

# TRUTH OR CAIR

THE COUNCIL ON AMERICAN ISLAMIC RELATIONS (CAIR)

*“we know [CAIR] has ties to terrorism”<sup>1</sup>*

*Senator Charles Schumer, September 2003*



*“... I am in support of the  
HAMAS movement...”<sup>2</sup>*

*CAIR Executive Director  
Nihad Awad*

*Barry University, March 22, 1994*

HAMAS is designated by the US Department of State as a Foreign Terrorist Organization, and is responsible for murdering 19 Americans and wounding over 30 more in terrorist attacks. HAMAS is also responsible for killing another 207 individuals, and wounding 1,415 others.

*“CAIR originated from the HAMAS front group, Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP), and has evolved into a propaganda arm for HAMAS and other militant fundamentalists”.<sup>3</sup>*

*Former FBI Counterterrorism Chief Steve Pomerantz*



*Five Americans were killed by HAMAS at Hebrew University on July 31, 2002*

CAIR was established by IAP founder Omar Ahmad and former public relations director Nihad Awad in 1994<sup>4</sup> on seed money provided by the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development (HLFRD)<sup>5</sup>; an organization that was declared a Specially Designated Global Terrorist by Executive Order 13224 in December 2001<sup>6</sup> for funneling millions of dollars to individuals and organizations linked to HAMAS between 1995 and 2001<sup>7</sup> (the HLFRD was founded by Mousa Mohammed Abu Marzook, the Deputy Chief of HAMAS' Political Bureau in Syria, and former HLFRD chairman and executive director Ghassan Elashi, who was also a founding board member of CAIR-Texas<sup>8</sup>). Conversely, CAIR helped raise money for the HLFRD. Shortly following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, CAIR placed on its website, under a picture of the World Trade Center in flames, a solicitation for donations. It read “Donate to the NY/DC Emergency Relief Fund”. This fund did not exist; instead, the link provided led directly to the website for donations to the HLFRD. CAIR shut down its HLFRD fundraising link in December 2001 after the HLFRD was declared a Specially Designated Global Terrorist and the material support of this organization was criminalized under Justice Department U.S. Code Title 18, Part 1, Chapter 113B, Section 2339A.<sup>9</sup>

CAIR has repeatedly provided political cover for militant extremists by portraying US government efforts to combat terrorists and their support networks as religiously motivated attacks against Islam. CAIR characterized the Bush Administration's freezing of HLFRD assets as “an attack on Islam”.<sup>10</sup> CAIR also portrayed the extradition order for HAMAS leader Mousa Mohammed Abu Marzook as “anti-Islamic”<sup>11</sup> and the conviction of Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman for his role in the 1993 New York City landmark bombing conspiracies as a “hate crime”.<sup>12</sup>

Muslim leaders have openly described CAIR as an extremist organization. Sheikh Abdul Hadi Palazzi, head of the Italian Muslim Association, refers to CAIR as the “U.S. section of HAMAS”<sup>13</sup>. Sheikh Muhammed Hisham Kabbani of the Islamic Supreme Council of America described CAIR as one of “many Muslim organizations that claim to speak on behalf of the Muslim community but that in reality are not moderate, but extremist.”<sup>14</sup> Egyptian peace activist Seif Ashmawy, who published the “Voice of Peace” newsletter about Muslim affairs, stated that CAIR has “defended, apologized for, and rationalized the actions of extremist groups [...] The real challenge for moderates such as myself is to prevent my Muslim brethren from [being] deceived by extremist groups that pretend to represent their interests.”<sup>15</sup>

## NOTES

- 1) US Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Terrorism, Technology and Homeland Security, September 2003
- 2) Statement by Nihad Awad at a panel discussion, "The Road to Peace: The Challenge of the Middle East", Barry University, March 22, 1994
- 3) Journal of Counter Terrorism and Security International, Spring 1998
- 4) Testimony of Matthew Eppstein before the US Senate Judiciary Committee Subcommittee on Terrorism, Technology, and Homeland Security, "Saudi Support for Islamic Extremism in the United States", September 10, 2003
- 5) IRS Form 1023, Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development
- 6) US Attorney General Transcript, "News Conference with President Bush and Secretary O' Neill", December 4, 2001
- 7) Anti-Defamation League, "The Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development", July 27, 2004
- 8) US Department of the Treasury Press Release, August 22, 2003; Anti-Defamation League, "The Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development", July 27, 2004
- 9) Joseph Kaufman, "The CAIR-Terror Connection", April 29, 2004
- 10) John Perazzo, " Hamas and Hizzoneer", March 5, 2003
- 11) Daniel Pipes, "CAIR: 'Moderate' Friends of Terror", April 22, 2002
- 12) John Perazzo, " Hamas and Hizzoneer", March 5, 2003
- 13) Art Moore, "Sheikh Joins Rabbi's Condemnation of Arafat'", March 12, 2003
- 14) Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, "Council on American Islamic Relations", 2004
- 15) Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, "Council on American Islamic Relations", 2004