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### **COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS (CAIR)**

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- Civil rights group partially funded by the Saudi Wahhabi establishment
- Has numerous ties to extremist Islamic organizations

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) describes itself as a "non-profit, grassroots membership organization ... established to promote a positive image of Islam and Muslims in America," to protect Muslims from hate crimes and discrimination, and to present "an Islamic perspective on issues of importance to the American public." According to the Council's Director of Communications, [Ibrahim Hooper](#), "We are similar to a Muslim [NAACP](#)." As of June 2007, CAIR [claimed](#) 32 branch affiliates in the United States and one in Canada.

CAIR was co-founded in 1994 by [Nihad Awad](#) and [Omar Ahmad](#), both of whom had close ties to the [Islamic Association for Palestine](#) (IAP), which was established by senior  [Hamas](#) operative [Mousa Abu Marzook](#) and functioned as Hamas' public relations and recruitment arm in the United States. Awad and Ahmad previously had served, respectively, as IAP's Public Relations Director and President. Thus it can be said that CAIR was an outgrowth of IAP.

CAIR opened its first office in Washington, DC, with the help of a \$5,000 donation from the [Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development](#) (HLF), a self-described charity founded by Mousa Abu Marzook. In May 1996, CAIR coordinated a press conference to protest the decision of the U.S. government to extradite Marzook for his connection to terrorist acts performed by Hamas. CAIR characterized the extradition as "anti-Islamic" and "anti-American." When President Bush closed HLF in December 2001 for collecting money "to support the Hamas terror organization," CAIR decried his action as "unjust" and "disturbing."

From its inception, CAIR has sought to portray itself as a moderate, mainstream organization, and as early as 1996 its officials became frequent guests at State Department and White House events. In the aftermath of 9/11, when the Bush administration tried to reassure American Muslims that Islam was not the target of the war on terrorism, CAIR officials were prominent among the invitees. CAIR was the main Islamic group to gain U.S. media access in the post-9/11 period, providing the "Muslim view" of the terrorist attacks and of America's response to them. As self-acclaimed Muslim spokesmen, CAIR officials typically refused to "simplify the situation" by blaming [Osama bin Laden](#) for the attacks on America. Moreover, while they eventually were induced by journalists to condemn Palestinian

suicide terror in a *pro forma* manner, they hedged their disavowals by describing it as an understandable response to Israeli brutality.

Contending that American Muslims are the victims of wholesale repression, CAIR has provided sensitivity training to police departments across the United States, instructing law officers in the art of dealing with Muslims respectfully.

CAIR further claims that U.S. foreign policy is dictated largely by Zionist extremists. As Evan McCormick of the Center for Security Policy puts it: "By convincing moderate Muslims that they are being targeted unfairly by the Bush administration's [anti-terror] policies, CAIR incites fear in members of that demographic. If innocent Muslims are then convinced that they will be the target of government action, then they have no incentive to reject an extremist ideology that resists the government's anti-terror policies. ... This is the essence of CAIR's strategy: shock moderate Muslims about the motivations of the U.S. Government, turn them into post-[9/11] victims, and then recruit them as supporters for your political agenda when they are ripe for the taking."

Along the same lines, a civil suit filed by the estate of 9/11 victim and former high-ranking FBI counter-terrorism agent John O'Neill, Sr. asserted that CAIR's goal "is to create as much self-doubt, hesitation, fear of name-calling, and litigation within police departments and intelligence agencies as possible so as to render such authorities ineffective in pursuing international and domestic terrorist entities."

CAIR endorsed an October 22, 2002 "National Day of Protest" whose premise was: "Since September 11th thousands of Muslims, Arabs and South Asians have been rounded up, detained and disappeared. ... Hard-won civil liberties and protections have been stripped away as part of the government's 'war on terrorism.' The USA-[PATRIOT Act](#) brings in a new set of repressive laws and restrictions on people and grants even greater power to law enforcement agents of all kinds." Moreover, this document explicitly defended the convicted murderers [Mumia Abu-Jamal](#) and [Leonard Peltier](#), as well as [Lynne Stewart](#) and [Jose Padilla](#), who were convicted on terrorism-related charges -- depicting all four as persecuted political prisoners of a repressive American government.

