

Current Trends in Islamist Ideology

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Edited by
Hillel Fradkin,
Husain Haqqani,
and Eric Brown

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The Muslim Brotherhood's U.S. Network

by Zeyno Baran

WASHINGTON D.C. HAS SUDDENLY BECOME VERY INTERESTED IN the Muslim Brotherhood. American policymakers are debating whether to engage non-violent elements of the Muslim Brotherhood network, both inside and outside the United States, in the hope that such engagement will empower these “moderates” against violent Wahhabi and Salafi groups such as al-Qaeda. Unfortunately, this strategy is based on a false assumption: that “moderate” Islamist groups will confront and weaken their violent co-religionists, robbing them of their support base.

This lesser-of-two-evils strategy is reminiscent of the rationale behind the Cold War-era decision to support the Afghan mujahideen against the Soviet army. In the short term, the U.S. alliance with the mujahideen did indeed aid America in its struggle against the Soviet Union. In the long term, however, U.S. support led to the empowerment of a dangerous and potent adversary. In choosing its allies, the U.S. cannot afford to elevate short-term tactical considerations above longer-term strategic ones. Most importantly, the U.S. must consider the *ideology* of any potential partners. Although various Islamist groups do quarrel over tactics and often bear considerable animosity towards one another, they all agree on the endgame: a world dictated by political Islam. A “divide and conquer” strategy by the United States will only push them closer together.

Even though the Muslim Brotherhood (in Arabic, *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*) does not openly call for violence or terrorism, it still does little to oppose it. In fact, it may provide an ideological springboard for future violence. This is not to say that all Salafis will one day become terrorists; the vast majority will never engage in violence and likely abhor terrorist acts. Nevertheless, the first step on the road to jihadi terrorism

is instruction in Islamist ideology. Nearly all individuals involved in terrorism—whether as a foot soldiers executing the attack or an upper level mastermind, financier, or recruiter—start out as non-violent Salafi Islamists, and many were once Brotherhood members. For example, Khaled Sheikh Mohammed, mastermind of the September 11 terrorist attacks, told U.S. interrogators that he was first drawn to violent jihad after attending Brotherhood youth camps.¹ It is therefore inexplicable that policymakers should seek to empower Islamist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood as a strategy to combat terrorism.

The deciding factor in determining which Muslims can be allies in the “long war” cannot be based on tactics—that is, whether or not a group eschews violent methods.² The deciding factor must be ideological: Is the group Islamist or not?

On Islamism

WHAT DO I MEAN BY “ISLAMIST?” THE TERM WAS COINED BY THE FOUNDER OF THE Muslim Brotherhood, Hassan al-Banna, in an effort to politicize Islam.³ Broadly, the label Islamist applies to individuals or groups who believe that Islam should be a comprehensive guide to life. Islamists do not accept that the interpretation of Islam could evolve over the centuries along with human beings’ understanding, or that the religion could be influenced or modified by the cultures and traditions of various regions. Nor do they recognize that Islam can be limited to the religious realm, or to simply providing its followers with a code of moral and ethical principles. With this definition in mind, a nonviolent, American-born Islamist should not be considered an ally of the U.S. Yet a devout, conservative Muslim immigrant to Europe—one who does not even speak any Western languages but rejects Islamist ideology—could be.⁴

Islamists are strenuously opposed to secular governance. Instead, they believe that Islamic rules and laws based upon the Quran and the *sharia* code must shape all aspects of human society, from politics and education to history, science, the arts, and more. Islamic jurisprudence developed and codified over the course of the 8th and 9th centuries and has not changed since then. In wholly *sharia*-based countries such as Iran, Sudan, and Saudi Arabia, there is little distinction between religion and state, leaving no room for liberal democracy. The institution of *elections* might be maintained, but this will inevitably be an illiberal system without dissent, individualization, or critical thinking.

Today’s Islamists adhere first and foremost to the works of the Muslim Brotherhood’s most famous ideologue, Sayyid Qutb, and are not necessarily concerned with Islam’s spiritual or cultural aspects. Qutb, like his ideological predecessors Ibn Taymiyya and Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, was preoccupied with the relative

decline of the Muslim world. All three believed this deterioration was a result of Muslims having strayed from pure Islam. Qutb argued that Islam's crisis could be reversed only if "true" Muslims, emulating the ways of the Prophet Muhammad, worked to replace existing governments in the Muslim world with strictly Islamic regimes.⁵ Accordingly, followers of Qutb desire the overthrow of their current governments and declare armed jihad against non-Muslim states. It is important to underline that this step is often viewed as "defensive jihad," an interpretation which has broad acceptance among many Muslims. This logic has been used to justify attacks in Spain (which was ruled by Muslims for several hundred years) and any other Western countries that are deemed to be waging a war against Islam, either militarily or culturally.⁶ The next step is the establishment of the caliphate. Islamists believe that bringing about such changes is an obligation for all Muslims. They are not bound by constraints of time—they have been fighting this war for many decades already and will continue as long as it takes. Nor are they hindered by location—the new caliphate can be established anywhere.

Islamist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood are engaged in a long-term social engineering project. The eventual "Islamization" of the world is to be enacted via a bottom-up process. Initially, the individual is transformed into a "true" Muslim. This Islamization of the individual leads that person to reject Western norms of pluralism, individual rights, and the secular rule of law. Next, the individual's family is transformed; then the society; then the state; and finally the entire world is expected to live, and be governed, according to Islamic principles. This ideological machinery is at the core of Islamist terrorism and it works to promote separation, sedition, and hatred. The tactics of the Muslim Brotherhood may be nonviolent in the West and less violent than other groups in the Muslim world, but the ideology behind those tactics remains fundamentally opposed to the Western democratic system and its values.

Many critics of the War on Terror complain that it fosters an "us versus them" attitude between Muslims and non-Muslims. In reality this mentality did not begin with the Bush Administration; it has long been part of the Islamists' rhetoric. For decades, Brotherhood-affiliated organizations have been telling Muslims that they are different—in fact, superior—and must remain separate from non-Muslims. While more recently, some Islamists in the West have begun talking about integration or participation, these concepts are meant to be followed only if they serve the long-term Islamist agenda.

Non-Islamist Muslims understand the inherent incompatibility between Islamism's desired imposition of *sharia* law upon society at large and Western society's pluralism and equality. To the Brotherhood and groups like it—whether in the Middle East or the United States—the Quran and Islam are not merely one *possible* source

of law; they are the *only* source of law. As the Muslim Brotherhood declares in its motto, “Allah is our objective, the Prophet is our leader, the Quran is our law, jihad is our way, dying in the way of Allah is our highest hope.”⁷

When the U.S. government engages with Islamist organizations in conferences or government outreach programs, it lends legitimacy to an ideology that does not represent—at least not yet—the views of the majority of American Muslims. American policymakers who advocate pursuing such a strategy are actually facilitating Islamism by endorsing it as a mainstream ideology. Both at home and abroad, this policy is leading to disaster. Liberal and non-Islamist Muslims—having already been denounced by Islamists as apostates—are now being told by Western governments that they do not represent “real” Islam.

