**Miller:**

**"It's not no, it's not whether I like it or dislike it. I was asking whether or not you can sit here now and say- CAIR condemns Hamas or Hezbollah. If you don't want to, just say that. If that is a position your group doesn't take, I**

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<sup>1</sup> Panel discussion: “Islam vs. Islamists,” Moderator: John Hockenberry, Panelists: Dr. M. Zuhi Jasser, Rafia Zakaria, Ahmed Rehab, PBS, July 30, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Interview of Ibrahim Hooper on CNN. "Protesting the War," January 2, 2009.



certainly accept that. I just want to understand what your answer is."  
[emphasis added]

Saylor:

"The position that my group takes is that we condemn terrorism on a consistent, persistent basis, wherever it happens, whenever it happens."

During the 2006 battle between Israel and Hizballah in Lebanon, CAIR made no mention of Hizballah's [cross-border attack](#) that killed three and included the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers who later were killed. Nor did it ever condemn Hizballah rocket and artillery fire into Israeli neighborhoods.

Instead, its criticism was on the Israeli response and a [demand](#) that the U.S. stop it.

Similarly, the fight between Israel and Hamas in Gaza in December 2008 and January 2009 resulted in no CAIR calls for Hamas to cease indiscriminate rocket fire into Israeli cities. Instead, CAIR organized anti-Israel rallies and Awad [demanded](#) "that our government, the U.S. government, take immediate steps to end the immoral and illegal Israeli bombardment of Gaza and its population which has already resulted in more than 300 deaths, including many women and children."

In addition to refusing to call for a Hamas ceasefire, CAIR officials have dismissed the rocket fire as a minor threat. A December 2008 Associated Press article quoted CAIR Michigan Executive Director Dawud Walid downplaying the threat of Hamas rockets fired at Israel, calling the Hamas rockets, "*a few cheap, homemade, makeshift rockets being fired across the border.*"<sup>3</sup> [Emphasis added]

In "Internet Disinformation #2," CAIR claims its success debunks "extremist arguments that Muslims cannot get fair treatment in our nation." Yet the notion that the U.S. is unfair toward Muslims often is often at the heart of CAIR's message.

CAIR repeatedly claims that Muslims are targeted by law enforcement and offers prosecutions of Muslims accused of helping finance terrorist groups as proof that the U.S. is "at war with Islam." Among the examples are CAIR's reactions to prosecutions of a "[Virginia jihad network](#)," [Sami Al-Arian](#), the [Holy Land Foundation](#) for Relief and Development (HLF) and five of its officers, Hamas political leader Mousa Abu Marzook, Dr. Rafiq Sabir, Hassan Abu-Jihaad (aka Paul Hall) and Nuradin Abdi. CAIR criticized each of these cases following the indictments and criticized many of the convictions and sentencings. In no case did CAIR offer its support to federal law enforcement. Among those it specifically faulted:

- In September 2003, 11 men alleged to be part of a Virginia jihad network were [charged](#) with conspiracy to wage war against the United States and conspiracy to provide material support to Al Qaeda.

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<sup>3</sup> "Israeli assault on Hamas kills more than 200," *Associated Press*, December 27, 2008.

Three of the men, [Masoud Khan](#), [Seifullah Chapman](#), and [Hammad Abdur-Raheem](#), were convicted on multiple charges the following March. Khan was convicted of conspiracy to wage war against the United States and of providing material support to the Taliban. All three were convicted of conspiring to provide material support to Lashkar-e-Taiba, a Designated Foreign Terrorist Organization, [accused of mounting the Mumbai attacks in 2009] and to attack India in violation of the Neutrality Act, as well as various firearms-related offenses, for actions during 2000 to 2003.

Six others pleaded guilty to various charges. Two men, Caliph Basha Abdur-Raheem and Sabri Benkhala, were acquitted.

CAIR-Maryland issued a [press release](#) decrying the convictions. The group's executive director stated, "Although we pride our legal system on the theory of 'presumption of innocence,' the perception within the American Muslim community is that Muslims and Arabs are automatically considered guilty until proven innocent."

Abdur-Raheem was sentenced to life in prison, Chapman to 85 years, and Khan to 97 months.

"It is the near universal perception in the Islamic community that these men would never have been charged had they not been Muslims, and that once convicted, prosecutors would never have sought such draconian sentences," [CAIR said](#) in response.

"Under the current administration," the statement continued, "we are quickly approaching a state of affairs in which there is a two-tier prosecutorial system in America; one system for Muslims, and one for all other Americans. This disturbing trend should be of concern to everyone who values America's centuries-long tradition of equal justice under the law. We call on Congress to conduct hearings into the selective prosecution of Muslims since the 9/11 terror attacks."