CAIR was a signatory to a February 20, 2002 document, composed by [C. Clark Kissinger](#)'s radical group [Refuse & Resist](#), condemning military tribunals and the detention of immigrants apprehended in connection with post-9/11 terrorism investigations. The document lamented that "the denial of any due process for Arab[s], Muslim[s], South Asians and others" bore "chilling similarities to a police state."

In February 2003, CAIR joined the [American Muslim Council](#), the [American Muslim Alliance](#), and the [Muslim Public Affairs Council](#) in forming a coalition to repeal and amend the Patriot Act -- alleging that it violated the civil liberties of Americans, particularly Muslims. CAIR also endorsed the Civil Liberties Restoration Act of 2004, which was designed to roll back, in the name of protecting civil liberties, vital national-security policies that had been adopted after

the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

CAIR promotes a radical Islamic vision, as evidenced by the fact that its co-founder Omar Ahmad told a Fremont, California audience in July 1998: "Islam isn't in America to be equal to any other faith, but to become dominant. The Koran ... should be the highest authority in America, and Islam the only accepted religion on Earth." In a similar spirit, co-founder Ibrahim Hooper told a reporter in 1993: "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." In 2003 Hooper stated that if Muslims ever become a majority in the United States, they will likely seek to replace the U.S. Constitution with Islamic law, which they deem superior to man-made law. In the late 1980s, [Ihsan Bagby](#), who would later become a CAIR Board member, stated that Muslims "can never be full citizens of this country," referring to the United States, "because there is no way we can be fully committed to the institutions and ideologies of this country."

In 2003 CAIR [invested](#), according to its own Form 990 filed with the Internal Revenue Service, \$325,000 from its California offices with the North American Islamic Trust (NAIT). [According to Newsweek](#), authorities say that over the years "NAIT money has helped the Saudi Arabian sect of Wahhabism -- or Salafism, as the broader, pan-Islamic movement is called -- to seize control of hundreds of mosques in U.S. Muslim communities." A recent study by the Center for Religious Freedom found that a very large number of American mosques teach hatred of Jews and Christians, coupled with doctrines of Islamic supremacy.

Writes Islam scholar Stephen Schwartz: "CAIR should be considered a foreign-based subversive organization, comparable in the Islamist field to the Soviet-controlled Communist Party USA, and the Cuban-controlled front groups that infiltrated 'Latin American solidarity' organizations in the U.S. during the 1980s. It has organized numerous community branches and has had immense success in gaining position as an 'official' representative of Islam in the U.S."

Notable facts about CAIR's *pas de deux* with Islamic extremism and terrorism include the following:

- Co-founder Nihad Awad asserted at a 1994 meeting at Barry University, "I am a supporter of the Hamas movement." Awad wrote in the *Muslim World Monitor* that the 1994 trial which had resulted in the conviction of four Islamic fundamentalist terrorists who had perpetrated the previous year's World Trade Center bombing was "a travesty of justice."
- On February 2, 1995, U.S. Attorney Mary Jo White named CAIR Advisory Board member and New York imam [Siraj Wahhaj](#) as one of the "unindicted persons who may be alleged as co-conspirators" in [Islamic Group](#) leader [Omar Abdel Rahman](#)'s foiled plot to blow up numerous New York City monuments.
- On June 6, 2006, CAIR's Ohio affiliate held a large [fundraiser](#) in honor of Siraj Wahhaj. Following the event, CAIR-Ohio issued a [press release](#) heralding the more than \$100,000 that Wahhaj had helped raise that evening for the organization's "civil

liberties work.”

