



“The 1993 Philadelphia Meeting”

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“The 1993 Philadelphia Meeting: A Roadmap for Future Muslim Brotherhood Actions in the U.S.”

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[This document is an exclusive report produced by the NEFA Foundation based upon exhibits entered into evidence by the U.S. Justice Department in the recent U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation case. For more information on the activities of the Muslim Brotherhood in North America, see the October 2007 NEFA report, “The Muslim Brotherhood in the United States” and to view a complete library of HLF exhibits see: <http://www.nefafoundation.org/hlfdocs.html>.]

Introduction

Founded in Egypt in 1928, the Muslim Brotherhood aims, in the words of a recent Dutch intelligence assessment, “to act as a bulwark against advancing Western cultural and ideological hegemony” and seeks to “‘re-Islamize society’ in accordance with an ultra-orthodox doctrine.”¹ In 1987, Hamas was created “as an outgrowth of the Muslim Brotherhood.”²

According to the U.S. government, shortly after the formation of Hamas, “the Muslim Brotherhood directed its Palestinian Committees throughout the world, including the United States, to carry out the mandate of assisting” the newly-formed organization.³ Federal prosecutors have further asserted that

“In accordance with that mandate, the Palestinian Committee in the United States...created a number of organizations charged with varying missions calculated to comprehensively address Hamas’ needs. These organizations included the United Association for Studies and Research (UASR) (‘think tank’), the Islamic Association of Palestine (IAP) (propaganda and information) and the Occupied Land Fund (OLF) (money), later to become the defendant HLF.”⁴

¹ General Intelligence and Security Service of the Netherlands (AIVD), “The Radical Dawa in Transition: The Rise of Islamic Neoradicalism in the Netherlands,”

http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/FeaturedDocs/AIVD_RadicalDawaTransition.pdf.

² U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Indictment, Filed July 26, 2004, <http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/U.S. v HLF Indictment.pdf>.

³ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government’s Trial Brief, <http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/U.S. v HLF TrialBrief.pdf>.

⁴ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government’s Trial Brief, <http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/U.S. v HLF TrialBrief.pdf>.

From October 2-3, 1993,⁵ key members of the U.S. Palestine Committee came together at a Marriott Courtyard hotel in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania for a conference that was monitored and recorded by Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents.⁶ Wiretaps of this meeting, which were entered into evidence at the 2007 trial of the Holy Land Foundation (HLF), reveal an extremely savvy group of individuals committed to exploiting America's freedoms in order to turn the U.S. into a "safe place for the Movement."⁷ The wiretaps also provide incontrovertible evidence of the deeply duplicitous nature of these men and their organizations. From calling Hamas "Samah"⁸ throughout the meeting to acknowledging that they "cannot say...that I'm Hamas" when talking to Americans⁹ to advising that "War is deception,"¹⁰ the attendees display a cunning that served them effectively for years, allowing their organizations to operate with relative impunity throughout the 1990s.

For example, the Texas-based HLF was able to develop into the largest Muslim charitable organization in the U.S., raising millions of dollars.¹¹ Similarly, IAP, the other key organization represented at the Philadelphia meeting, trumpeted on its website in 2000 that it had "grown into the largest Muslim, Arab, and Palestinian American grassroots organization dedicated to the cause of Palestine with tens of regional and local chapters, representatives, and offices around the country."¹² Despite their firm commitment to supporting Hamas' radical agenda, HLF and IAP adeptly couched their actions in the language of humanitarianism and multiculturalism. For example, in a 2000 edition of its "S.H.A.R.E."¹³ newsletter, HLF wrote, "we affirm that all possible steps should be taken to alleviate or prevent human suffering while opening windows of hope for all innocent people throughout the world!"¹⁴ And, on its website, IAP stated that it "builds strong bridges with various Muslim, Arab, Palestinian and other American groups through its activities and contacts with community centers, mosques, churches, media, civil and human rights institutions, intellectuals and officials."¹⁵

⁵ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 004-0008, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93philly_agenda.pdf.

⁶ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government's Trial Brief, <http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/U.S. v HLF TrialBrief.pdf>.

⁷ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0063, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_16.pdf.

⁸ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0049, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_27.pdf. See also: http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/shukri_samah2.pdf.

⁹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0087, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_18.pdf.

¹⁰ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0069, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_9.pdf.

¹¹ Peter Whoriskey, "Mistrial Declared in Islamic Charity Case," *The Washington Post*, October 23, 2007.

¹² "IAP Mission," http://web.archive.org/web/20010206081325/www.iap.org/about_iap.htm.

¹³ "S.H.A.R.E" stood for "Serve", "Help", "Aid", "Rescue" and "Educate."

¹⁴ HLF "S.H.A.R.E." Newsletter, May 2000.

¹⁵ "IAP Mission," http://web.archive.org/web/20010206081325/www.iap.org/about_iap.htm.

Note: Following 9/11, HLF and IAP faced a far less welcoming environment. In December 2001, the Treasury Department froze HLF's assets and labeled the organization a Specially Designated Global Terrorist, announcing, "the Holy Land Foundation masquerades as a charity, while its primary purpose is to fund Hamas. This is not the case of one bad actor stealing from the petty cash drawer and giving those stolen monies to terrorism. This organization exists to raise money in the United States to promote terror." Then, in December 2004, HLF and IAP were amongst a

Also of deep significance at the Philadelphia meeting is discussion about the need to form a “political organization and public relations” organ,¹⁶ “whose Islamic hue is not very conspicuous.”¹⁷ One of the attendees saw this new organization as a necessity because the groups that were in existence at the time were “purely Islamic organizations” and may be “burned” and “unable to work.”¹⁸ Less than a year after the meeting, two attendees and one-time IAP officials founded the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), which now serves as the self-appointed voice of the American Muslim community in the national media, regularly offering “diversity training” to law enforcement and able to access the highest levels of the U.S. government. Notably, in a filing in the HLF case, the U.S. government identifies CAIR as a member of the U.S. Palestine Committee.¹⁹

Context : The Signing of the Oslo Accords

On September 13, 1993, representatives of the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) signed “The Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements” (a.k.a. “The Oslo Accords”). That document, which, by most accounts, officially ended the First Intifada, stated that both parties:

“agree that it is time to put an end to decades of confrontation and conflict, recognize their mutual legitimate and political rights, and strive to live in peaceful coexistence and mutual dignity and security and achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement and historic reconciliation through the agreed political process.”²⁰

The U.S. government's trial brief in the HLF case summarizes Hamas' response to the Accords:

“The Oslo Accords were not...universally accepted. Hamas rejected the agreement for its unacceptable condition of recognizing Israel's right to exist. For Hamas, the Oslo Accords were a threat to its survival and in direct confrontation with its most valued tenet - the destruction of the State of Israel and the creation of an Islamic state in all of what is today Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip.”²¹

number of defendants held civilly liable in a \$156 million judgment stemming from the 1996 murder of U.S. citizen David Boim by Hamas terrorists in the West Bank. Although the 2007 trial of HLF and seven of its officials for providing material support to Hamas ended in a mistrial on most charges, the U.S. government has said it will retry the case.