- CAIR has advocated on behalf of admitted Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) supporter Sami Al-Arian for years, dismissing allegations about his terrorist connections as "political," ignoring damning evidence that establishes [his support](#) for terrorism and cements [Al-Arian's place](#) in the PIJ leadership.

After his [guilty plea](#) for conspiring to provide goods and services to the PIJ, CAIR [hosted screenings across the country](#) for a documentary sympathetic to his cause. When he was found in civil contempt for refusing to testify before a federal grand jury investigating terror financing – despite a grant of immunity and numerous [court orders](#), CAIR solicited people to write [to the court](#) and to the [Attorney General](#) on behalf of Al-Arian's efforts to get out of jail.

- A grand jury [indicted](#) HLF in 2004 on charges of conspiracy and providing material support to terrorists. After a mistrial in 2007, a jury [convicted](#) HLF and five former officials on 108 counts.

CAIR, as an organization and through its spokesmen, derided each action and continued to cast the charity as a victim of a fear-driven campaign by the U.S. Justice Department even as damning evidence was released publicly.

When HLF was shut down, CAIR spokesman Ibrahim Hooper dismissed the move as “ill-advised and counter-productive. The only specific accusation is that [HLF funds] feed the orphans of suicide bombers along with hundreds of other children.”<sup>4</sup> Interviewed by the *New York Times*, [Hooper said](#), “This action is really creating outrage in the Muslim community. The Holy Foundation has a long history of being a respected Muslim charity that does good work...”

CAIR joined seven other US Islamic groups in [a statement](#) condemning HLF’s closure. Their release stated:

“American Muslims support President Bush’s effort to cut off funding for terrorism and we call for a peaceful resolution to the Middle East conflict. These goals will not be achieved by taking food out of the mouths of Palestinian orphans or by succumbing to politically-motivated smear campaigns by those who would perpetuate Israel’s brutal occupation.”

The [statement](#) continued:

“We ask that President Bush reconsider what we believe is an unjust and counterproductive move that can only damage America’s credibility with Muslims in this country and around the world and could create the impression that there has been a shift from a war on terrorism to an attack on Islam.”

After the 2004 indictment, CAIR tried to de-legitimize the prosecution by [arguing](#) Hamas-related evidence seized by the Israeli military was “tainted by foreign intelligence sources from a nation that has its own political agenda.”

As noted in IPT Fact Check 1, evidence in that trial implicated CAIR officials, including Awad, in the conspiracy to support Hamas. For example, Awad [participated](#) in a secret meeting of Hamas supporters in Philadelphia, called in September 1993 to discuss ways to derail U.S.-led peace efforts opposed by Hamas.

Awad has not addressed his presence at the Philadelphia meeting, CAIR’s listing on a Palestine Committee [agenda](#) or his own appearance on the Palestine Committee [phone list](#).

The sweeping convictions in the HLF trial in November 2008 were [dismissed](#) by CAIR as “based more on fear-mongering than on the facts.”

- In 2007, CAIR solicited people to attend [sentencing hearings](#) for Mohamed Salah and Abdelhaleem Ashqar. Prosecutors say both men were Hamas members and financiers. Ashqar even competed with HLF as the American-fundraising arm for Hamas until [being told](#) to back off.

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<sup>4</sup> Julia Malone, “Bush Expands War Front to Texas Charity,” Cox News Service, December 4, 2001.

**In 2008, CAIR Chicago presented an award to Michael Deutsch for his “tireless and passionate advocacy and representation” of Mohammad Salah at the organization’s 4<sup>th</sup> annual banquet. The award was presented by CAIR-Chicago’s Christina Abraham and Reem Rahman. In his recognition speech he called Mohammed Salah a “great patriot.”<sup>5</sup>**

**[CAIR’s claim] Internet Disinformation #3:** Rather than praise the conviction of the perpetrators of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, CAIR or Nihad Awad deemed it “a travesty of justice.”

This is a lie; no evidence substantiating this falsehood has ever been offered. No CAIR document or official ever made such a statement. CAIR obtained hard copies of relevant editions of the *Muslim World Monitor*, the publication in which Awad is alleged to have made this remark. Awad never wrote or spoke the comment or anything like it. In addition, he was not the editor in chief of *Muslim World Monitor* as CAIR’s detractors claim.

CAIR has never dealt with this case other than a one-paragraph mention in the 1996 CAIR report on Muslim civil rights in which CAIR quoted attorney Stanley Cohen as saying that he thought “. . . the case against his client is political rather than criminal.”