- In October 1998, CAIR demanded the removal of a Los Angeles billboard describing Osama bin Laden as "the sworn enemy." According to CAIR, this depiction was "offensive to Muslims."
- In 1998, CAIR denied bin Laden's responsibility for the two al Qaeda bombings of American embassies in Africa. According to Ibrahim Hooper, the bombings resulted from "misunderstandings of both sides."
- In September 2003, CAIR's former Community Affairs Director, [Bassem Khafagi](#), pled guilty to three federal counts of bank and visa fraud and agreed to be deported to Egypt. Federal investigators said that a group Khafagi founded, the [Islamic Assembly of North America](#), had funneled money to activities supporting terrorism and had published material advocating suicide attacks against the United States. Khafagi's illegal activities took place while he was employed by [CAIR](#).
- In July 2004, [Ghassan Elashi](#), a founding Board member of CAIR's Texas chapter, was convicted along with his four brothers of having illegally shipped computers from their Dallas-area business, InfoCom Corporation, to Libya and Syria, two designated state sponsors of terrorism. That same month, Elashi was charged with having provided more than \$12.4 million to Hamas while he was running HLF. In April 2005, Elashi and two of his brothers were also convicted of knowingly doing business with Hamas operative Mousa Abu Marzook, who was Elashi's brother-in-law. Elashi's illegal activities took place while he was employed by CAIR, whose Dallas-Fort Worth chapter depicted the Elashis' indictment as "a war on Islam and Muslims."
- On September 6, 2001, the day that federal agents first raided Infocom's headquarters, CAIR Executive Director Nihad Awad denounced the U.S. government for "tak[ing] us back to the McCarthy era."
- [FBI wiretap evidence](#) which was introduced during the 2007 trial of the [Holy Land Foundation](#) (a trial that explored HLF's financial ties to Hamas), proved that Nihad Awad had attended a 1993 Philadelphia meeting of Hamas leaders and operatives who collaborated on a plan to disguise funding for Hamas as charitable donations.
- CAIR co-founder and Chairman Emeritus [Omar Ahmad](#) was named, in the same 2007 Holy Land Foundation trial, as an unindicted co-conspirator with HLF. During the trial, evidence was supplied proving that Ahmad had attended, along with Nihad Awad, the aforementioned 1993 Philadelphia meeting of Hamas leaders and operatives. Moreover, prosecutors described Ahmad as a member of the [Muslim Brotherhood's](#) "Palestine Committee" in America.

- The home of Muthanna al-Hanooti, one of CAIR's directors, was raided in 2006 by FBI agents [in connection with an active terrorism investigation](#). FBI agents also searched the offices of Focus on Advocacy and Advancement of International Relations, al-Hanooti's Michigan- and Washington DC-based consulting firm that investigators suspect to be a front supporting the Sunni-led insurgency in Iraq.

Al-Hanooti is an ethnic Palestinian who, [according to](#) a 2001 FBI report, "collected over \$6 million for support of Hamas" and attended, along with CAIR and [Holy Land Foundation](#) officials, the previously cited Hamas fundraising summit in Philadelphia in 1993. Currently a prayer leader at a Washington-area mosque that aided some of the 9/11 hijackers, [he is a relative](#) of Shiek Mohammed al-Hanooti, an unindicted co-conspirator in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. Muthanna al-Hanooti [formerly helped run](#) an organization called LIFE for Relief and Development, a suspected Hamas terror front whose Michigan offices were raided by the FBI in September 2006, and whose Baghdad office was raided by U.S. troops in 2004.

In March 2011, al-Hanooti was [sentenced](#) to a year in federal prison for violating U.S. sanctions against Iraq. [According to the FBI](#), al-Hanooti also raised more than \$6 million for support of Hamas and was present with CAIR and Holy Land Foundation officials at a secret Hamas fundraising summit held in Philadelphia during the 1990s.

- [Randall Todd Royer](#), who served as a communications specialist and civil rights coordinator for CAIR, trained with [Lashkar-I-Taiba](#), an al Qaeda-tied Kashmir organization that is listed on the State Department's international terror list. He was also indicted on charges of conspiring to help al Qaeda and the Taliban battle American troops in Afghanistan. He later pled guilty to lesser firearm-related charges and was sentenced to twenty years in prison. Royer's illegal activities took place while he was employed by [CAIR](#).
- Onetime CAIR fundraiser [Rabih Haddad](#) was arrested on terrorism-related charges and was deported from the United States due to his subsequent work as Executive Director of the [Global Relief Foundation](#), which in October 2002 was designated by the U.S. Treasury Department for financing al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations.
- During the 2005 trial of [Sami Al-Arian](#), who was a key figure for [Palestinian Islamic Jihad](#) in the United States, Ahmed Bedier of CAIR's Florida branch emerged as one of Al-Arian's most vocal advocates.
- In the aftermath of 9/11, federal agents [raided](#) the Washington-area home of CAIR civil rights coordinator Laura Jaghlit as part of a probe into terrorist financing, money laundering and tax fraud. Her husband [Mohammed Jaghlit](#), a

director of the Saudi-backed [SAAR Foundation](#), is a suspect in the still-active (as of January 2008) investigation.