Through engagement, the U.S. government effectively legitimizes the Islamists’ self-appointed status as representatives of Muslim community. This also legitimizes the Islamists’ self-appointed ability to judge “Muslim-ness” of others. Bestowing this status and capability upon Islamists is particularly dangerous in America. Muslims living in the U.S.—particularly converts and those born to immigrants—are more vulnerable to being won over by Islamist ideology because America does not have a strong native tradition of Islam. American Muslims searching for a greater understanding of what it means to be Muslim often find little information available except the Islamist perspective. This is because most prominent Muslim organizations in America were either created by or are associated with the Brotherhood—and have therefore been heavily influenced by Islamist ideology.

The Brotherhood Infiltrates America

THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD BEGAN OPERATING IN THE U.S. IN THE 1960S UPON the arrival of Muslim immigrants from the Middle East and South Asia. These individuals sought a university education (mostly at the leading state schools of Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan)⁸ and greater professional opportunity. A number of these Muslims were Brotherhood members escaping the persecution and repression of their native lands. Starting in the 1950s, many Middle Eastern governments began cracking down on the Muslim Brotherhood, particularly in Egypt.⁹ The Ikhwanis soon recognized that American social and political liberties would enable them to easily spread their Islamist ideology. Still, they cloaked themselves in secrecy from the start, publicly referring to their organization as “The Cultural Society.”¹⁰

The 1960s was also when Saudi Arabia’s Wahhabi establishment began its global Islamization project, partnering with Brotherhood members who had left countries where the group was targeted for repression. One former U.S. Treasury official

estimated that the Saudi government has spent some \$75 billion supporting Islam and Islamic institutions worldwide.¹¹ In 1962, the Muslim World League (MWL) was established in Mecca, with Brotherhood members in key leadership positions, to propagate Wahhabism worldwide. Over the ensuing decades, the MWL has funded many legitimate charitable endeavors but also a number of Islamist projects. Some of this money has come to support Brotherhood activists in the U.S., in part to change the perception of Wahhabism in America from “extremist” to “mainstream.”

A primary focus of the MWL and the Brotherhood has been on education and indoctrination—especially of the youth—as the critical first step of their bottom-up approach.¹² According to the Brotherhood’s own documents, “In 1962, the Muslim Students Union was founded by a group of the first Ikhwanis in North American and the meetings of the Ikhwan became conferences and Students Union Camps.”¹³ The next year, a more formal organizational structure was created by two Brotherhood members, Ahmed Totonji and Jamal Barzinji, who helped found the Muslim Students Association (MSA) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. In its early years, the MSA distributed at its chapter meetings English translations of the writings of al-Banna, Qutb, and other Islamist ideologues. Arab Muslim members of the MSA who adopted these ideologies would then be recruited into the Brotherhood.¹⁴

With a global mission in mind, Barzinji, Totonji, and a third Brotherhood associate named Hisham Altalib then spearheaded the founding of the International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations (IIFSO) in 1969. The first IIFSO meeting took place that year in Mecca; Totonji was its first Secretary-General and his friend Altalib served as Deputy Secretary.¹⁵ It may be worth noting that Totonji, Barzinji, and Altalib were born in Iraqi Kurdistan, and after completing their studies in the UK, came to the United States for graduate study but also to continue organizing Muslim youth activities. These three men played a critical role in the Brotherhood’s original establishment, its vertical and horizontal institutionalization in the US over the decades, and the development of linkages between the American Brotherhood and other international Brotherhood networks.

Three years after the IIFSO was formed, the World Association of Muslim Youth (WAMY) was created in Riyadh. WAMY has described itself as “an independent international organization” yet it has strong ties to the Saudi government. In fact, the Saudi Minister of Islamic Affairs, Endowment, and Dawa once served as the group’s president.¹⁶ Just as with the IIFSO, Totonji and Barzinji were deeply involved in WAMY’s creation. Totonji served as deputy to WAMY’s first Secretary-General and Barzinji was listed as a WAMY representative in the 1980s.¹⁷

In 1973, seeking to expand its influence beyond school and university campuses, Barzinji and Altalib also helped establish the North American Islamic Trust (NAIT). According to its incorporation documents, the purpose of NAIT was to “serve the

best interest of Islam and the Muslim Students Association of the United States and Canada” by establishing a non-profit, tax exempt corporation (known in Arabic as a *waqf*). NAIT received large sums of money—especially from Saudi Arabia—allowing it to form a variety of Muslim professional associations as well as to build schools, Islamic centers, and publishing houses.

By the late 1970s it became clear that many of the students who had come to the US from the Middle East and South Asia were not returning home. Following the Iranian revolution of 1979, the Saudis/Wahhabis intensified their focus on American Muslims, as more funds and more literature flowed into the country. During this period, NAIT received funds and was able to take control of American mosques. Today, NAIT’s website claims that it owns approximately 300 Islamic centers, mosques, and schools in the U.S.¹⁸ Other NAIT documents indicate that in 2002 it held the deed to 20 percent of America’s approximately 1,200 mosques at that time.¹⁹ However, some assess that NAIT’s influence is even greater. In 2003, one national security expert claimed that NAIT owns or controls the physical assets of 75 percent of U.S. mosques and that ISNA (a NAIT affiliate—*see below*) controls their ideological content.²⁰

A number of MWL- and WAMY-linked men then founded the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) in 1981, a think tank dedicated to the “Islamization of knowledge.” This phrase could be a euphemism for the rewriting of history to support Islamist narratives. For example, after such Islamization, Spain is permanently relabeled “Al-Andalus” (as it was called during Muslim rule) and the country becomes the rightful property of Muslims.²¹ That Spain was first conquered *from* Christian peoples before it was re-conquered *by* them does not matter—Islamists still believe that the region “belongs” to Muslims. The IIIT’s founders include Barzinji and Totonji, along with Abdulhamid Abusulayman, Taha Jabir al-Alwani (both of whom were leaders of WAMY along with Barzinji), Yaqub Mirza (chief executive of the now-defunct SAAR Foundation, a fundraising operation linked to Hamas), Sayyid Syeed (then-President of the MSA), and Anwar Ibrahim (founder of a Malaysian student movement (ABIM) affiliated with WAMY and later Malaysia’s deputy prime minister). Ishaq Ahmad Farhan, a former Jordanian education minister affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood in that country, joined later. The IIIT states that it “supports research projects that study the reconstruction of Islamic thought and worldview based on Quranic principles and the Sunnah.”²²