**IPT Fact-Check: This is classic CAIR dissembling. Again, readers see no specific instance in which the quote is erroneously cited. And the item makes it sound as if the statement never appeared in the *Muslim World Monitor* and that Awad was nowhere near it if it was.**

**The quote calling the Trade Center verdict “a travesty of justice” appeared in the *Monitor*’s March 31, 1994 issue. CAIR would not be created for at least three more months, so no one could find a CAIR document or CAIR official making the statement.**

**However, the statement appears in an editorial, speaking on behalf the *Muslim World Monitor*, on page 10 of the issue. (See scan [here](#)). The *Monitor* was published by the Islamic Association for Palestine, and Awad is listed as “contributing editor,” a designation that appears in [14 editions](#) including the one with the unsigned editorial (speaking for the publication) on the WTC verdict.**

**[CAIR’s claim] Internet Disinformation #4: CAIR receives foreign money.** CAIR’s operational budget is funded by donations from American Muslims. While the majority of CAIR’s financial support comes from American Muslims, CAIR is proud to receive the support of every individual--whether Muslim, Christian, Jewish, or of another faith background--who supports the

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<sup>5</sup> CAIR-Chicago Annual Banquet, Rosemont, Illinois, February 23, 2008.

organization's mission of promoting justice and mutual understanding. This willingness to accept support from foreign nationals exists as long as there are no "strings" attached to the bequest.

The U.S. government, corporations and many other non-profit organizations—such as the American Red Cross--routinely receive money from foreign nationals. CAIR is frequently criticized for receiving \$500,000 from Prince Alwaleed bin Talal, one of the world's richest men. That money was donated specifically to CAIR's Library Project, a program designed to distribute a set of books on Islam, the majority of which were written by non-Muslim academics, to libraries so that people can learn more about Islam. According to Forbes magazine, Bin Talal's Kingdom Holding "...contains his investments in well-known companies such as Citigroup and News Corp., as well as Four Seasons Hotels and Fairmont Hotel management companies, among many others." (Forbes, 3/05/2008)

News Corp. is headed by Rupert Murdoch and is the parent company of Fox News Channel.

If CAIR is taken to task for bin Talal's donation to us, so should these companies be taken to task for accepting his money.

CAIR was proud to receive that donation to help further efforts to eradicate ignorance and misinformation about Islam.

#### **IPT Fact-Check:**

**CAIR ignores several trips abroad its official have made to solicit money, including at least two trips abroad in 2006 seeking millions of dollars in donations from wealthy Gulf donors. One public account of that trip can be seen [here](#). In addition, State Department cables obtained by the IPT through Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests demonstrate that the CAIR delegations briefed U.S. Embassy officials in [Saudi Arabia](#) and the [United Arab Emirates](#) about their efforts.**

**The CAIR delegation that met with Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum included: North Carolina State Senator Larry Shaw [currently CAIR Board Chairman]; former U.S. Rep. Paul Findley, Don Myers of the Washington D.C. public relations firm Hill & Knowlton; Nihad Awad, CAIR Executive Director and Co-Founder; Ibrahim Hooper, CAIR Communications Director; Dr. Parvez Ahmed, then-CAIR Board Chairman; and Dr. Nabil Sadoun, CAIR Board Member.**

**Paul Findley, who led the delegation, told U.S. officials that he briefed Sheikh Hamdan on CAIR's strategic plan to correct the image of Islam and Muslims among the American public. During this briefing, CAIR provided suggestions for countering "Islamophobia" or "negative stereotypes about Muslims in the U.S." as well as for "addressing anti-Americanism in the Middle East." Myers, a Hill & Knowlton executive, gave a demonstration of a "PR campaign designed to support CAIR's overall organization." The campaign had several objectives including political empowerment of Muslims, grassroots efforts by CAIR to improve community relations with non-Muslims, and launching a 5-year outreach campaign**

to counter negative stereotypes about Muslims.

A month after its trip to the UAE, CAIR sent a delegation to Saudi Arabia in June 2006. The visit was prompted by a June 22 phone call to the Saudi Embassy to discuss CAIR's organization and outreach strategies. Prior to their visit to Riyadh, the CAIR delegation visited Mecca and Jeddah where they were not received "at the highest levels of the SAG," but were assured that "*King Abdullah knows CAIR very well*" and "*receives regular updates*" on CAIR's projects [emphasis added]. Due to CAIR's previous successes in May during the delegation's visit to the UAE, CAIR "predicted that they would be back in the region by fall to visit Kuwait and Qatar."

Similar to its UAE presentation, CAIR cited its cooperation with U.S. State Department officials such as Secretary Rice and Undersecretary Hughes. Myers again presented a CAIR funded media campaign. This time, he added that the multi-year broadcast and print campaign would be entitled "Let the Conversation Begin." While CAIR did not share the details of its success in its visit to Saudi Arabia the group did admit that one "*reason for the group's current visit to the KSA [Saudi Arabia] was to solicit \$50 million in governmental and non-governmental contributions.*" [emphasis added]

Indications of CAIR's intentions to solicit money during the meetings included discussion by the PA Counselor who "*noted that private outreach activities can provide valuable support to USG efforts to build mutual understanding overseas but cautioned that USG Public Diplomacy (PD) funds cannot be used or associated with efforts to target American audiences.*" [italics added] The CAIR delegation was interested in the details of the Embassy's Public Diplomacy exchange and activities and offered to help support them in any appropriate way.