- [Abdurahman Alamoudi](#), one of CAIR's former directors, is a supporter of both  [Hamas](#) and  [Hezbollah](#), and is currently serving a 23-year prison sentence for terrorism-related convictions.
- Current CAIR board member Nabil Sadoun [co-founded](#), along with [Mousa Abu Marzook](#), the [United Association for Studies and Research](#) (UASR), which investigators consider to be a key Hamas front in America. Sadoun now sits on UASR's board.
- Current CAIR research director Mohamed Nimer previously [served](#) as a Board Director for UASR.
- One of CAIR's founding directors, [Rafeeq Jaber](#), is a [supporter](#) of Hezbollah and served as the longtime President of the [Islamic Association for Palestine](#).
- CAIR Board member [Hamza Yusuf](#) was investigated by the FBI shortly after 9/11 because, just two days before the attacks, he had told a Muslim audience: "This country [the U.S.] is facing a terrible fate and the reason for that is because this country stands condemned. It stands condemned like Europe stood condemned because of what it did. And lest people forget, Europe suffered two world wars after conquering the Muslim lands."

The foregoing affiliations have drawn the notice of numerous commentators:

- Steven Pomerantz, the FBI's former chief of counter-terrorism, has stated that "CAIR, its leaders and its activities effectively give aid to international terrorist groups."
- WorldNetDaily quotes an FBI veteran as [saying](#): "Their [CAIR's] offices have been a turnstile for terrorists and their supporters."
- The family of John P. O'Neill, Sr., the former FBI counter-terrorism chief who died at the World Trade Center on 9/11, named CAIR in a lawsuit as having "been part of the criminal conspiracy of radical Islamic terrorism" responsible for the September 11 attacks.
- Terrorism expert Steven Emerson, citing federal law enforcement sources and internal documents, characterizes CAIR as "a radical fundamentalist front group for Hamas."
- U.S. Senator [Richard Durbin](#) has [said](#), "CAIR is unusual in its extreme rhetoric and its associations with groups that are suspect."



- On September 17, 2003, U.S. Senator Charles Schumer stated that CAIR co-founders Nihad Awad and Omar Ahmad have "intimate links with Hamas." He later remarked that "we know [CAIR] has ties to terrorism."
- [According to](#) U.S. Rep. Sue Myrick (R - North Carolina), co-founder of the House Anti-Terrorism/Jihad Caucus: "Groups like CAIR have a proven record of senior officials being indicted and either imprisoned or deported from the United States."
- During September 2003 hearings held by the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Terrorism, Technology, and Homeland Security, Chairman Jon Kyl noted the connections between such groups as CAIR and the Saudi government, [stating](#): "A small group of organizations based in the U.S. with Saudi backing and support is well advanced in its four-decade effort to control Islam in America -- from mosques, universities and community centers to our prisons and even within our military. Moderate Muslims who love America and want to be part of our great country are being forced out of those institutions."

A number of American Muslims have made similar observations:

- The late Seifeldin Ashmawy, who published *Voice of Peace*, called CAIR the champion of "extremists whose views do not represent Islam."
- Tashbih Sayyed of the Council for Democracy and Tolerance (CDT) called CAIR "the most accomplished fifth column" in the United States. Jamal Hasan, also of CDT, said that CAIR's goal is to spread "Islamic hegemony the world over by hook or by crook."
- According to Kamal Nawash of the Free Muslim Coalition Against Terrorism, CAIR and similar groups "condemn terrorism on the surface while endorsing an ideology that helps foster extremism," and adds that "almost all of their members are theocratic Muslims who reject secularism and want to establish Islamic states."

In 1998, CAIR co-hosted a rally at Brooklyn College where Islamic militants exhorted the attendees to carry out "*jihad*" and described Jews as "pigs and monkeys." The crowd chanted: "No to the Jews, descendants of the apes." Referring to Israel as a "racist country and state," CAIR was a signatory to a MAY 20, 2004 "Joint Muslims/Arab-American Statement on Israeli Violence in Gaza," which "strongly condemn[ed]" Israel's "indiscriminate killings of innocent Palestinians, including many children," and its "demolition of Palestinian homes." In August 2006 CAIR accused Israel of practicing state terrorism in its war against the Lebanese terrorist organization Hezbollah. Said CAIR Communications Director Ibrahim Hooper, "Our [American] government must end its support for Israel's campaign of terror in Lebanon and join an international effort to protect and bring humanitarian aid to the civilian population of that devastated

nation."