¹⁶ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0073, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_11.pdf.

¹⁷ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0067, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_8.pdf.

¹⁸ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0067, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_8.pdf.

¹⁹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, List of Unindicted Co-conspirators and/or Joint Venturers, Filed May 29, 2007,

http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/US_v_HLF_Unindicted_Coconspirators.pdf.

²⁰ “The Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements”, September 13, 1993.

²¹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government's Trial Brief, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/U.S._v_HLF_TrialBrief.pdf.

Moreover, according to that same government brief,

"For Hamas' support network in the United States (the Palestinian Committee), the signing of the Oslo Accords and America's brokering of the agreement presented a difficult challenge. The Oslo Accords had provided a degree of public expectation for a peaceful resolution to the historic conflict. In order for the Palestinian Committee to fulfill its mandate of assisting and strengthening Hamas, it would have to be much more cautious and organized in its efforts, so as to avoid overt alignment with a group now dedicated to undermining the American-backed peace process."²²

The Purpose of the Meeting

According to the FBI, it was in this context that members of the Palestine Committee met "to develop a strategy to defeat the Israeli/Palestinian peace accord, and to continue and improve their fund-raising and political activities in the United States."²³

Meeting attendee Omar Ahmad (see biographical information below) succinctly summarizes the groups' view of the Oslo Accords when he comments to attendees that the peace treaty "is between infidels and infidels."²⁴

The Attendees

Federal prosecutors reported that "approximately 20 members of the Palestinian Committee" attended the Philadelphia meeting,²⁵ the FBI has identified those individuals as "senior leaders of HAMAS, the HLF RD and the IAP."²⁶

Four HLF officials – Shukri Abu Baker, Ghassan Elashi, Mufid Abdulqader, and Haitham Maghawri – who faced trial in Texas for providing material support to Hamas attended the conference.²⁷

- Shukri Abu Baker: Abu Baker helped found HLF and served as the organization's President, Secretary, and Chief Executive Officer.²⁸ In 2005, the

²² U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government's Trial Brief, <http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/U.S. v HLF TrialBrief.pdf>.

²³ Action Memorandum from Dale L. Watson, Assistant Director, Counterterrorism Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation to R. Richard Newcomb, Director, Office of Foreign Asset Control, Department of Treasury, November 5, 2001, Herein "FBI Action Memorandum dated Nov. 5, 2001," <http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/WatsonMemo.pdf>.

²⁴ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0071, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_10.pdf.

²⁵ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government's Trial Brief, <http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/U.S. v HLF TrialBrief.pdf>.

²⁶ FBI Action Memorandum dated Nov. 5, 2001.

²⁷ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Indictment, Filed July 26, 2004 and http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93philly_hotelreceipts.pdf.

²⁸ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Indictment, Filed July 26, 2004, <http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/U.S. v HLF Indictment.pdf>.

U.S. government asserted that his brother, Jamal, was "the former Hamas leader in Sudan and the current Hamas leader in Yemen."²⁹

- Ghassan Elashi: Elashi incorporated HLF³⁰ and served as the organization's Treasurer and later as Chairman of the Board.³¹ He also incorporated IAP³² and was a founding board member of CAIR's Texas chapter.³³ In April 2005, Elashi and his computer company, Infocom, were convicted for engaging in prohibited financial transactions with a Specially Designated Terrorist and conspiring to commit money laundering. That Specially Designated Terrorist was Hamas official Mousa Abu Marzook, who is married to Ghassan's cousin, Nadia Elashi.³⁴ (Notably, Marzook gave HLF \$210,000³⁵ and IAP \$858,158.³⁶)
- Mufid Abdulqader: Abdulqader "was a top fundraiser" for HLF and is the half-brother of Hamas leader and Specially Designated Global Terrorist Khalid Mishal.³⁷ Further, through his sister's marriage, he is related to Mohamed Siam,³⁸ whom the U.S. government has identified as "one of the founders of Hamas."³⁹
- Haitham Maghawri: Maghawri acted as HLF's Executive Director.⁴⁰

HLF fundraiser Abdel Jabbar Hamdan, who was arrested on immigration violations the same day the HLF indictment was issued, was also at the meeting.⁴¹ According to the Department of Homeland Security, Hamdan "served as the primary spokesman and fundraiser for the organization in Southern California" from 1990 until the Treasury Department shut down HLF in December 2001.⁴²

²⁹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Superseding Indictment, Filed November 30, 2005,

[http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/U.S. v HLF SpclIndictment.pdf](http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/U.S._v_HLF_SpclIndictment.pdf).

³⁰ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 011-0032, http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/AOI_OLF.pdf.

³¹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Indictment, Filed July 26, 2004.

³² U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 011-0033, http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/IAP_Elashi.pdf.

³³ Testimony of Matthew Epstein before the United States Senate Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Technology, and Homeland Security, "Saudi Support for Islamic Extremism in the United States," September 10, 2003.

³⁴ <http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/familiallinks.pdf>.

³⁵ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 011-0020, http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/HLF_IRS990_1993.pdf.

³⁶ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 020-0034, http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/FeaturedDocs/IAP_Marzook_Summary.pdf.

³⁷ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Indictment, Filed July 26, 2004, [http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/U.S. v HLF Indictment.pdf](http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/U.S._v_HLF_Indictment.pdf).

³⁸ <http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/familiallinks.pdf>.

³⁹ Department of Justice Press Release, "Yemeni Citizens Arrested for Conspiring to Provide Support to Al Qaeda, Hamas, and Other Terrorist Groups," March 4, 2003, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/Siam_Hamas.pdf.

⁴⁰ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Indictment, Filed July 26, 2004.

⁴¹ http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93philly_hotelreceipts.pdf.

⁴² Immigration and Customs Enforcement Fact Sheet, "Public Examples in which ICE has Used Immigration Authorities to Address Terrorism-Related Threats since January 2004," May 7, 2007.