Meanwhile, for the tax reporting year of 2005, CAIR received \$1,366,466 in donations from Saudi businessman Adnan Bogary, whose reported address was PO Box 1800, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Three other CAIR trips abroad to solicit funds occurred from 1998 to 2002. Reports indicate that CAIR was successful in obtaining funds from at least one of their attempts to solicit money from the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY) in Saudi Arabia.

In July 1998, Nihad Awad addressed a news conference at WAMY's headquarters urging Muslims worldwide to boycott Nike products. The company, he claimed, breached a contract to stop selling shoes with a symbol considered offensive to Muslims. Awad solicited funds from the audience saying that, "we[CAIR] can not defuse such anti-Islamic propaganda with a few hundred dollars budget."<sup>6</sup> Awad said that CAIR needed funds to stop discrimination against Muslims.

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<sup>6</sup> Shahid Ali Khan, "Nike violating agreement on offensive logo, says CAIR," *Saudi Gazette*, July 3, 1998.

**In December 1999, at a WAMY press conference, WAMY Assistant Secretary General Dr. Hameed Shaygi pledged \$3.5 million for a CAIR headquarters in Washington, D.C. Nihad Awad of CAIR was present and gave a presentation outlining CAIR's role in changing the public opinion on Islam in the U.S. Dr. Shaygi urged the crowd to support CAIR in order to change the stereotype of Muslims in the U.S.<sup>7</sup>**

In November 2002 Awad traveled to Saudi Arabia seeking money for a CAIR advertising campaign in American newspapers. During his trip, WAMY pledged to fully finance a CAIR media campaign on Islam to counter "the growing Islamic sentiment in the U.S." A spokesman at WAMY's News Office, Muhammad Bin Ali Al-Qotaibi, said that WAMY would provide **\$1.04 million** to run ads in *USA Today* every Friday for a year.<sup>8</sup>

**[CAIR's claim] Internet Disinformation #5:** CAIR Executive Director Nihad Awad publicly declared support for Hamas at Barry University in Florida in 1994, saying: "I'm in support of the Hamas movement."

CAIR detractors—such as Steven Emerson and Daniel Pipes—selectively recycle this and other incomplete statements to assert their pre-fabricated conclusions. In response to a direct question from an audience member about social programs in the occupied territories, Awad said, "I'm in support of the Hamas movement more than the PLO." This excerpt was lifted from a longer answer in which Awad also stated: "There are some radicals. We are not interested in those people." This statement was made in March 1994, before CAIR was formed. Hamas did not commit its first suicide bombing until October 1994. The United States subsequently identified Hamas as a specially designated terrorist in January 1995. Thus, Awad's remarks came seven months prior to Hamas' first suicide bombings and nine months before the organization received the specially designated terrorist label from the government. (Awad's response to suicide bombings: "My position and CAIR's position is extremely clear - we condemn suicide bombings" Associated Press, 9/22/2006)

Awad and CAIR have consistently denounced violence by Hamas, Israel and other groups and advocated peaceful and negotiated resolutions to conflicts in the Middle East and elsewhere.

**IPT Fact-Check: CAIR is fond of emphasizing the 1995 designation of Hamas as a terrorist group, hinting that any indication of support prior to that point should not be objectionable. That's a little ironic, since CAIR spokesman Ibrahim Hooper denounced President Clinton's order, telling the *Washington Post* on the day it was issued:**

**"We've been fearing something like this for a long time because there have been elements in the pro-Israeli lobby accusing Muslim groups of raising**

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<sup>7</sup> Jayid Hassan, "WAMY Spends SR12m on New Mosques," *Arab News*, December 23, 1999.

<sup>8</sup> Shahid Ali Khan, "WAMY supports CAIR campaign against US anti-Islamic sentiment," *Saudi Gazette*, November 13, 2002.



money for these kinds of purposes, with no evidence whatsoever of diversion of funds.”

The Hamas charter was issued in 1988 and, as noted above, distributed by the Islamic Association for Palestine while Awad was an IAP officer. Among its tenets:

**“Article 13: Peaceful Solutions, [Peace] Initiatives and International Conferences**  
[Peace] initiatives, the so-called peaceful solutions, and the international conferences to resolve the Palestinian problem, are all contrary to the beliefs of the Islamic Resistance Movement.”

**“Article 15: When our enemies usurp some Islamic lands, Jihad becomes a duty binding on all Muslims. In order to face the usurpation of Palestine by the Jews, we have no escape from raising the banner of Jihad.”**

It is important to note that when Awad made his comments “in support of the Hamas movement” in 1994, the PLO was pursuing a negotiated peace initiative which Hamas rejected in total. And that is what makes the Philadelphia meeting significant. Awad [participated](#) in that meeting, which focused on the group’s opposition to the U.S.-led Oslo Accords.