The IIIT also convinced the United States government that they should be the official arbiters of Islam in the American military. Indeed, Abdurahman Alamoudi, a close associate of the IIIT leadership, was tasked by the U.S. government in 1991 to select Muslim chaplains for the U.S. military. Alamoudi became a well-known political personality in Washington and was a frequent guest of Presidents Clinton and Bush in the late 1990s and early 2000s. This same Muslim activist—previously praised as a

great moderate—was later convicted on terrorism charges and sentenced to serve 23 years in prison.²³ Alamoudi was also later identified by the U.S. Treasury department as having funneled more than \$1 million to a UK-based affiliate of al-Qaeda.²⁴

Another major organization founded in 1981 with the involvement of American Muslim Brotherhood related entities NAIT and the MSA was the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), a self-described umbrella organization for all Muslims in North America. ISNA was incorporated in Indiana on July 14, 1981 “to advance the cause of Islam and service Muslims in North America so as to *enable them to adopt Islam as a complete way of life.*” For those familiar with Islamism, this is a clear statement. ISNA represents a continuation of the MSA. According to the Brotherhood’s own internal documents, “the Muslim Students Union [i.e. the MSA] was developed into the Islamic Society in North America (ISNA) to include all the Muslim congregations from immigrants and citizens, and to be a nucleus for the Islamic Movement in North America.”²⁵

ISNA’s funding sources are not transparent—it is classified as a church for tax purposes and is therefore not required to file Form 990. However, it too received significant support from Saudi Arabia and has many connections to the MWL and WAMY. A former FBI analyst has testified before the Senate about a 1991 ISNA financial statement indicating that Saudi Arabia was the largest source of donations at that time.²⁶ More recently, in November 2005, Canadian media reported that in 2002 Saudi King Fahd gave \$5 million and an annual grant of \$1.5 million to the Islamic Centre in Toronto which also houses ISNA’s headquarters there. In 2005, the Saudi Islamic Development Bank announced a \$275,000 grant to ISNA’s high school, as well as a scholarship program.²⁷ The website of the Islamic Development Bank confirms both awards.²⁸

It is instructive to look more closely at just three of the men who founded or directed ISNA. Their Salafi background is clear, as is their connection to other Muslim Brotherhood related organizations created inside the U.S.

Sayyid Syeed helped found ISNA. Following his immigration to the United States, he graduated from Indiana University in 1984 and appears to have spent his entire professional life working for organizations related to ISNA. He served as its Secretary General, and is currently National Director of the group’s Office of Interfaith and Community Alliances. Syeed has also served as President of the MSA, Secretary General of the IIFSO, and is on the board of advisors at the Washington-based lobby group Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR, *see below*). Interestingly, his official biography omits that from 1984 until 1994, he was the Director of Academic Outreach at the IIIT.²⁹

Jamal Badawi is another important ISNA leader. Badawi was born in Egypt and received his undergraduate degree in communications from Ain Shams University in

Cairo, which is now well known to have been a center for Muslim Brotherhood activity during the years Badawi was there. Muslim Brotherhood leaders and Islamic extremists who studied or taught at Ain Shams during that time period include Mohammed Akef, current leader of the international Muslim Brotherhood; Shaykh Ahmed Yassin, the late Hamas leader;³⁰ and Shaykh Abdul Majeed al-Zindani, then head of Yemen's Muslim Brotherhood.³¹ Badawi came to the U.S. in 1963 to obtain his PhD in Management at the University of Indiana, where he joined the local MSA chapter.³² Badawi has been a member of ISNA's board of advisors since 1988, and served on NAIT's board from 1991 until 1993. He is also on the executive committee of the Fiqh Council of America, which is run as a subordinate group to ISNA and is comprised of a collection of Muslim scholars who answer questions of jurisprudence and issue religious edicts.¹³³

Taha al-Alwani, also a key figure, was until recently the Chairman of the Fiqh Council. He was born in 1935 in Iraq and received both his primary and secondary education there; then he went to the College of Shari'ah and Laq at al Azhar University (Cairo), receiving his degree in 1959. He continued at the college, receiving a Master's Degree in 1968 and a doctorate in Usul al-Fiqh in 1973. Ten years after the completion of his doctorate, al-Alwani taught Usul al-Fiqh at Imam Muhammad Ibn Sa'ood University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.³⁴ Mohammed Ibn Sa'ood University is generally described as Saudi Arabia's premier Islamic educational institution—known for upholding strict, fundamentalist Islamic teachings. *The Washington Post* called the university the “main citadel for Wahhabi instruction.”³⁵ Al-Alwani was also a founding member of the MWL in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. He then came to America and began work in his community. Al-Alwani was a founding member of the IIT, where he served as president and is still a member of the board. He currently serves as president at the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences, an institution run under auspices of the IIT in Virginia. He is also a professor at this institution, occupying the Imam Al Shafi'i Chair in Islamic Legal Theory. Since 1988, al-Alwani has also been a member of OIC Islamic Fiqh Academy based in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.³⁶

Supporting Palestine, Promoting Hamas

AFTER SEEING DOZENS OF MUSLIMS GRADUATE FROM THE MSA AND INTO THE ISNA umbrella, the Islamist community was able to focus on its version of *dawa*, or proselytizing Islam, in a more systematic way.³⁷ This allowed the Ikhwan to continue to build an Islamist support base in the U.S., and also to begin lobbying in favor of the Palestinian cause. Under the direction of senior Muslim Brotherhood activist Khalid Mishal (who would later become secretary-general of Hamas), Brotherhood member

Mousa Abu Marzook (who had come to the U.S. to pursue his PhD in Industrial Engineering and in 1991 became Chairman of Hamas's Political Bureau), and Sami al-Arian (who was pursuing his PhD in Computer Engineering at the time and would later be convicted of providing material support to terrorism), the Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP) was formed in Chicago in 1981. Its stated purpose was "to communicate the Ikhwan's point of view" and "to serve the cause of Palestine on the political and the media fronts."³⁸

After Hamas was created in 1987 in Gaza, the IAP became its leading representative in North America. The IAP was the first organization to publish the Hamas charter in English and received hundreds of thousands of dollars from Hamas leader Marzook.³⁹ Yet the IAP would not be alone in furthering Hamas' cause. Mousa Abu Marzook soon formed the Palestinian Committee to raise money for Hamas. Then, in 1989—also in Chicago—Marzook founded a think tank called the United Association for Studies and Research (UASR). This think tank was established to promote the ideology of Hamas in the United States and also received large infusions of cash from Marzook—all during the time when Marzook was supposedly an unemployed graduate student. The UASR shut down in 2004 as it began receiving increased levels of scrutiny from federal investigators. The UASR's link with Hamas has been confirmed by a captured Hamas operative named Mohammed Salah. He revealed that political command of Hamas in the United States was vested with the UASR and that the terrorist group's American-based leader, Ahmed Yousef, was the UASR's director.⁴⁰ Yousef fled the United States in 2005 to avoid prosecution and has since become the chief political advisor to Hamas' leader Ismail Haniyeh as well as the organization's principal Western media spokesperson.⁴¹

Though many American Islamist organizations deny any connection to Hamas, given its use of violence and terrorism, the direct links between Hamas and the Brotherhood are indisputable. In fact, Article 2 of the Hamas Charter states:

"The Islamic Resistance Movement is one of the wings of the Muslim Brothers in Palestine. The Muslim Brotherhood Movement is a world organization, the largest Islamic Movement in the modern era. It is characterized by a profound understanding, by precise notions and by a complete comprehensiveness of all concepts of Islam in all domains of life: views and beliefs, politics and economics, education and society, jurisprudence and rule, indoctrination and teaching, the arts and publications, the hidden and the evident, and all the other domains of life."⁴²

The roster of American Islamist organizations grew larger when Ikhwanis created the Muslim American Society (MAS) in 1993. Incorporated in Illinois but now

operating out of Virginia, MAS was founded by Jamal Badawi, Omar Soubani, Ahmad Elkadi and Mohammed Akef (now head of the Muslim Brotherhood) to serve as the *de facto* public face of the Brotherhood in the United States. Elkadi, according to a profile by *The Chicago Tribune* in 2004, is an Egyptian-born surgeon who was formerly personal physician to Saudi Arabian King Faisal. He and his wife—both Brotherhood members in Egypt, along with his father—moved to Louisiana in 1967, where he continued his medical training. As Elkadi told the *Tribune*, he became treasurer of the U.S. Brotherhood in 1970 and was elected president in 1984. Elkadi explained that he was the leader of the Brotherhood in the U.S. from 1984 to 1994—the final year also serving as director of the newly-created MAS.⁴³ In response to Elkadi’s revelations, MAS has moved to discredit Elkadi, arguing that his memory is failing and unreliable.⁴⁴ In any case, Akef told the *Tribune* that he helped found MAS and Shaker Elsayed, then-Secretary General of MAS, told the *Tribune* that “Ikhwan members founded MAS” and that about 45 percent of the organization’s “active” members belong to the Brotherhood.⁴⁵ Becoming an active member of MAS entails completing five years of Muslim community service and studying the writings of key Brotherhood ideologues like al-Banna and Qutb.⁴⁶

Following a 1993 Philadelphia meeting of Hamas leaders and activists in which the need to engage in propaganda efforts was discussed, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) was founded in Washington DC. Its stated mission is to “enhance understanding of Islam, encourage dialogue, protect civil liberties, empower American Muslims, and build coalitions that promote justice and mutual understanding”⁴⁷ Although these objectives sound innocuous enough, the Muslim Brotherhood (of which many of CAIR’s founders were members) often uses terms like these as euphemisms for more insidious actions. A Brotherhood memo written in 1991 makes reference to a “dictionary” that the Ikhwanis use to decipher the true meaning of their words, which are put in quotation marks in written documents.⁴⁸ The fact is that CAIR was created by Ikhwanis for influencing the U.S. government, Congress, NGOs, and academic and media groups. The Brotherhood identified the media as “stronger than politics,” highlighted the importance of training activists to present a “view of the IAP” that would be acceptable to Americans. One of CAIR’s founders, Omar Ahmad, explicitly suggested the need for “infiltrating the American media outlets, universities and research centers.”⁴⁹

CAIR, whose founders included top leaders of the IAP and the UASR, can be considered as one of the most effectively camouflaged Brotherhood-related groups in the U.S. Over the past 15 years, CAIR has successfully portrayed itself as a mainstream Muslim organization—and has been treated as such by many U.S. government officials, including Presidents Clinton and Bush.

It is also important to note that American Islamist organizations are alleged to

have played a vital role in supporting violent groups in other countries. CAIR, ISNA, and NAIT were all named as unindicted co-conspirators in the federal trial against the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development (HLF), which was charged with providing millions of dollars to Hamas. The HLF court case ended in October 2007 with a mistrial and a deadlocked jury, but facts uncovered during the trial revealed numerous disturbing linkages between Hamas and America's most prominent Muslim organizations. Among other things, court documents and testimony specifically identified CAIR as a member of the Palestine Committee in America, which is tasked with working to "increase the financial and moral support for Hamas," to "fight surrendering solutions," and to publicize "the savagery of the Jews."⁵⁰

This brief review of the history of major American Muslim organizations should make it rather obvious that the majority of them have for some time been intertwined with the Muslim Brotherhood. The same leaders appear in multiple organizations, tend to have familial relations, and move within the same close trusted circles. For example, Ghassan Elashi, who incorporated the Holy Land Foundation and served as the organization's Treasurer and later as its Chairman of the Board, was also responsible for the IAP's incorporation and was a founding member of CAIR's Texas Chapter. Marzook is married to Elashi's cousin and Mufid Abdulqader, a "top fundraiser" for the HLF, is the half-brother of Khalid Mishal. Meanwhile, Mohamed El-Mezain, the original Chairman of the HLF Board, is Marzook's cousin and identified by Mishal as "the Hamas leader for the U.S."⁵¹

Many of the initial group of Brotherhood members who came to the U.S. to study and set up the organizations detailed above are still actively involved in the movement. While their tone and presentation may have changed, their Islamist ideology has not. Even when an American-born "next generation" takes over the leadership of these organizations, little will change. Indeed, this is exactly what the Ikhwan intended. The same 1991 strategy memo referenced earlier states that the most important thing is to establish a "foundation" so that "we will be followed by peoples and generations that would finish the march and the road but with a clearly defined guidance."⁵²

Moreover, given that today there nearly 600 MSA chapters actively nurturing Islamist ideas among next-generation American Muslims at universities throughout the United States and Canada,⁵³ one cannot be too optimistic about the future nature of Islam in America. Indeed, it is unnerving to think that American Muslims who are genuinely seeking greater knowledge about their religion are obliged to turn to one or several of these organizations. Once there, Islamism is presented as synonymous with Islam, and the new member has no way to know otherwise. New members often fail to realize that the groups they have joined are not merely religious groups but political ones with a Wahhabi bias.

The case of Ahmed Omar Abu Ali is instructive of the dangers of education and indoctrination. Abu Ali was convicted in late 2005 of plotting to assassinate President George W. Bush. Abu Ali graduated as the valedictorian of his class from the Islamic Saudi Academy in Alexandria, Virginia. This school is run by the Saudi government, the property is under the Saudi government's control, and the Saudi Ambassador is the school board's chairman. In fact, the school is currently the subject of scrutiny and questions have been raised regarding the propriety of its curriculum. The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom has urged that the school be shut down until it can ensure that the texts (provided by the Saudi government) do not preach religious intolerance and violence.⁵⁴ Abu Ali also participated in the paintball sessions organized by the "Virginia jihad" group of Ali al-Tamimi, who was convicted to life in prison without parole in April 2005 on charges of conspiracy, attempting to aid the Taliban, soliciting treason, soliciting others to wage war against the United States, and aiding and abetting the use of firearms and explosives.⁵⁵ Along with many other Islamists, including two of the 9/11 hijackers, Abu Ali attended the Dar al-Hijrah mosque (run by none other than Shaker Elsayed, the former Secretary General of MAS). In fact, Abu Ali taught youth Islamic classes there during high school.⁵⁶

Secrecy and Deception

IN SETTING UP THEIR VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS OVER THE PAST FOUR DECADES Brotherhood members have remained secretive, working through the organizations mentioned above to exert their influence. When questioned, most of these organizations at first deny any links to the Brotherhood. One undated MAS memo explicitly instructs group leaders to respond negatively if asked whether they are part of the Brotherhood. When this deception failed and connections to the Brotherhood were disclosed, MAS members have downplayed these links as merely an association of the past.⁵⁷ At the same time, they adopt the role of the victim, accusing their accusers of "McCarthyism" and "Islamophobia." This intimidation, up to and including anti-defamation lawsuits, has silenced many journalists, researchers, and other Muslims.