CAIR officials have displayed a double standard for denouncing violence. For example, Ibrahim Hooper in a *Pittsburg Post-Gazette* interview refused to denounce the terrorism of  [Hamas](#)  and  [Hezbollah](#) , stating, "we're not in the business of condemning." By contrast, when Israeli troops killed Hamas leader  [Ahmed Yassin](#) , CAIR condemned "the assassination of a wheelchair-bound Palestinian Muslim religious leader," calling the operation "an act of state terror."

According to terrorism expert Steven Emerson: "Hussam Ayloush, the Executive Director of the Southern California chapter of [CAIR] ... is known to use the term 'Zionazi' to refer to Israelis, and [he] compare[s] Zionism to Nazism, once writing in an e-mail, 'Indeed, the Zionazis are a bunch of nice people; just like their Nazi brethren!'"

CAIR chose not to endorse or participate in the May 14, 2005 "Free Muslims March Against Terror," an event whose stated purpose was to "send a message to the terrorists and extremists that their days are numbered ... [and to send] a message to the people of the Middle East, the Muslim world and all people who seek freedom, democracy and peaceful coexistence that we support them."

CAIR  [states](#)  that it "works in close cooperation with other civic and civil liberties groups such as the  [American Civil Liberties Union](#) ,  [Amnesty International](#) ,  [NAACP](#) , Hispanic Unity, Organization of Chinese Americans, Japanese American Citizens League, Sikh Mediawatch and Resource Task Force, among many others." CAIR also identifies the  [National Council of Churches](#)  as a "partner" organization.

On December 12, 2006, CAIR Board Chairman Parvez Ahmed  [called](#)  the war in Iraq a "pure unadulterated projection of raw power" and said the U.S. should withdraw its forces immediately.

Another notable CAIR official is  [Altaf Ali](#) , the organization's Florida Director. Ali alleges that America responded to the 9/11 attacks by trampling on the civil liberties of all Muslims, and he has  [wavered](#)  on the question of whether or not the victims who died in the World Trade Center on 9/11 could be classified as innocents whose killings were unjustified.

In 2007 CAIR became involved in the infamous " [flying imams](#) " lawsuit, a case that centered around six Muslim clerics aboard a November 2006 US Airways flight from Minneapolis to Phoenix. Shortly before takeoff, they began engaging in bizarre behaviors eerily reminiscent of those that had been used by the 9/11 hijackers: shouting slogans in Arabic; leaving their assigned seats to position themselves in different places; requesting seat belt extenders that they positioned on the floor, rather than using them to secure themselves. Responding to the concerns of alarmed passengers and the flight crew, authorities removed the imams from the plane. Soon thereafter the imams filed a lawsuit against US Airways, claiming that they had been removed from the flight for no



reason other than anti-Muslim discrimination. The lawyer representing the imams was Omar T. Mohammedi, who as of 2006 was President of CAIR's New York chapter.

In February 2007, CAIR [endorsed](#) a call by the American Muslim Taskforce for Civil Rights and Elections, for a worldwide "rolling fast" in support of the incarcerated [Sami Al-Arian](#), who had initiated a hunger strike on January 21 to protest his detention and treatment by federal authorities. Participants in the campaign agreed to fast every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday for as long as Al-Arian continued his hunger strike.

On June 4, 2007, the *New York Sun* [reported](#) that CAIR had been named as an unindicted co-conspirator in an alleged criminal conspiracy to support both [Hamas](#) and the [Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development](#) (HLF). The federal prosecution document, in naming CAIR as an unindicted co-conspirator, described the organization as a present or past member of the U.S. [Muslim Brotherhood's](#) Palestine Committee.

Also named as unindicted co-conspirators in the HLF trial were groups such as [Hamas](#), INFOCOM, the [Islamic Association for Palestine](#), the [Islamic Society of North America](#), the [Muslim Arab Youth Association](#), the [United Association for Studies and Research](#), and the North American Islamic Trust. The list also included many individuals affiliated with the [Muslim Brotherhood](#) and/or Hamas. Among these were [Omar Ahmad](#), [Abdurahman Alamoudi](#), [Jamal Badawi](#), [Yousef al-Qaradawi](#), [Abdallah Azzam](#), [Mohammad Jaghliit](#), [Mousa Abu Marzook](#), [Abdel Aziz Rantisi](#), and [Ahmed Yassin](#).