His claim that his statement should not be seen as a Hamas endorsement might be more persuasive if he hadn’t spent a weekend holed up with two dozen Hamas members and supporters in Philadelphia just six months earlier. Transcripts of FBI recordings from that meeting show that Awad even [referenced “Samah,”](#) the simple code meeting participants tried to follow instead of saying Hamas. In that same transcript, fellow CAIR co-founder Omar Ahmad, who just left CAIR after years as its chairman emeritus, offered one of many examples in which he discussed sugar-coating the group’s message to avoid spooking Americans:

**“But when I stand up and tell him that Sharia [Islamic law] says so and so, the Jews are God’s enemy for instance ... I won’t say ‘God’s enemy.’ I will say it in a way ... citing the Islamic aspect, that the Islamic aspect prohibits that.”**

Hamas, meanwhile, had a well-established record of violence and terrorism before the order was signed and before Awad made his contested remarks at Barry University. Among them:

- On May 3, 1989, a Hamas member stabbed five people, killing two of them, in a Jerusalem market.
- On October 16, 1992, Hamas stabbed an orthodox Jewish seminary student.
- On January 3, 1993, Hamas bombed a bus.
- On April 6, 1994, a Hamas suicide bomber blew up a bus in northern Israel, killing nine and wounding 44.

- **Days later, on April 13, 1994, another Hamas suicide bomber blew up a bus, killing five and injuring 30.**
- **On October 9, 1994, two Hamas terrorists ran down a busy street firing AK-47s indiscriminately. Two people were killed – one Israeli and one Palestinian. Thirteen were injured including an American diplomat.**

**[CAIR's claim] Internet Disinformation #6:** The labeling of the organization as an unindicted co-conspirator in a trial in Dallas, TX implies that CAIR was somehow involved with criminal activity.

The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals and other courts have unequivocally held that the public naming of unindicted co-conspirators in pre-trial proceedings violates the Constitutionally protected due process rights of the uncharged parties. This unjust designation implies to the public that those listed are somehow involved in criminal activity; it negatively impacted CAIR's ability to conduct proactive relations with government officials and law enforcement agencies on civil rights issues. (See #9 below for one example.)

In May 2007, the Department of Justice publicly named 307 individuals and organizations as "unindicted co-conspirators" (UCC) in a filing associated with the first Holy Land Foundation trial, which ending in a hung jury.

The UCC list includes three of the largest American Muslim organizations – The Islamic Society of North America (ISNA, the largest Muslim organization in America), The North American Islamic Trust (NAIT, the largest Muslim endowment/trust in America) and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (the largest Muslim civil liberties group in America).

The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals previously held that designating an individual as an unindicted co-conspirator violates the Fifth Amendment's liberty and property protections, as such a designation does not afford the designee the opportunity to defend his name. See *In re Edward S. Smith*, 656 F.2d 1101, 1107 (5th Cir. 1981). The court held that "no legitimate governmental interest is served by an official public smear of an individual when that individual has not been provided a forum in which to vindicate his rights." *Id* at 1106.

Making the UCC list public contradicts the Justice Department's own guidelines, which indicate that such lists are to remain sealed to prevent the unfair labeling of those who are not facing any criminal charges.

The Justice Department's manual for prosecutors says: "In all public filings and proceedings, federal prosecutors should remain sensitive to the privacy and reputation interests of uncharged third-parties." The guidelines further state that when co-conspirator lists must be filed in court, prosecutors should seek to file them under seal.

No legitimate reason for the necessity of publicly filing the names of UCC's has ever been offered, but government sources have acknowledged that it was a legal tactic.

In August 2007 Newsweek reported, "According to one senior law-enforcement official (who asked not to be named talking about an ongoing case), the listing of ISNA, CAIR and other groups as 'unindicted co-conspirators' was largely a tactical move by the government." (Newsweek, 8/08/2007) A June 2008 ACLU

press release also reports, “The prosecutor also acknowledged that the public labeling was simply a ‘legal tactic’ intended to allow the government to introduce hearsay evidence against HLF later at trial.”

Three federal prosecutors asked by the Los Angeles Times about the practice of publicly naming unindicted co-conspirators called it "improper" and "unfair."