Thanks to the HLF case, however, much previously-classified evidence and many documents have emerged that clearly demonstrate these linkages. One of the key document unveiled in this trial is a 1991 strategy paper of the Muslim Brotherhood authored by Mohamed Akram, who was a key Ikhwan leader in the U.S. at the time and is now the Secretary General of the International al-Quds Foundation in Lebanon as well as Director of the al-Quds International Institute. The International al-Quds Foundation is headed by none other than the Muslim Brotherhood's chief ideologue,

Yusuf al-Qaradawi.⁵⁸ In Akram’s 18-page “Explanatory Memorandum on the General Strategic Goal for the Group in North America,” he states that “the general strategic goal of the Group [the Muslim Brotherhood] in America” consists of six stages:

1. Establishing an effective and stable Islamic Movement led by the Muslim Brotherhood
2. Adopting Muslims’ causes domestically and globally
3. Expanding the observant Muslim base
4. Unifying and directing Muslims’ efforts
5. Presenting Islam as a civilizational [sic] alternative
6. Supporting the establishment of the global Islamic state wherever it is⁵⁹

Akram then notes that the priority for this strategy is “Settlement.”⁶⁰ This entails becoming “rooted in the spirits and minds of [the] people” and establishing “organizations on which the Islamic structure is built.” Akram states that Muslims should look upon this mission as a “Civilization Jihadist responsibility,” one that “lies on the shoulders of Muslims [but especially on those of] the Muslim Brotherhood in this country.” Akram then clarifies exactly what the “jihad” required by this strategy entails:

The Ikhwan must understand that their work in America is a kind of grand Jihad in eliminating and destroying the Western civilization from within and “sabotaging” its miserable house by their hands and the hands of the believers so that it is eliminated and God’s religion is made victorious over all other religions.⁶¹

Clearly, in this case jihad is not intended to be an inner, personal struggle, as is often claimed by American Islamists when they must explain why they were caught inciting for “jihad.” Akram also lists the stages of the Ikhwani activism in the U.S.:

1. The stage of searching for self and determining the identity.
2. The stage of inner build-up and tightening the organization.
3. The stage of mosques and the Islamic centers.
4. The stage of building the Islamic organizations—the first phase.
5. The stage of building the Islamic schools—the first phase.
6. The state of thinking about the overt Islamic movement—the first phase.
7. The stage of openness to the other Islamic movements and attempting to reach a formula for dealing with them—the first phase.

8. The stage of reviving and establishing the Islamic organizations—the second phase⁶²

The memo further describes the role of the Ikhwan as “the initiative, pioneering, leadership, raising the banner and pushing people in that direction. They are then to work to employ, direct and unify Muslims’ efforts and powers for this process. In order to do that, we must possess a mastery of the art of ‘coalitions’, the art of ‘absorption’ and the principles of ‘cooperation.’” It then underlines that “the success of the Movement in America in establishing an observant Islamic base with power and effectiveness will be the best support and aid to the global Movement project.”⁶³

Akram lists various tactical and strategic methods to “merge” all the various organizations established across the U.S. (*dawa* and education organizations, women’s groups, political organizations, media, economic, scientific, professional, youth, etc) in order to reach their goal. He concludes the memorandum by listing the various Ikhwan organizations and “the organizations of our friends,” adding a final parenthetical phrase: “Imagine if they all march according to one plan!!!” ISNA, NAIT, the MSA, and the IIIT are among the 29 organizations he lists. (CAIR had not yet been created.)

This document makes clear that the Brotherhood’s goal is to spread its version of political Islam, making it a “civilization alternative” to the West’s civilization. In the past 17 years, the Ikhwan in the U.S. has made serious progress in its six-stage strategy. In fact, if it were not for the 9/11 attacks and the resulting increased scrutiny on American Muslim organizations, it might now be farther along in its plan.

Even though many Brotherhood-linked organizations have dismissed this memo as “outdated,” it is fairly consistent with numerous more recent statements as well as the generic long war strategy. In a 1995 speech to an Islamic conference in Ohio, the Muslim Brotherhood’s spiritual leader, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, declared that “victory” will come through *dawa*. “Conquest through *dawa*, that is what we hope for,” said the Qatar-based imam who has authored a number of religious edicts justifying Hamas suicide bombings against Israeli civilians and American soldiers in Iraq. In a chilling note, he confidently stated, “We will conquer Europe, we will conquer America, not through the sword but through *dawa*.”⁶⁴

Other prominent American Muslims have made similarly provocative remarks. In the late 1980s, future CAIR board member Ihsan Bagby said that “Ultimately we [Muslims] can never be full citizens of this country, because there is no way we can be fully committed to the institutions and ideologies of this country.”⁶⁵ And in 2006, Zaid Shakir, a well-known African-American imam declared “Every Muslim who is honest would say, I would like to see America become a Muslim country.”⁶⁶

A later affirmation of the Brotherhood’s goal is clear in the views of the group’s official supreme leader, Mohammed Akef. In a series of January 2004 interviews,

Akef called the U.S. a “Satan” and said that he was confident America would collapse. Akef also stated that he has “complete faith that Islam will invade Europe and America, because Islam has logic and a mission.”⁶⁷

It is actually rather amazing to find such straightforward statements. Since the 1990s (especially after the 1993 World Trade Center bombing), the Brotherhood has been increasingly cautious. At a secret 1993 meeting of Hamas members and sympathizers in Philadelphia, Shukri Abu Baker, the HLF’s former chief executive, stated “war is deception” and urged “caution should be practiced not to reveal our true identity.” Also present at this meeting was CAIR founder Omar Ahmad, who agreed with Abu Baker’s comments that “war is deception” and went on to say, “this is like one who plays basketball; he makes a player believe that he is doing this while he does something else...politics is a completion of war.”⁶⁸

To deceive Americans, Ahmad also suggested that the Ikhwan create some neutral sounding organizations such as a “Palestinian-American Friendship Association...This will be done in order to...put some honey a little bit at a time with the poison they’re given. But if from the first night you ...call it ‘The Islamic Society for Youths’ Welfare,’ they will shut the door in your face.” He also asked his “brothers” not to even mention Hamas by name and instead refer to it as “Samah” Later, in 2002 he claimed to “reject and abhor Hamas, its goals and methods,” in total contradiction to earlier tapes and documents that revealed him praising Hamas.⁶⁹