A fifth HLF official, Mohamed El-Mezain, was invited but was too ill to attend.⁴³ El-Mezain incorporated HLF, served as the original Chairman of the Board, and then became Director of Endowments.⁴⁴ According to a 2006 Treasury Department document, Khalid Mishal identified El-Mezain, who is Mousa Abu Marzook's cousin,⁴⁵ "as the Hamas leader for the U.S."⁴⁶ In the HLF trial, El-Mezain was acquitted of all charges against him, except the material support charge, on which the jury deadlocked.⁴⁷

A handful of IAP officials joined their HLF associates in Philadelphia.

- **Omar Ahmad:**⁴⁸ Ahmad served as President of IAP.⁴⁹ Shortly after the Philadelphia meeting, in 1994, Ahmad co-founded CAIR and is currently the organization's Chairman Emeritus.⁵⁰
- **Nihad Awad:**⁵¹ Awad acted as IAP's Director of Public Relations.⁵² He co-founded CAIR with Omar Ahmad and is currently the group's Executive Director.⁵³
- **Akram Kharroubi:**⁵⁴ In a 1991 letter, Kharroubi identifies himself as the Chairman of IAP's Washington branch.⁵⁵ From 1995-1999, he was HLF's representative in Ramallah.⁵⁶ According to the FBI, "during the early 1990s," Kharroubi "was in contact with HAMAS leaders, including Mousa Abu Marzook. He reportedly distributed HAMAS statements when they were issued." Detained by Israel in 1999, he admitted to his interviewers that "from

⁴³ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government's Trial Brief, <http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/U.S. v HLF TrialBrief.pdf>.

⁴⁴ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Indictment, Filed July 26, 2004, <http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/U.S. v HLF Indictment.pdf>.

⁴⁵ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Indictment, Filed July 26, 2004, <http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/U.S. v HLF Indictment.pdf>. Note: Another of El-Mezain's cousins, Ahmad Hamdan, was a Hamas member deported to Lebanon. See: <http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/familiallinks.pdf>.

⁴⁶ Treasury Department Press Release, "Treasury Freezes Assets of Organization Tied to Hamas," February 19, 2006, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/FeaturedDocs/Treasury_Designation_KindHearts.pdf

⁴⁷ U.S. v. El-Mezain (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Verdict, Filed October 22, 2007.

⁴⁸ http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93philly_hotelreceipts.pdf.

⁴⁹ Nihad Awad, "Muslim-Americans in Mainstream America," *The Link*, February-March 2000.

⁵⁰ CAIR National Board and Staff, http://www.cair.com/AboutUs/CAIRNationalBoardandStaff.aspx#Omar_Ahmed.

⁵¹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government's Memorandum in Opposition to Council on American-Islamic Relations' Motion for Leave to File a Brief *Amicus Curiae Instanter* and *Amicus* Brief in Support of the Unindicted Co-Conspirators' First and Fifth Amendment Rights, Filed September 4, 2007, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/AwadAhmad_Philly.pdf.

⁵² Nihad Awad, "Muslim-Americans in Mainstream America," *The Link*, February-March 2000.

⁵³ CAIR National Board and Staff, <http://www.cair.com/AboutUs/CAIRNationalBoardandStaff.aspx#NihadAwad2>.

⁵⁴ FBI Action Memorandum dated Nov. 5, 2001.

⁵⁵ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 022-0006, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/DarAlHijrah_IAPOLF.pdf.

⁵⁶ http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/hlf_hlfoffices.pdf.

1994 to 1999, he was a money courier between HAMAS members in Jordan and the West Bank.⁵⁷

- Mohammad Al-Hanooti:⁵⁸ Hanooti served as IAP President from 1984-1986.⁵⁹ A 2001 FBI memorandum cited an FBI source, who had "been found reliable in the past," who "stated that Al-Hanooti was a big supporter of HAMAS." That same memo cited another FBI source, who also had "been found reliable in the past," who reported "that Al-Hanooti collected over six million U.S. dollars for support of HAMAS in Israel."⁶⁰
- Ismail Elbarasse:⁶¹ Elbarasse incorporated the American Middle Eastern League for Palestine,⁶² which "did business as" IAP.⁶³ Elbarasse held a joint bank account with Mousa Abu Marzook in the 1990s; further, Specially Designated Terrorist Mohammad Salah told Israeli authorities "that he was directed by Marzook to receive funds from Elbarasse to be used for funding HAMAS military operations...Salah's financial records document that Elbarasse wire-transferred a total of \$735,000 to Salah from December 1992 to January 1993."⁶⁴
- Hasan Sabri:⁶⁵ Sabri worked for IAP Information Services⁶⁶ and later served on IAP's board.⁶⁷

Two other attendees were affiliated with the Al-Aqsa Educational Fund (AAEF), which Chicago prosecutors have argued was a conduit for Hamas funds.⁶⁸ According to the FBI, "in early 1994,...[the] Al-Aqsa Educational Fund...and the HLFRD were in conflict over fund-raising issues...HAMAS Political Bureau head Mousa Abu Marzook designated the HLFRD as the primary fund-raising entity in the United States and ordered the AAEFI to curtail fund-raising operations. Ultimately, Marzook traveled to the United States and chaired a meeting in Dallas, Texas, regarding this issue..."⁶⁹

- Abdelhaleem Ashqar:⁷⁰ Ashqar, who incorporated the AAEF,⁷¹ was indicted in August 2004 with Mousa Abu Marzook and Mohammad Salah for

⁵⁷ FBI Action Memorandum dated Nov. 5, 2001.

⁵⁸ FBI Action Memorandum dated Nov. 5, 2001.

⁵⁹ "Backgrounder On the Fiqh Council of North America and the Council on American-Islamic Relations," The Investigative Project on Terrorism, Citing *Ila Filastin*, February 1990, p. 70.

⁶⁰ FBI Action Memorandum dated Nov. 5, 2001.

⁶¹ FBI Action Memorandum dated Nov. 5, 2001.

⁶² U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 022-0006, http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/IAP_Aolnc.pdf.

⁶³ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 011-0012, http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/DBA_AMELP_TX.pdf.

⁶⁴ FBI Action Memorandum dated Nov. 5, 2001.

⁶⁵ http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93philly_hotelreceipts.pdf.

⁶⁶ http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93philly_hotelreceipts.pdf.

⁶⁷ List of IAP Board Members,

http://web.archive.org/web/20000816224509/www.iap.org/contact_us.htm.

⁶⁸ U.S. v. Marzook (N.D. IL.), No. 03-CR-978, Second Superseding Indictment, <http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/U.S. v Marzook Excerpt.pdf>.

⁶⁹ FBI Action Memorandum dated Nov. 5, 2001.