**IPT Fact-check: CAIR’s representation ignores the fact there was a retrial in the HLF case in the fall of 2008 and that it ended in sweeping guilty verdicts. In sentencing the five defendants to lengthy prison terms, the presiding judge [repeatedly said](#) that “The purpose of creating the Holy Land Foundation was as a fundraising arm for Hamas,”**

**This entire section by CAIR laments the fact that the [unindicted co-conspirator list](#) was made public. No effort is made to rebut the evidence that prompted CAIR to be included among members of the “Palestine Committee.”**

**A brief summary of that evidence includes an internal Palestine Committee [meeting agenda](#) which identifies CAIR as a committee member. An internal [telephone list](#) includes CAIR founders Nihad Awad and Omar Ahmad. On the meeting agenda, CAIR is listed along with the United Association for Studies and Research (UASR) - a think-tank founded by Hamas Deputy Political Director Mousa Abu Marzook; the Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP) - a charity where Ahmad and Awad previously worked; and HLF. Those three entities also are listed in 1991 Palestine Committee [organizational chart](#).**

**In the telephone list, Marzook is the first entry listed. His assistant, Ismael Elbarrase is listed, too, along with UASR director Ahmed Yousef, who now is a spokesman to deposed Hamas Prime Minister Ismael Haniyeh. Awad is the 32<sup>nd</sup> name listed and Ahmad is 25<sup>th</sup>, albeit under the name “Omar Yahya,” which he acknowledges is a pseudonym.**

**Meanwhile, the FBI and federal prosecutors – those most familiar with the evidence - are unequivocal in linking CAIR to Hamas support. In a brief responding to CAIR’s petition to be removed from the co-conspirator list, prosecutors [argued](#) it wouldn’t change anything:**

**“In the instant case, striking CAIR’s name from the attachment to the Trial Brief will not prevent its conspiratorial involvement with HLF, and others affiliated with Hamas, from becoming a matter of public record. That has already occurred as a consequence of the presentation of evidence at trial.”**

**[And:](#)**

**“CAIR has been identified by the Government at trial as a participant in an ongoing and ultimately unlawful conspiracy to support a designated terrorist**

**organization, a conspiracy from which CAIR never withdrew.” [Emphasis added]**

**As mentioned earlier in this report, the FBI’s decision to cut off outreach communications with CAIR is rooted in uncertainty “whether *there continues to be a connection between CAIR or its executives and HAMAS.*” [Emphasis added]**

**[CAIR’s claim] Internet Disinformation #7:** Former CAIR employees and board members have been arrested, convicted, deported, or otherwise linked to terrorism-related charges and activities.

The short answer to this is guilt by association. CAIR has hundreds of board members and employees and thousands of supporters. It would be illogical and unfair to hold CAIR responsible for the personal activities of all these people. For example, when Aldrich Ames (CIA) and Robert Hanssen (FBI) admitted to being spies for foreign governments, it did not automatically associate the CIA or FBI with being complicit in any of these criminal activities. Currently, former members of US Congress are serving jail time and others are under the cloud of ethical suspicion. Does such behavior by members of Congress while in office incriminate the entire U.S. Congress?

The acts of a person done outside the scope or duration of his or her employment, and without the employer’s knowledge, have no legal bearing on the employer. CAIR believes that anyone who is found guilty of committing a crime, especially one that furthers terrorist motives, should receive a fair, objective trial and, if found guilty, be punished to the fullest extent of the law. CAIR would never compromise its principles, both American and Islamic, in the furtherance or assistance of any illegal endeavors.

McCarthy-like attempts to portray CAIR as guilty by association with certain individuals evoke memories of attempts to smear Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as a communist or womanizer.

The smears normally involve the following individuals: Ismail Royer, Dr. Bassem El-Khafagi, Rabih Haddad, and Ghassan Elashi.

**ISMAIL ROYER**

In January 2004, Royer pled guilty to weapons charges. He did not plead guilty to any charge of “terrorism.” Any criminal action to which he pleaded guilty was done when Royer was no longer employed with CAIR and it was certainly not at CAIR’s direction.

**BASSEM EL-KHAFAGI**

El-Khafagi was never an employee of CAIR and was never convicted on terrorism charges. According to the Associated Press (AP) article announcing his plea, federal officials stated that he was charged with writing bad checks in February and June of 2001. El-Khafagi was an independent contractor for CAIR, effective November 2, 2001. The actions of which he was accused occurred before any relationship with CAIR had commenced and without any knowledge by CAIR’s of any wrongdoing on his part. Writing bad checks is a criminal offense, not terrorism. Surely if there had been strong evidence of terrorist

activities, the Justice Department would have vigorously pursued those avenues and not allowed him to plead guilty to non-terrorism related charges.

#### RABIH HADDAD

Haddad was never an employee of CAIR, was “deported for overstaying his tourist visa” and was “never charged with a crime.” He was never an employee or associate of CAIR. His only association with CAIR was as a speaker at a single CAIR chapter event. He was not a “CAIR fundraiser,” as is sometimes claimed.

#### GHASSAN ELASHI

Elashi was never an employee or officer of CAIR. The fact that Elashi was once briefly associated with one of our more than 30 regional chapters has no legal significance to our corporation since any actions he took were outside the scope and chronology of his association with one of our chapters.