Two weeks after the Justice Department had named CAIR as an unindicted co-conspirator in the HLF trial, the organization legally [changed its name](#) to "Council on American-Islamic Relations Action Network."

In the summer 2007 Holy Land Foundation trial, it was learned that CAIR's parent organization, the [Islamic Association for Palestine](#), had been named in a May 1991 Muslim Brotherhood memorandum as one of the Brotherhood's likeminded "organizations of our friends" who shared the common goal of conducting "a kind of grand Jihad in eliminating and destroying the Western civilization from within and 'sabotaging' its miserable house by their hands ... so that ... God's religion [Islam] is made victorious over all other religions."

[According to](#) a June 2007 *Washington Times* report, CAIR's membership had declined more than 90 percent since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, from approximately 29,000 in the year 2000, to fewer than 1,700 six years later. As a result, CAIR's annual income from dues dropped from \$732,765 in 2000 (when yearly dues cost \$25 per person), to \$58,750 in 2006 (when dues cost \$35). As of 2007, the majority of CAIR's \$3 million annual budget derived from about two dozen individual donors.

M. Zuhdi Jasser, Director of the American-Islamic Forum for Democracy, [said](#) in June 2007 that the decline in CAIR's membership contradicted the organization's claim that it represents the interests

and concerns of 7 million American Muslims. "This is the untold story in the myth that CAIR represents the American Muslim population," said Jasser. "They only represent their membership and donors."

CAIR has received funding from the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta, the New York Foundation, [and](#) the [Tides Foundation](#).

CAIR also receives considerable funding from Saudi Arabia, whose Washington embassy in 1999 announced a \$250,000 grant by the Saudi-based Islamic Development Bank to help CAIR purchase some land in Washington, DC -- to be used in the construction of "an education and research center." In 2002 the [World Assembly of Muslim Youth](#), which is bankrolled by the Saudi government, [financed](#) CAIR's distribution of books on Islam and CAIR's immensely expensive advertising campaign in a number of American publications -- including a weekly ad in *USA Today* which cost approximately \$1.04 million over the course of the year. In 2003, Saudi Prince Alwaleed bin Talal [donated](#) \$500,000 to help CAIR distribute the Koran and other Islam-related books throughout the United States. Two years later, a Saudi Arabian named Adnan Bogary [gave](#) CAIR's Washington branch a donation of more than \$1.36 million.

In 2006 Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai, [financed](#) the building of a property in the United States to serve as an endowment for CAIR. That property now generates some \$3 million annually for CAIR.

According to the [Investigative Project on Terrorism](#), CAIR in 2006 sent delegations to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in an effort to procure millions of dollars in donations from wealthy Gulf donors.

According to the [Investigative Project on Terrorism](#), in September 2009 CAIR executive director Nihad Awad (along with CAIR national spokesman Ibrahim Hooper and chairman Larry Shaw) praised Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi for his "leadership" and his "continuing efforts for world peace," and asked him to underwrite a CAIR program to distribute a million copies of the Quran to American government officials and the general public. "We want to assure you that Muslims in America are your brothers and supporters," Shaw said. "They share with you your interests and aspirations." The CAIR officials also asked Gaddafi for financial assistance to help them run an entity known as the Muslim Peace Foundation, founded in 2008 ostensibly to help repair American-Muslim relations. One of the foundation's founders was a man named Winslow Seale, a Muslim convert who later changed his name to Johari Abdul Malik. Malik's *Dar al-Hijrah* mosque is believed to be "associated with Islamic extremists" and "has been linked to numerous individuals linked to terrorism financing."

In October 2010, CAIR announced that it was forming a new ["Islamophobia" department](#) that would produce an annual report tracking "trends in rhetorical attacks on Islam and Muslims and ... offer accurate and balanced information to be used in the struggle for tolerance and mutual understanding."

In November 2010, Muneer Awad, director of CAIR's Oklahoma state chapter, [filed a federal lawsuit](#) challenging a measure -- approved by 70 percent of Oklahoma voters -- that barred the state's judges from considering Sharia, or Islamic law, in formulating their rulings. According to Awad, the measure not only violated the First Amendment right to "free exercise" of religion, but also singled out Islam for "profound stigma."