⁷⁰ FBI Action Memorandum dated Nov. 5, 2001.

allegedly participating in a 15-year racketeering conspiracy to support Hamas. Prosecutors alleged that, “From 1989, Ashqar functioned as a conduit of money for Hamas members both in the United States and abroad. In this role, he opened various bank accounts in and around Oxford, Miss., which he utilized as a clearinghouse for Hamas funds from Abu Marzook as well as other Hamas members and organizations in the United States and abroad...Ashqar also served as a communications conduit for Hamas both through his participation in and linking of telephone calls between various Hamas members in the United States and abroad, as well as his storing and disseminating numerous Hamas-related documents that concerned both the public activities of Hamas as well as the internal operation of Hamas.”⁷² In 2007, Ashqar was acquitted of racketeering conspiracy but convicted of obstruction of justice and criminal contempt charges related to his refusal to testify in a grand jury investigation of Hamas’ U.S. network.⁷³

- Muin Shabib.⁷⁴ Shabib, who served as an AAEF official,⁷⁵ “admitted supporting HAMAS financially and politically” during a March 1994 FBI interview.⁷⁶

There is little information publicly available on the other meeting attendees, including Ghassan Saleh,⁷⁷ Riad Ahmed, and Abdul-Rahman Baraksi.⁷⁸

Planning the Agenda

Prosecutors in the HLF case introduced an undated intercepted telephone conversation between AAEF’s Abdelhaleem Ashqar, HLF’s Shukri Abu Baker, and IAP’s Omar Ahmad (a.k.a. Omar Yehya), in which the three men plan the details of the upcoming conference.

A significant portion of the conversation is spent talking about the best format for the conference. Ahmad asks,

"should we ask every organization...to present a paper on behalf of his organization?...for instance, the people of the Association [IAP], we are four or five. All of us should try to organize our thoughts and one of [us] would come and present a paper, to see what he believes, the strategy

⁷¹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 011-0034, http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/AOI_AAEF.pdf.

⁷² U.S. v. Marzook (N.D. IL.), No. 03-CR-978, Second Superseding Indictment, <http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/U.S. v Marzook Excerpt.pdf>.

⁷³ Dan Effen, “Two Men Acquitted of Conspiracy to Fund Hamas Activities in Israeli,” *The Washington Post*, February 2, 2007.

⁷⁴ FBI Action Memorandum dated Nov. 5, 2001.

⁷⁵ Janice Kephart, “Immigration and Terrorism: Moving Beyond the 9/11 Staff Report on Terrorist Travel,” *Center for Immigration Studies*, September 2005, Citing IRS Form 990, Al Aqsa Educational Fund, 1993.

⁷⁶ FBI Action Memorandum dated Nov. 5, 2001.

⁷⁷ Note: Saleh is mentioned in a letter authored by Ghassan Elashi. However, his exact role is not clear. See: U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 005-0006, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/IAP_OLF_JointAddress.pdf.

⁷⁸ http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93philly_hotelreceipts.pdf.

and what is the situation of the work in the future. For instance, the same thing for the Fund, the same thing for Al Aqsa, too."⁷⁹

Abu Baker responds, "my opinion is to designate people to write" because "it is essential to know what the future of the charitable and national organizations under the self rule area will be. At least, even if theoretically...from the legality standpoint, what can happen to them."⁸⁰

When the discussion shifts to the invite list, Ahmad asks about inviting Abdel Aziz Sidiqui, "the Sudanese brother." Abu Baker replies, "I'm just with the original idea that we limit the number. We don't...necessarily have to bring everyone who is working because [the meeting] is strategic planning." Voicing concerns about security, he remarks, "A large number...will be suspicious and...will attract attention."⁸¹

Reflecting similar priorities, Abu Baker expresses his desire that "this meeting will be an open presentation...so that some[one] walks into us from the street and hears the talk, he will not..." be suspicious. Abu Baker adds, "Because, you have talk about the organizations and you need to work properly."⁸²

In a follow up conversation, Ashqar informs Omar Ahmad that "you are looking at twenty-three or twenty-six" attendees.⁸³

The Agenda

Prosecutors introduced the conference's agenda into evidence during the HLF trial; that document states that the meeting's goals during the four sessions were "determining the strategies, policies, and frames of Islamic activism for Palestine in North America in the near and far stages in its following aspects: Political action and public relations. Popular action. Charitable action. Media action."⁸⁴

Opening the Conference and Establishing the Ground Rules: Say "Samah", not Hamas

As the conference opens, Omar Ahmad asks God to "heal" Mohamed El-Mezain and then explains the purpose of the meeting to the attendees, saying, "This meeting was called for by the Palestine Committee...to study the situation in light of the latest developments on the Palestinian arena, its effects and impact on our work here in America."⁸⁵

⁷⁹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0025, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93philly_planning.pdf.

⁸⁰ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0025, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93philly_planning.pdf.

⁸¹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0025, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93philly_planning.pdf.

⁸² U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0025, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93philly_planning.pdf.

⁸³ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0015, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93philly_planning2.pdf.

⁸⁴ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 004-008, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93philly_agenda.pdf.

⁸⁵ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0047,

Laying the ground rules, he states, "The brothers who will submit papers...will have a moderator with them and someone to take the minutes of the session and the points [discussed]. When discussion is over, he will present to us what he got out of the discussions. We approve it and then we end the first session and so forth...We would leave with work visions or action plan."⁸⁶

Then, with the conference in its early stages, Shukri Abu Baker makes a telling request, asking the attendees, "Please don't mention the name Samah in an explicit manner. We agree on saying it as 'sister Samah'..."⁸⁷ An FBI analysis of the meeting assesses that "participants went to great length and spent much effort hiding their association with the Islamic Resistance Movement, a.k.a. HAMAS. Instead, they referred to HAMAS as 'SAMAH', which is HAMAS spelled backwards. Most of the time, the participants referred to HAMAS as 'The Movement.'"⁸⁸

Abu Baker follows up his "Samah" request by informing the group, "the session here is a joint workshop between the Holy Land Foundation and the IAP. This is the official form. I mean, please, in case some [people] inquired."⁸⁹ During the HLF trial, federal prosecutors linked these instructions to a security manual seized by authorities during a search of Infocom, Ghassan Elashi's computer company. Under the heading, "The Foundation's Policies & Guidelines," the manual notes that meeting participants must agree "on a cover for the reason of the meeting which is in harmony with the type of the relationship."⁹⁰

Discussion – The Best Strategy for Defeating the Oslo Accords

At the conference, the attendees go back and forth about the ideal tactics for undermining the Oslo Accords.