At this 1993 meeting Abu Baker also stated, “It does not benefit me to show to the American people that...I hate Abu Amar [Yasser Arafat] and hate the [Palestinian Liberation] Organization.” Instead of “attack[ing] the [Palestinian Liberation] Organization in a personal and direct manner,” Abu Baker suggests that U.S. Islamist groups should speak about “democracy and freedom of expression.” Another participant then agrees on the importance of “playing a very important tune to the average American which is the issue of democracy, the issue of representation. When you tell an American individual that, ‘...this person is not elected. He is an oppressor...This is a dictatorial regime...’ bring up Saddam Hussein’s name...”⁷⁰

Deception is a key tactic the Islamists use to proceed with their “settlement” plan. Below are just a few of the recent and well-known examples demonstrating that MAS, ISNA, and CAIR all play dual roles

Muslim American Society (MAS)

UNTIL THE HOLY LAND FOUNDATION TRIAL, MUSLIM AMERICAN SOCIETY LEADERS played word games regarding their connection with the Ikhwan. At the trial, it was revealed that a phone book was found at the home of Ismail Elbarrasse—an unindicted

co-conspirator of the HLF and former assistant to Hamas leader Musa Abu Marzook—listing the names and numbers of the Muslim Brotherhood leadership in the United States. On the first page of the phone book under the title “Members of the Board of Directors” were fifteen names. Among those names are Ahmad Elkadi, Jamal Badawi, and Omar Soubani—the founders of MAS.⁷¹

In fact, in light of previous documents that became public in other trials, MAS leaders finally have admitted that the group was founded by the Brotherhood.⁷² Yet, they quickly add that it has since evolved beyond the Ikhwan to include greater ideological diversity. They maintain that MAS has no formal connection with the Brotherhood. Meanwhile, the Brotherhood is just as reluctant to acknowledge any ties with MAS. One senior Muslim Brotherhood official explained that he does not want to say MAS is a Brotherhood “entity” because doing so “causes some security inconveniences for them in a post-September 11 world.”⁷³

Esam Omeish, president of MAS, claimed that the documents introduced at the HLF trial were “full of abhorrent statements and are in direct conflict of the very principles of our Islam.” He said, “The Muslim community in America wishes to contribute positively to the continued success and greatness of our civilization...The ethics of tolerance and inclusion are the very tenets that MAS was based on from its inception.” He also firmly stated that “MAS is not the Muslim Brotherhood.” Omeish said that MAS “grew out of a history of Islamic activism in the U.S. when the Muslim Brotherhood once existed but has a different intellectual paradigm and outlook.”⁷⁴

In August 2007, Virginia Governor Timothy Kaine appointed Omeish to a state commission on immigration. Yet Omeish was compelled to resign less than two months later after a December 2000 video was released in which he praised Palestinians for knowing that “the jihad way is the way to liberate your land;” in another video he congratulated Palestinians for giving up their lives for the sake of Allah.⁷⁵ When confronted, Omeish engaged in a rhetorical dance over his intended meaning of “jihad.” But the 1991 Akram memo makes clear just what jihad means to Islamists. Moreover, Omeish’s comments were made at the height of the 2000 Palestinian intifada. In this context, it is clear that the type of jihad that Omeish praised as the way to “liberate” Palestine was the very same process that the Palestinians were engaged in—that is, violent jihad.

What is particularly worrisome in this example, like so many others before, was that Omeish’s accusers were automatically put on the defensive, while many others, including the governor, supported Omeish. It should be a concern to Americans that those who reveal the Islamists’ true nature are tarred as Islamophobes, McCarthyists, or part of some “vast right-wing conspiracy.”

The Omeish incident reveals a clear tactic: MAS officials’ first move is to maintain that they have no formal connection with the Brotherhood. When evidence comes

out that proves otherwise, they engage in wordplay, claiming that they have “moved on” from its ideology.⁷⁶ Of course, to become one of the elite, so-called “active,” members of MAS, one still must—among other things—study in detail the writings of al-Banna and Qutb.⁷⁷

Islamic Society in North America (ISNA)

WHILE INFORMATION HAS BEEN AVAILABLE FOR SEVERAL YEARS NOW, THE HLF trial clearly demonstrated the ISNA-Hamas connection. Marzook, the political leader of Hamas at the time, thanked ISNA for its support while he was in prison.⁷⁸ This is not a surprise given that ISNA was effectively established by the Ikhwanis and almost all of ISNA’s founders have since remained active either in ISNA or in one of its affiliated organizations. Several key individuals who have been very active since the beginning—such as Sayyid Syeed—have tellingly omitted their early Islamist backgrounds from their “official” biographies.

ISNA also has deep links to well-known Islamists. One of the most prominent such individuals is Sami al-Arian, who helped establish ISNA in 1981 and founded the Islamic Committee for Palestine (an official ISNA affiliate) shortly thereafter.⁷⁹ Al-Arian is also currently serving the remainder of a 57-month conviction for supporting the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ). Until he was arrested in 2003, he was considered to be one of the country’s leading civil rights activists and was often invited to meet top U.S. government officials, including Presidents Clinton and Bush. This was despite the fact that al-Arian had been the subject of an FBI investigation into his connections with the PIJ since 1996. After videotapes appeared in 2001 of al-Arian speaking at rallies calling for terrorist jihad in Palestine, he was suspended from his professorship at the University of South Florida. Al-Arian and a host of groups—including ISNA—immediately sprang to the defense, loudly proclaiming this to be nothing more than a “smear campaign” and an example of “anti-Arab and anti-Muslim bigotry.” In February 2003, a federal grand jury served a 50-count indictment against al-Arian.

Until the trial, for over a decade, al-Arian denied any connection to the Palestinian Islamic Jihad—in a 1994 interview, he even pretended that he did not know what the initials PIJ stood for.⁸⁰ In the trial, one piece of evidence was a videotape showing him declaring to supporters: “Let us damn America, let us damn Israel, let us damn them and their allies until death” and “Quran is our constitution...jihad our path...victory to Islam...death to Israel...revolution till victory.”⁸¹ The case eventually ended in a partial acquittal and mistrial but al-Arian pled guilty in 2006 to “conspiracy to make or receive contributions of funds, goods or services to or for the benefit of the Palestinian

Islamic Jihad, a specially designated terrorist organization.”⁸² Moreover, the judge who presided over his trial had few doubts as to al-Arian’s true nature. During sentencing, the judge called him a “master manipulator,” saying to al-Arian “you looked your neighbors in the eyes and said you had nothing to do with the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. This trial exposed that as a lie...The evidence was clear in this case that you were a leader of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad.”⁸³

Al-Arian was sentenced on May 1, 2006, to 57 months in prison (which included 38 months time served) and agreed to be deported after serving the prison term. Credit for serving his sentence was frozen due to a contempt citation resulting from al-Arian’s refusal to testify before a Virginia grand jury investigating the IIT, which financially and ideologically supported his work in Tampa. However, in December 2007, a federal judge overturned this contempt charge and al-Arian will likely be released and deported in April 2008.⁸⁴

Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)

THE HLF TRIAL DOCUMENTS ALSO PROVED THAT CAIR WAS PART OF THE MUSLIM Brotherhood linked network created to help Hamas in the U.S. Even though it has portrayed itself to be a civil rights group, and is often described as such by the mainstream press, its top leadership is made up of the IAP and the UASR principals mentioned earlier. Despite public denials, CAIR leaders have been heard expressing their support for Hamas both in public and on FBI surveillance tapes. CAIR has received support from, and lent support to, Hamas financial conduits in the United States. Several CAIR officers and employees have been indicted on terrorism-related charges.