#### **IPT Fact Check:**

**CAIR raises the Ames and Hanssen cases to argue that an isolated case should not reflect on the whole organization. And that would be a fine argument had CAIR been tainted by an isolated case or two. In this case, however, CAIR misleadingly explains away the arrests of four of its employees and fund raisers while ignoring at least three other cases.**

**That CAIR expresses no concern about this volume says plenty about the organization’s ability to be candid about itself.**

**What the cases share is a desire to help jihadists or to even participate in jihad.**

- **[Randall Royer](#) was in fact still employed with CAIR when he committed the criminal action to which he pled guilty. CAIR’s claim that Royer did not plead guilty to any charges of terrorism conceals allegations against Royer for his ties to [Lashkar-e-Taiba](#), a designated Foreign Terrorist Organization and charges against Royer for conspiracy to levy war against the U.S. and conspiracy to provide material support to Al Qaeda, another terrorist organization.**

**According to [a biography](#) posted on IslamOnline.net, Royer began working as a CAIR communication specialist in 1997. According to [media reports](#), he continued to work for CAIR at least through the beginning of October 2001.<sup>9</sup>**

**This fact contradicts CAIR’s claim that “[a]ny criminal action to which he pleaded guilty was done when Royer was no longer employed with CAIR.”**

**Strictly speaking, CAIR is correct in saying Royer’s guilty plea to weapons charges did not mention terrorism. On the other hand, he never contested prosecution claims that he had an AK-47 style rifle and 219 rounds of ammunition [in his car](#) during a September 2001 traffic stop, or that he engaged in propaganda work for**

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<sup>9</sup> See also: Dave Lenckus, “US Muslims Advised to Address Racism Risks; Advocates Encourage Community Work,” *Crain Communications, Inc. Business Insurance*, October 1, 2001.

Lashkar-e-Taiba and “[fired at](#) Indian positions in Kashmir.” Lashkar-e-Taiba was [designated](#) a Foreign Terrorist Organization on December 26, 2001.

Rather, Royer agreed to cooperate with the government in its prosecution of other Lashkar-related cases. In [this excerpt](#) of grand jury testimony, Royer acknowledges attending a meeting five days after the 9/11 attacks about “what the response of Muslims in the United States should be.” The group was advised “it was a positive thing for Muslims to go and help the Taliban defend against the U.S. invasion.”

- Bassam Khafagi served as CAIR’s director of community relations as late as November 1, 2002.<sup>10</sup> CAIR claims that “Khafagi was never an ‘employee’ of CAIR, but Executive Director Nihad Awad [acknowledges](#) “[h]e was commissioned as an independent contractor for CAIR, effective November 2, 2001.”

Khafagi also served as president of the Islamic Assembly of North America, which the *Washington Post* [reported](#) in 2003 was suspected of being “a powerful engine for groups that promote teachings and religious *fatwas* -- orders that advocate violence against the United States -- issued by two radical Saudi clerics.”

Khafagi was arrested and indicted in January 2003 on bank fraud charges.<sup>11</sup> “At the time of his arrest,” the *Associated Press* [reported](#), “he was community affairs director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, a Muslim civil rights and advocacy group based in Washington.”<sup>12</sup> In September 2003, he pleaded guilty to bank and visa fraud<sup>13</sup> and agreed to be deported to Egypt.<sup>14</sup>

- Ghassan Elashi was a founding board member of CAIR-Texas<sup>15</sup> and is a twice-convicted felon.

He was [convicted](#) in July 2004 on 12 counts of money laundering and dealing in the property of a Specially Designated Terrorist through a family-owned computer business called Infocom. In 2008, he was [convicted](#) on 35 counts of money laundering and providing material support to Hamas and sentenced to 65 years in prison.

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<sup>10</sup> Khafagi was listed as the Director of Community Relations for CAIR at a fundraiser held in Houston on November 1, 2002.

<sup>11</sup> *US v. Khafagi*, Case No. 03-CR 80087, “Indictment,” (E.D. Mich. February 13, 2003).

<sup>12</sup> “Former Head of Islamic Charity Sentenced in Fraud Case,” *Associated Press*, November 13, 2003 and Bill Morlin, “Egyptian with UI Ties Held in Probe,” *Spokane Spokesman-Review*, March 14, 2003.

<sup>13</sup> “Ex-Head of Islamic Charity Pleads Guilty,” *Associated Press*, September 10, 2003.

<sup>14</sup> “Former Head of Islamic Charity Sentenced in Fraud Case,” *Associated Press*, November 13, 2003

<sup>15</sup> CAIR Articles of Incorporation, Texas Secretary of State, September 29, 1998.