Omar Ahmad advocates trying to "make people view the [Palestinian National] Authority as collaborators...An Authority which doesn't care for people's interests and the interest of the national rights and the people's...This is the best success we could reach."⁹¹

In Shukri Abu Baker's opinion, "It does not benefit me to show to the American people that...I am against the accord because I hate About Ammar [Yasser Arafat] and hate the [Palestinian Liberation] Organization." Instead of "attack[ing] the [Palestinian

http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_26.pdf.

⁸⁶ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0047,

http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_26.pdf.

⁸⁷ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0049,

http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_27.pdf. See also:

http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/shukri_samah2.pdf.

⁸⁸ FBI Action Memorandum dated Nov. 5, 2001.

⁸⁹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0049,

http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_27.pdf.

⁹⁰ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 002-0101,

<http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/FeaturedDocs/securitymanual.pdf>. See also:

<http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/securitymanual.pdf>.

⁹¹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0051,

http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_1.pdf.

Liberation] Organization in a personal and direct manner," the U.S. groups should speak about "democracy and freedom of expression..."⁹²

An unidentified speaker agrees with Abu Baker, chiming in that they should be "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..."⁹³

However, Ghassan Saleh challenges this approach, arguing that "we should oppose and combat this accord using its humanitarian aspects..."⁹⁴

Discussion – Hamas' Reach in the Occupied Territories and Oslo's Impact

During the conference, Muin Shabib briefs the men on Hamas' presence in ten sectors, including educational organizations, Zakat committees, and the media. For example, he states, "the main organization...which is known to belong to us is Islamic University in the Gaza Sector..."⁹⁵ Hamas co-founder Ahmed Yassin helped establish the Islamic University of Gaza (IUG),⁹⁶ while another Hamas co-founder, Mohammad Siam, has served as its president.⁹⁷ Two years prior to the Philadelphia conference, in October 1991, HLF sent the IUG \$50,000.⁹⁸ (As noted above, Siam is related to indicted HLF official Mufid Abdulqader.)⁹⁹

Shabib also tells the group, "we could say that the Ramallah Zakat Committee is ours, including its management and officers."¹⁰⁰ Confirming Shabib's assessment, a 2001 FBI memo, citing Israeli information, identified a number of Ramallah Zakat Committee associates as "HAMAS activists." For example, Aqel Suliman Muhammad Rabia, the Committee's then- Director/Manager, was jailed from December 1990-March 1992 "due to his involvement in HAMAS."¹⁰¹ HLF sent the Ramallah Zakat Committee \$550,338 between 1991 and 2001.¹⁰²

⁹² U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0087, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_18.pdf.

⁹³ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0087, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_18.pdf.

⁹⁴ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0087, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_18.pdf.

⁹⁵ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0059, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93philly_muin.pdf.

⁹⁶ Matthew Levitt, "Moderately Deadly," *National Review Online*, March 26, 2004.

⁹⁷ Thomas Friedman, "An Islamic Revival is Quickly Gaining Ground in an Unlikely Place: Israel," *The New York Times*, April 30, 1987.

⁹⁸ http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/islunivgaza_olf_50k.pdf. Note: The HLF defense introduced a State Department memo revealing that "from 2002 through 2006, USAID provided approximately \$134,455 in assistance..." to the Islamic University of Gaza. See: U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Defense Exhibit D-1094, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/stdept_islunivgaza.pdf.

⁹⁹ <http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/familiallinks.pdf>.

¹⁰⁰ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0059, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93philly_muin.pdf.

¹⁰¹ FBI Action Memorandum dated Nov. 5, 2001.

¹⁰² U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 020-0008, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/ramallahzakatcomm_hlf_550338.pdf.

Later in the meeting, Shabib is asked, "What are the kinds of organizations which you expect will be directly hit, during the initial phase...?" Shabib responds, "in the Gaza Sector, the Islamic University will be target number one...the most important activity for the Zakat committees...is in the form of the Medical Scientific Society which now encompasses most [of] the medical activity in the West Bank...the cover is now in place." Additionally, "there are tens of organizations in the West Bank...which might be targeted directly. For instance, there are several organizations in Hebron...such as the Young Men Muslim Association, possibly the Islamic Welfare Society which is one of the organizations with notable activity."¹⁰³

Discussion: A New Operating Environment in the U.S.

Throughout the two day conference, the attendees frequently highlight the fact that the Oslo Accords have radically altered the U.S. environment.

For example, Gawad (last name unknown) tells the group that you "no longer have the right to resist the occupation. All of that will be classified according to the American concept. There is no occupation now...This will be classified as terrorism according to America...How are you going to perform Jihad?" He continues, "You must formulate the position of the Palestinians and the Muslims here in America to support the resistance...That's a problem by itself. In the same time, not falling under the accusations of terrorism and those who harbor terrorism or tend to according to the American [definition]...This, really, is a true problem."¹⁰⁴

Addressing a similar theme, Abdelhaleem Ashqar declares, "now that the agreement is in place...your actions now are terrorism and not a resistance."¹⁰⁵

Moreover, Shukri Abu Baker comments: "The term 'derailment' should include resistance, you see? 'Derailment' scares me a lot as we work in organizations meant to...when we say 'derailment', it puts us in a platform bigger than what the U.S. atmosphere would tolerate."¹⁰⁶ At a different juncture in the conference, Abu Baker acknowledges that when talking to Americans, "I cannot say...that I'm Hamas." Since they "don't want the American front to become a front for direct conflict," the organizations must be extremely careful because "for the American organizations, if you're against peace, you're a terrorist."¹⁰⁷

Despite the new environment, some attendees refuse to accept that they must temper their approach. Most notably, Gawad (last name unknown) remarks, "regarding the goals, I was very surprised. There is a 180-degree change in customary threatening language of the organizations regarding the Palestinian cause...You feel that it is over,

¹⁰³ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0063, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_6.pdf.

¹⁰⁴ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0051, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_1.pdf.

¹⁰⁵ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0053, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_2.pdf.

¹⁰⁶ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0051, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_1.pdf.