A brief look at the men who founded CAIR, their objectives, and their deceptive methods make clear that this it is not just a civil rights group. As mentioned earlier, CAIR was created following the 1993 Philadelphia meeting of Hamas leaders and activists where the need to engage in propaganda efforts was discussed. U.S. prosecutors named Nihad Awad, CAIR’s executive director, and Omar Ahmad, CAIR’s founder and chairman—both ethnic Palestinians—as unindicted co-conspirators in the Holy Land case.

Among the founders of CAIR were three important leaders of the IAP: Omar Ahmad (IAP President, 1991-1994); Nihad Awad (IAP Public Relations Director, 1991-1994); and Rafiq Jabir (IAP President from 1994 to 2005, the year IAP shut down). Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, Awad’s CAIR profile neglects to mention his IAP connection.⁸⁵ CAIR’s website no longer contains biographies of Ahmad or Jabir, but even when they were posted they did not include their IAP connections. Likewise, the CAIR biographies of both Mohammed Nimr al-Madani (current

research director of CAIR and a former board member at the UASR) and Nabeel Sadoun (CAIR board member and co-founder of UASR) do not mention their association with the UASR.

Typically, when the Ikhwanis are confronted with extremist quotes they claim that they have been misinterpreted. Yet in many cases the directness of their rhetoric leaves little room for interpretation. On July 4, 1998, the *San Ramon Valley Herald*, a local California newspaper, published an article about an Islamic school study session entitled “How Should We Live as Muslims in America?” The article stated that at this gathering CAIR Chairman Omar Ahmed urged Muslims not to assimilate into American society but instead to deliver Islam’s message. He underlined that Islam is not in America to be equal to any other faiths, but to become dominant, and that the Quran should be the highest authority in America with Islam the only accepted religion on Earth.⁸⁶ When Ahmed’s statements were highlighted in 2003, the CAIR founder flatly denied making these statements and said that he had sought and obtained a retraction from the newspapers that printed the article. Interestingly, as of December 2006, neither of the newspapers that ran the article received a retraction request from Ahmed and the reporter who wrote the article has adamantly stood by her account of the events.⁸⁷

Ibrahim Hooper, CAIR’s communications director, has also expressed his wish to overturn the U.S. system of government in favor of an “Islamic” state. “I wouldn’t want to create the impression that I wouldn’t like the government of the United States to be Islamic sometime in the future,” Hooper said in a 1993 interview with the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. “But I’m not going to do anything violent to promote that. I’m going to do it through education.”⁸⁸ By “education,” Hooper likely means *dawa*, which would be in line with what the Muslim Brotherhood commands its members to carry out.

As with other aspects of its existence, CAIR’s funding has also been deceptive. In a November 2001 news release, CAIR stated that it does not support, or receive support from, any overseas group or government.⁸⁹ There is evidence however; that this statement was not true even at the time it was issued: In August 1999, the President of the Saudi-based Islamic Development Bank announced a \$250,000 contribution to the purchase of land in Washington DC for CAIR’s headquarters.⁹⁰ WAMY also financed the construction of the headquarters. In December 1999, Arab news reported that the Riyadh-based group was “extending both moral and financial support to CAIR in its effort to construct its own headquarters at a cost of \$3.5 million in Washington DC.”⁹¹ WAMY later provided in excess of \$1.04 million for one of CAIR’s advertising campaigns.⁹²

Given all the facts that are being revealed, especially as the HLF trial unfolded, the posturing of CAIR is very troubling. In August 2007, at a banquet in Dallas, CAIR

Chairman Parvez Ahmed stated, “it is not just the HLF that is under fire, but the entire American Muslim community is under fire.”⁹³ With this, Ahmed is implying to the American Muslim community that groups like CAIR are being persecuted simply because they are Islamic rather than because of links to terrorist organizations—further creating a sense that all Muslims need to unite to the Islamist cause. Such rhetoric is increasingly used to drive a wedge between Muslims and non-Muslims in America, as well as in Europe and elsewhere.

The Muslim Brotherhood in America: Implications

THE PRECEDING PAGES HAVE SHOWN HOW VARIOUS BROTHERHOOD-LINKED Islamist organizations have flourished in the tolerant environment of the U.S. In the process, they have been actively and openly creating a fifth column of activists who work to undermine the very foundations of America by challenging its constitution and religious plurality.

Turning a blind eye to the Brotherhood and its ideological extremism—even if done for the sake of combating violent extremism and terrorism—is a direct threat to the democratic order. Of course, such a threat might be welcomed by the Ikhwan goals, as the group’s long-term strategy paper of 1991 states that it hopes to “destroy America from within.” Moreover, as mentioned earlier, they seem have realized how certain concepts such as “democracy” and “freedom of expression” can be used in America to win over audiences.

The Islamist threat is real and is the result of decades of networking, infrastructure-building, and intellectual and ideological preparation. These groups have spent billions of dollars in creating networks of like-minded supporters (much of their support comes from the “us versus them” mentality they have helped to create) and have worked hard at social engineering (i.e., Islamization) for nearly four decades. As the Brotherhood in America became more “settled” and mature, it added new institutions, expanding its coverage geographically, based on issues and at various levels—from local to international, from charities to public relations and eventually to national politics.

The Brotherhood’s own documents clearly state a need for “a mastery of the art of coalitions, the art of absorption and the principles of cooperation.” As a result of this strategy, individuals like Sami al-Arian—who claimed to have delivered the Muslim vote to the Republican Party in 2000—obtained access to the highest levels of the U.S. government. Gaining influence within the United States is especially important

for the Ikhwan since, as a superpower, it has a huge impact on how Islamists are treated in other parts of the world. Indeed, one of the goals mentioned at the 1993 Philadelphia meeting was “forming the public opinion or coming up with a policy to influence the...way the Americans deal with the Islamists.” Given this information, it may be worth exploring the decision-making process that led the U.S. to haphazardly push for elections in the Palestinian territories as it led to the election and empowerment of Hamas, which—as this paper has detailed—has strong linkages to some of most prominent and influential American Muslim organizations.