**[CAIR's claim] Internet Disinformation #8:** The FBI severed relations with CAIR in October 2008

Shortly before the end of the Bush administration, FBI offices contacted many CAIR chapters stating that they were suspending some ties between the Washington-based civil rights and advocacy group and FBI field offices.

The letters also stated that the FBI will continue to work with CAIR on civil rights issues impacting American Muslims.

A number of anti-Muslim Internet sites have promoted the story as a means to smear CAIR. However, these same sites have been forced to admit that the Bush administration's policy has not been fully accepted by local FBI officials.

According to WorldNetDaily.com, a site many argue adopts a significant anti-Muslim tone: "F.B.I. sources, however, say the new policy has not been uniformly followed since it was put into effect late last summer. They say there is still political resistance to the rule, which has generated complaints from some in the Muslim community." (1/30/2009)

CAIR is a civil rights and advocacy group that often challenged Bush administration policies. It is not surprising that we would be targeted in a purely political move by those in the previous administration who sought to prevent us from defending the civil rights of American Muslims.

This campaign of smears and misinformation is an unfortunate legacy of the Bush administration's misguided and counterproductive efforts to marginalize mainstream American Muslim organizations.

The true losers under this unfortunate policy are those FBI officials who will have their access to the mainstream American Muslim community restricted by the Bush administration's directive that prevents them from taking part in the many public activities such as town hall meetings and diversity workshops sponsored by CAIR chapters.

We hope the FBI will not be perceived as turning back the clock on the civil rights movement to a time when those who defended civil liberties were targeted, as was the case with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

It should be noted that even if the Bush administration's politically-motivated policy remains in place, CAIR chapters nationwide will continue to work with local law enforcement agencies and the FBI on issues related to our core mission of defending the civil rights of all Americans.

Going forward, we will do our utmost to work with the new administration to ensure that public officials and representatives of law enforcement agencies hear the voices of American Muslims.

We look forward to returning to normal relations with law enforcement now that there is a new administration.

**IPT Fact-Check: Having ignored all the evidence linking CAIR founders to a Hamas support network, it's easy to cast the FBI's decision to cut off CAIR's access to "an unfortunate legacy of the Bush administration's misguided" effort. A more compelling argument could be offered – why did it take the FBI so long to sever its dialogue with an entity its own agents say is a front for terrorists, or at least terror supporters?**



**And the Bush Administration has been gone for six months, yet the FBI's posture toward CAIR does not appear to be wavering. In response, CAIR seems to have dug in its heels, protesting the FBI's use of informants to root out possible [terrorist plots](#) and [terror supporters](#) and joining a group of organizations contemplating [a boycott](#) on communication with the Bureau.**

Details about this appear above in the fact checks to points 1 and 6, however a summary of the evidence can be seen [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

**On May 7, CAIR quietly announced that co-founder and Chairman Emeritus Omar Ahmad was retiring. No reason was given. CAIR seems to hope that Ahmad's departure will assuage FBI concerns.**

#### **[CAIR's claim] Conclusion**

CAIR is a high-profile organization that represents a minority in the United States that is often treated as suspect and frequently subjected to discrimination. We recognize that this very public profile, along with our community's current struggle to find full acceptance in our nation's pluralistic landscape, will draw the ire of nativists, bigots and those who seek to profit from the Islamophobic "fear industry."

CAIR board chairman and South Carolina State Senator Larry Shaw summed up the truth of the organization's mission when he issued the following statement in March, 2009: "CAIR exists to uphold the right to liberty that Americans are guaranteed under the Constitution. We will challenge any attempts to erode constitutionally-protected liberties. We will also continue to work to ensure that American Muslims play a positive and productive role in our society.

"In carrying out our mission of promoting justice and mutual understanding, we honor and will continue to learn from groups who have faced similar challenges, including African-Americans, Asian-Americans and many others.

"CAIR embraces the cultural and religious pluralism that is a hallmark of America and repudiates any misuse of Islam to falsely justify violence or intolerance.

"We look forward to partnering with the Obama administration to help defend civil liberties and to project to the world the best of our nation's universal, constitutional and pluralistic values of freedom and justice."

We realize that many people and entities are subjected to the misinformation campaign about CAIR. It is our hope that those who seek the truth and are willing to evaluate the full picture share these responses with interested individuals and entities.

For more information, please visit [www.cair.com](http://www.cair.com).

**IPT Response: CAIR ends its report as it began, with a blanket, unsubstantiated smear of its critics. They are "nativists, bigots and those who seek to profit from the**

**Islamophobic ‘fear industry.’” There’s no factual reference to rebut this. Readers can decide for themselves whether there is any merit to the claim.**

**However, it is unfortunate that CAIR, which demands that it be taken seriously as a national voice for American Muslims, refuses to confront its history honestly or to simply acknowledge that its political ideology stands in league with terrorists and terror financiers because it agrees with their politics.**