¹⁰⁷ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0087, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_18.pdf.

that's it, we must deal with the reality and we surrendered...Issues such as steadfastness, direct support to the people of Palestine and supporting the Jihad in Palestine are now absent. Where are they? I'm really surprised." Gawad later elaborates, noting, "my opinion regarding the goals is very clear: supporting the resistance to the occupation because the occupation will continue. It won't end."¹⁰⁸

When Gawad is challenged by a speaker who is not identified in the FBI transcript, Gawad says unabashedly, "I'm working on Jihad, support the Jihad, support the Jihad, support the resistance to the occupation." He adds, "The [Islamic] Association [for Palestine] met with the FBI in defense of Hamas. It was a clear talk then. Support to the Movement. Henceforth, do these goals mean anything?" (In response, the security conscious unidentified speaker cautions his colleague, "Keep your voice down.")¹⁰⁹

Another unidentified speaker agrees with Gawad, arguing:

"If we retreat and didn't insist on [our] own initial position people won't have someone as a role model. Therefore, we must remain steadfast on our Islamic position and work under pressure in order to strengthen the Islamic voice for Palestine...We shouldn't retreat from our position even if we come under attack by the media and their allies. In this manner, we will gain credibility with people."¹¹⁰

During the conference, Omar Ahmad also points out that the groups risk alienating Muslims by seeking to appease non-Muslim Americans. He comments, "if you want to [talk to] the Americans, you lose the Muslims. If you address the Muslims, it means that you cannot reveal your address to the Americans. Frankly speaking." Providing an example, he says, "Like when you're talking opposition to peace...people are telling us that we have become peace-loving, for instance...But, one could interpret peace-loving that we have surrendered and another would interpret it that we...use diplomatic terms...if someone asked you if you want to destroy Israel, what are you going to say on TV?" He tells the group, "if you give an inconclusive response which is like you didn't answer the question, someone will come to you and tell you that you have forsaken your principles."¹¹¹

Discussion: The Benefits and Perils of Operating in the U.S.

In addition to highlighting how Oslo has changed the U.S. environment, Palestine Committee members point out the benefits and perils of operating in America.

On one hand, as Abdelhaleem Ashqar assesses, they have "legal slack" in the U.S.¹¹² But, Omar Ahmad later counters that even if an organization such as the IAP

¹⁰⁸ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0067, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_8.pdf.

¹⁰⁹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0067, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_8.pdf.

¹¹⁰ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0077, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_13.pdf.

¹¹¹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0069, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_9.pdf.

¹¹² U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0053, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_2.pdf.

covers its bases "from [the] legal point of view," "it is possible that you could be destroyed by the media without the law touching you."¹¹³

Expanding on his concern, Ahmad states, "For instance, newspapers and magazines can say that you are a terrorist because you are an Islamic organization." He adds, "they could hold things against you and destroy you on the media front before you're destroyed by the government and the law. This is like Sheik Omar, for instance." Ahmad continues, "Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman,¹¹⁴ there are no...what you call crimes against him, you see?" According to Ahmad, "they kept digging around him and stuff like that. But, it was the media which accused him before he was legally charged and he wasn't able to...because he didn't have a support system. He couldn't defend himself in face of the media. The media is overwhelming, that is."¹¹⁵

At another point in the conference, Ahmad reiterates his fear that IAP could be marginalized: "Tomorrow, the Jews will use the media [and say], 'The Islamic Association for Palestine and stuff. It does this and that.' Not a single person will go to the festival."¹¹⁶

Ahmad's warnings were prophetic as some reporters, such as *The Dallas Morning News'* Steve McGonigle, carefully scrutinized IAP and HLF during the 1990s, documenting the organizations' ties to Hamas. Upset about *The Dallas Morning News'* hard-hitting coverage of HLF, IAP, and other Muslim organizations, HLF sued the paper in 2000 as a "last resort in trying to stop a defamation campaign..." and "an attempt to delegitimize" the organization's work."¹¹⁷ HLF also argued that the paper had spent years "attempting to place the foundation in the center of some diabolical scheme..."¹¹⁸

Discussion: What are the Priorities of the U.S. Organizations?

During the conference, the men intensely debate the goals and priorities of the U.S. organizations.

Early in the conference, Shukri Abu Baker posits a number of questions about those priorities, asking: "what do we want from...from the reader of *Al Zaytouna* and the reader of the *Monitor* [both IAP publications] and from the guy who owns a store in Chicago? Do I want him to go fight or do I want to earn his sympathy so that he could donate to me..." He adds, "what do we want from the Americans? Do we want to

¹¹³ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0069, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_9.pdf.

¹¹⁴ Omar Abdel Rahman was convicted for his central involvement in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and the New York landmark bombing plot. As *The 9/11 Commission Report* states, Rahman "preached the message of Sayyid Outb's *Milestones*, characterizing the United States as the oppressor of Muslims worldwide and asserting that it was their religious duty to fight against God' enemies." Outb was a key figure in the Muslim Brotherhood. See: *The 9/11 Commission Report*.

¹¹⁵ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0069, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_9.pdf.

¹¹⁶ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0085, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_17.pdf.

¹¹⁷ HLF "S.H.A.R.E." Newsletter, May 2000.

¹¹⁸ HLF "S.H.A.R.E." Newsletter, August 2000.

convert them to Muslims...because the [Islamic] Association [for Palestine] often does activities which sound like that of mosques; pure Islamic things."¹¹⁹

At a later stage, Abu Baker asks the attendees follow-on questions about their mission in the U.S, which represents a "safe place for the Movement": "Should most of the effort be focused on stabilizing the organizations in America and focusing on the U.S. front or should focus be on the domestic front?...should the organizations exist to serve the Movement inside or...for building a strong community, a politically active one, one which we use and establish our roots in America..."¹²⁰

Responding to Abu Baker's queries, Omar Ahmad replies, "I believe that we are a service organization for the inside. All of our work is for Palestine. All of the work for Palestine is 75-25, 75% for the inside..." Highlighting the problem with this approach, Ahmad notes that "the community here doesn't want to just serve the inside...Are you going to serve it or you're going to tell them, 'I just want you to serve the inside. I bring you news, donate money to me.'" Explaining how other U.S. organizations serve the American Muslim community, he gives the example of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), which defends against racial discrimination and harassment. He then asks, "are we supposed to develop and do things like that so that the community feels that we're defending them..."¹²¹ Arguing a different side, Ghassan Elashi tells Ahmad, "you...don't want to turn into a specialized organization like the ADC. The ADC is already existing and its name is the Anti-Discrimination Committee..."¹²²

Sharing his perspective on the issue, Abdelhaleem Ashqar comments that "We must make people in the inside [feel] that they're not cut out like a limb from a tree, but that they have their extensions."¹²³ And Gawad emphasizes the need to "make this front a pressure element on the Palestinian political leadership over there. Why? In order to shape the public opinion, the enlightened class, doctors, the rich, the well-to-do, those who live in the West, those who know the Western nations, etc. The American front...will give a backing to the position of the Movement." He also discusses the importance of financial support, for "if financial support for them [the brothers inside] does not continue, our institutions will really stop."¹²⁴

Discussion: Charitable Organization - Strategy

When the group assesses how charitable organizations (primarily HLF) can be most effective, the session provides a roadmap for HLF actions following the Philadelphia conference.