Cloaking themselves in civil rights and charity work, the leaders of these organizations have successfully managed to disguise their true agenda: supporting Islamism, and protecting and augmenting the operations of radical groups that support terrorism. So it is not unexpected that large sections of the institutional Islamic leadership in America do not support U.S. counter-terrorism policy. Far from it; they denounce virtually every terrorism indictment, detention, deportation, and investigation as a religiously motivated attack on Islam. Instead of considering whether the individual in question actually broke any laws, they instinctively blame the legal accusations on bigotry or an anti-Muslim conspiracy. For example, after the FBI raided the offices of HLF co-founder Ghassan Elashi in 2001, CAIR’s Executive Director Nihad Awad called the government’s actions an “anti-Muslim witch hunt.”⁹⁴ It should be noted that Elashi was later indicted and convicted of channeling funds to Hamas.

Islamists sometimes even provoke incidents intended to make the American Muslim community feel under siege, presumably in an attempt to compel them to unite. The case of the six imams who were denied access to a U.S. Airways flight in 2006 is instructive. CAIR, which represented these imams, claimed this was a clear case of discrimination against Muslims. Yet the imams were prevented from flying not because they were Muslim or held a prayer session directly outside the gate (and again on the plane, which is peculiar since even devout Muslims do not pray this frequently), but because they were behaving like hijackers. The imams demanded to board at the same time even though only two had first-class tickets and then attempted to reseat themselves on the plane in a suspicious formation (two in the tail, two in the mid-section, and two in first class). They muttered loudly in Arabic about jihad and cursed the United States for its involvement in Iraq. They requested seat belt extensions (which can be used as makeshift weapons) even though none was large enough to need it. Other Muslim passengers on the flight were not harassed. Given their blatantly suspicious behavior it has been suggested by many that the imams were deliberately trying to provoke their removal from the airplane.

Countless young American Muslims—whether converts, Muslims born into secular families, or those brought up in traditional households—that have entered

college since 9/11 are curious about Islam and their identity as both a Muslim and an American. Too often these young men and women end up at the local MSA chapter looking for answers. Sadly, the MSA is still often the only option available for college students who wish to get involved in Muslim affairs. Perhaps it's no wonder that a Pew report released in May 2007 found a quarter of American Muslims aged 18 to 29 believe suicide bombings against civilians can sometimes be justified to defend Islam, while only 9 percent of those older than 30 agreed.⁹⁵

For non-Islamist Muslims Islam is a matter of personal faith. As long as the government continues to grant them freedom to practice their faith as they see fit, they have no reason to organize politically. It is therefore essential to help American Muslims—particularly younger ones—understand the difference between Islam and Islamism, because the various Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated organizations, which have presented themselves as representatives of American Muslim community, are not faith groups. They are political entities with a political agenda. If the U.S. government continues to engage with them, it should be done in the context of a “war of ideas” debate, and not in a passive and receptive mode, expressing concern about offending their religious or spiritual sensitivities.

Another important consideration for the United States is that the Islamist revolutionary vanguard is no longer limited to the Arabic-speaking Middle Easterner. The hardline Islamists and even the terrorists of today and tomorrow are smart, tech-and-media-savvy citizens of the West. Terrorist acts inside the U.S. are huge setbacks for American Islamists; their long-term strategy of gradual infiltration was in fact seriously hurt by the 9/11 attacks as they increasingly came under the scrutiny of law enforcement authorities. It is not surprising that most of these organizations offer their cooperation to prevent Islamist terrorism inside the U.S. This is also the primary reason why some in the U.S. favor engaging the Islamists. But as described earlier, this is a misguided policy, as ideological extremism is at the root of the terrorist problem. The New York Police Department explicitly stated this link in its recent report on homegrown terrorist threats, stating that “jihadi-Salafi ideology is the driver that motivates young men and women, born or living in the West, to carry out ‘autonomous jihad’ via acts of terrorism against their host countries.”⁹⁶

Within America, the key threat is not an eventual Islamist takeover of the country, but an Islamist takeover of its Muslim citizens. In accordance with the Brotherhood’s long-term plan to create an “us and them” mentality, Islamists in Europe are also beginning to push for the creation of self-segregated societies—a process that has been labeled “voluntary apartheid.” This tactic has been enthusiastically supported by Yusuf al-Qaradawi, who has repeatedly advised Muslims living in the West to create their own “Muslim ghettos” to avoid cultural assimilation. If American Muslims start forming “parallel societies,” it will be much easier for the Ikhwan to push for

the introduction of *sharia* in these societies. While this may seem far-fetched, it cannot be so easily dismissed—especially given how close the Islamists came to introducing *sharia* for Canadian Muslims.⁹⁷ And since most of the American Muslim organizations are in the hands of Islamists who enjoy seemingly unlimited money, media attention, and political influence, few non-Islamists would be able to fight back.

NOTES

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5. Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones*, Indianapolis, IN: American Trust Publications, 1990.
6. Scheuer, *Through Our Enemies’ Eyes*, p. 54-57.
7. “Muslim Brotherhood Movement,” <http://www.ummah.net/ikhwan>.
8. Noreen Ahmed-Ullah, Sam Roe, and Laurie Cohen, “A Rare Look at Secretive Muslim Brotherhood in America,” *Chicago Tribune*, September 19, 2004.
9. The Muslim Brotherhood was outlawed in Egypt in 1954 after it was convicted of attempting to assassinate Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Naser.
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11. David B. Ottaway, “U.S. Eyes Money Trails of Saudi-Backed Charities,” *Washington Post*, August 19, 2004, available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A13266-2004Aug18?language=printer>.
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14. Tape recorded address of Zeid Al-Noman, available at <http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/IkhwanAmerica.pdf>.
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16. "Institutionalized Islam: Saudi Arabia's Islamic Policies and the Threat They Pose," Testimony of Simon Henderson before the Senate Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Terrorism, Technology, and Homeland Security, September 10, 2003, available at http://kyl.senate.gov/legis_center/subdocs/091903_henderson.pdf.
17. Speech delivered by Anwar Ibrahim, Minister of Finance of Malaysia, at the 7th International Conference of WAMY," available at <http://web.archive.org/web/20030314125221/http://www.wamy.org/english/conferences/speech6.htm>; Matthew Levitt, "Combating Terrorist Financing, Despite the Saudis," Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policy Watch #673, November 1, 2002, available at http://www.ciaonet.org/pbei/winep/policy_2002/2002_673.html
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27. Marina Jimenez and Omar El Akkad, "Values at Heart of Islamic Tensions," *Globe and Mail*, November 8, 2005, A12.
28. "Scholarship Programmes," Islamic Development Bank, available online at

- http://www.isdb.org/english_docs/idb_home/scholarship_MuslimMinorities_CPO.htm; and “News,” Islamic Development Bank, available online at http://www.isdb.org/english_docs/idb_home/content.htm?content=include/bedpr221.inc.
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