¹¹⁹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0067, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_8.pdf.

¹²⁰ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0063, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_16.pdf.

¹²¹ In 2001, IAP stated on its website that one of its objectives was "fighting discrimination, stereotyping and defamation acts against" Muslim, Arab, and Palestinian Americans. See: "IAP Objectives," http://web.archive.org/web/20010206081325/www.iap.org/about_iap.htm.

¹²² U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0063, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_16.pdf.

¹²³ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0053, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_2.pdf.

¹²⁴ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0055, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_3.pdf.

Most revealing is a comment by HLF's Shukri Abu Baker, as he admits that "we give the Islamists \$100,000 and we give others 5,000." Pushing for the need to "maintain a balance," Abu Baker says that HLF "must stay on its legal track as far as charitable projects are concerned without going after a sentiment which could harm the Foundation legally..."¹²⁵

True to Abu Baker's pledge to give to non-Islamists in the hopes of minimizing scrutiny, HLF donated \$5,000 to assist the victims of the Oklahoma City bombing in April 1995.¹²⁶ Significantly, prosecutors in the HLF case introduced a wiretapped conversation between indicted HLF officials Mohamed El-Mezain and Abdel Rahman Odeh, in which Odeh suggests that the Oklahoma City tragedy provides "a good opportunity...for us to be highlighted...that we do something in America." Odeh adds that HLF should provide aid "if we can benefit from the matter" because "We are an American organization and we're supposed to...not only send stuff over there but help over here as well."¹²⁷

Following a similar strategy, HLF operated a food pantry in Patterson, New Jersey and donated \$10,000 to the Fort Worth, Texas city council in March 2000 after tornadoes devastated the city.¹²⁸

Another suggestion made during the Philadelphia meeting, this one by Abou Basem (no further information), is that "it might be suitable for the charitable organizations working on the Palestinian field such as Al Ouds Fund, The Holy Land [Foundation] and others to be open to other areas in the charitable work. We suggest that this new areas reach Palestinian camps in Lebanon and Jordan, for instance, and other areas..."¹²⁹ Indeed, HLF expanded its area of operations beyond the West Bank/Gaza during the 1990s, becoming active in areas such as Bosnia,¹³⁰ Chechnya,¹³¹ Kosovo,¹³² and Turkey.¹³³ What's more, HLF noted on its website in 2000 that it had worked in the camps in Lebanon and Jordan.¹³⁴

Further, Abou Basem tells the group that the Palestine Committee's charitable organizations should "start a dialogue with the U.S. and international charitable

¹²⁵ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0057, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_4.pdf.

¹²⁶ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Defense Exhibit D-1058, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/okcity_hlf.pdf.

¹²⁷ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 015-0015, <http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/OKCityDiscussion.pdf>.

¹²⁸ HLF "S.H.A.R.E." Newsletter, May 2000.

¹²⁹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0057 http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_4.pdf.

¹³⁰ "A Cry for HELP! For Bosnia!"

<http://web.archive.org/web/19970213141654/hlf.org/BOSNIA.HTML>.

¹³¹ "Saving Lives in Chechnya,"

http://web.archive.org/web/20011128021302/www.hlf.org/Chechnya_2000.shtml.

¹³² "Answering the Cry of the Kosovars,"

http://web.archive.org/web/20011128010836/www.hlf.org/answering_kosovars.shtml.

¹³³ "The Night of the Earthquake in Turkey,"

http://web.archive.org/web/20011128010833/www.hlf.org/turkey_earthquake.shtml.

¹³⁴ "Frequently Asked Questions,"

<http://web.archive.org/web/20001119090500/http://hlf.org/aboutus.shtml>.

organizations, UN organizations and embarking [sic] on new joint projects in Palestine."¹³⁵

HLF also closely followed this recommendation. For instance, in its February 2000 newsletter, HLF announced plans to hold an "International Conference on the Question of Palestinian Refugees." The newsletter stated that the "list of invitees will include 120 Non-Governmental Organizations from around the globe who have shown a commitment to Palestine, and share in our concern for the future of the refugees."¹³⁶ And in a 2001 web posting titled "Working as One," HLF wrote, "Joining our commitment for humanity and as part of the Holy Land Foundations [sic] ongoing mission of finding durable solutions for the plight of the Palestinians, Wheel Chairs for the World Foundation, Hope Haven International, and Airline Ambassadors traveled to Gaza City amidst all the uncertainty to deliver a sense of dignity to disabled."¹³⁷ Moreover, defense attorneys in the HLF trial entered into evidence a document that formalized a "joint agreement to share responsibility for the production of bread for Kosovar refugees in Albania." Participants included HLF, the United Nations World Food Programme, and the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.¹³⁸

Finally, during another session, Abdel Rahman (no further information) tells attendees that "in the coming stage, the most important thing we can provide...is to support Jihad In Palestine. I believe it is the only way if we want to bring the goals of the [peace] accord to fail...We...as a non-profit organization - are not able to do that. But, at least, we can focus on the issues relating to that matter..."¹³⁹ He continues,

"you have the issue of sponsoring the families of martyrs, you have the prisoners...those people have a direct relationship with Jihad, and they must get more money and more thought [from us]. In our letters we sent to people, we ought to place emphasis on the families of the martyrs, the prisoners, the orphans and the families of the wounded."¹⁴⁰

According to the U.S. government, HLF supported the families of a number of Hamas members, including Abdel Aziz Rantisi, Ahmed Yassin, and Ismail Haniya.¹⁴¹ HLF official Abdel Rahman Odeh even personally sponsored the child of Hamas bombmaker Yehya Ayyash following Ayyash's death.¹⁴²

¹³⁵ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0057
http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_4.pdf.

¹³⁶ HLF "S.H.A.R.E." Newsletter, February 2000.

¹³⁷ "Working as One,"

<http://web.archive.org/web/20010618191300/http://www.hlf.org/workingasone.shtml>.

¹³⁸ http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/UN_HLF.pdf.

¹³⁹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0063,
http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_6.pdf.

¹⁴⁰ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0063,
http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_6.pdf.

¹⁴¹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, List of Unindicted Co-conspirators and/or Joint Venturers, Filed May 29, 2007,

http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/US_v_HLF_Unindicted_Coconspirators.pdf.

¹⁴² http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/ayyash_childrensponsorship.pdf and U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 001-0228,
http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/ayyash_childrensponsorship2.pdf.

(Note: Shukri Abu Baker provides even greater insight into HLF's true agenda with its charitable work when he comments to the attendees, "Even children's daycare centers...we discover that their Dawa'a value is close to zero...What have we benefited from that? The same thing applies to orphans sponsorships; we spend hundreds of thousands of dollars over this program but, there is no Dawa'a use for it...We are not re-evaluating our strategy in charity work in the first place."¹⁴³)

Discussion – Media/Communication Strategy

Attendees spend a considerable amount of time discussing the most effective ways to spread their message and increase their influence.

One speaker recommends that "The main goal we should follow while doing media activism is awareness." He suggests building "awareness on the level of imams and Sheiks", and notes, "We should always feed them with the points of the Friday sermons and speeches they give about the cause of Palestine." Further, he advocates "Building a network of faxes for quick initiatives,"¹⁴⁴ which IAP did.¹⁴⁵ The attendees should also work to encourage "student activism in universities,"¹⁴⁶ and work to ensure that there are "curricula and teaching materials which spread in Islamic schools and in weekend schools" in the U.S.¹⁴⁷

Nihad Awad also presents on media strategy, telling attendees, "the first thing is training and qualifying individuals in the branches and the communities on media activism through holding special courses on media."¹⁴⁸ Also, we could have internships for students, either in institutions or universities." Other proposals include "giving an opportunity to the largest number of non-Arab writers to adopt, write about and speaking about the Palestinian cause...", "inviting non-Arabic speakers to attend the Return Festivals so that they see that Palestine has a certain cultural and artistic characteristic," and "re-writing some leaflets and media issues relating to the Palestinian

¹⁴³ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0061, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_5.pdf.

¹⁴⁴ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0067, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_8.pdf.

¹⁴⁵ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 015-0052, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/IAP_InfoOffice.pdf. Note: On its website, IAP stated, "The IAP disseminates information through its home page on the Inter Net and faxing System." See: "IAP Areas of Activities," http://web.archive.org/web/20010206081325/www.iap.org/about_iap.htm.

¹⁴⁶ In the wake of 9/11, HLF announced the establishment of "a one million dollar scholarship endowment fund for Arab and Muslim students pursuing [sic] degrees in journalism, media, communications, public relations, public administration, political science, and comparative religion." See: HLF Press Release, "\$1 Million Scholarship Endowment Fund," http://web.archive.org/web/20011128010816/www.hlf.org/ONEMILLIONJR_8-3.shtml.

¹⁴⁷ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0067, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_8.pdf.

¹⁴⁸ Notably, IAP reported on its website that it "trains Muslim activists and youth in effective leadership and public relations." See: "IAP Areas of Activities," http://web.archive.org/web/20010206081325/www.iap.org/about_iap.htm.

cause in English."¹⁴⁹ He also stresses the importance of "keeping up with the internal events and incidents and breaking the Western black-out of them."¹⁵⁰

When Omar Ahmad speaks on the issue, he emphasizes the significance of "broadcasting the Islamic point of view in U.S. media", pointing out that "when Nihad appeared on CNN and talked in the way he spoke, this greatly reduces the severity of allegations of radicalism."¹⁵¹ Further, Ahmad believes that there must be a "unified activism program for Palestine. If the positions of the Islamic organizations started to contradict, which is what is currently happening as the [Islamic] Association [for Palestine] is saying one thing, the AMC is saying one thing, MAS is saying another thing...we must be careful that the positions of Muslims remain the same."¹⁵²

And, Ahmad highlights the need to strengthen "influence with Congress..."¹⁵³ In his view,

"This can be achieved by infiltrating the American media outlets, universities and research centers...It is also achieved by working with Islamic political organizations and the sympathetic ones such as...the American Muslim Alliance, such as the United Muslims of America, MPAC...if Muslims engage in political activism in America and started to be concerned with Congress and public relations we will have an entry point to use them to pressure Congress and the decision-makers in America."¹⁵⁴

A final point of interest on this topic is that one speaker suggests, "we should try to publish some articles by representatives of the Islamic Movement in U.S. papers."¹⁵⁵ In 2006 and 2007, Hamas officials Ahmad Yousef¹⁵⁶ (who previously was the director of the United Association for Studies and Research in Virginia,¹⁵⁷ a member of the U.S. Palestine Committee¹⁵⁸), Mousa Abu Marzook¹⁵⁹, and Ismail Haniyeh¹⁶⁰ all published

¹⁴⁹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0069, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_9.pdf.

¹⁵⁰ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0071, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_10.pdf.

¹⁵¹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0075, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_12.pdf.

¹⁵² U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0075, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_12.pdf.

¹⁵³ On its 2001 website, IAP noted that it "lobbies political lead-ers, [sic] works in coalitions, and encourages voter registration and election participation." See: "IAP Areas of Activities," http://web.archive.org/web/20010206081325/www.iap.org/about_iap.htm.

¹⁵⁴ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0075, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_12.pdf.

¹⁵⁵ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0075, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_12.pdf.

¹⁵⁶ Ahmed Yousef, "Engage with Hamas," *The Washington Post*, June 20, 2007 and Ahmed Yousef, "What Hamas Wants," *The New York Times*, June 2007.

¹⁵⁷ "Mazen Al-Najjar Free at Last," *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, January/February 2001.

¹⁵⁸ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, List of Unindicted Co-conspirators and/or Joint Venturers, Filed May 29, 2007, http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/US_v_HLF_Unindicted_Coconspirators.pdf.

¹⁵⁹ Mousa Abu Marzook, "What Hamas is Seeking," *The Washington Post*, January 31, 2006.

¹⁶⁰ Ismail Haniyeh, "Aggression Under False Pretenses," *The Washington Post*, July 11, 2006.

articles in U.S. newspapers in the wake of Hamas' electoral victory. After Yousef published different Op-Eds on the same day in *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*, *Washington Post* ombudsman Deborah Howell revealed that *The Post's* "piece came to us through a representative of Mr. Yousef [in the United States] with whom we'd dealt before."¹⁶¹ While there has been no further information on that U.S. representative, it is fascinating that the Palestine Committee discussed this strategy over a decade prior.

Discussion – The Need to Form a New Organization

Throughout the conference, attendees debate whether they should form a new organization.

The topic is first broached by Omar Ahmad, who brings the subject up in an effort "to dispel a myth," as he states, "there is a rumor being circulated with some people that people would like to form alternate organizations in place of the [Islamic] Association [for Palestine] and the Fund and stuff. This is not true. There was a misunderstanding...There are no alternate organizations." Providing more detail, Ahmad reveals that "a suggestion was made by a Jordanian person to start an alternative, meaning that they want the organizations to form a solidarity committee for the Palestinian people and the other organizations would dissolve within it within two years. It was a suggestion made by whom? By one or two people."¹⁶²

Despite Ahmad's attempt to downplay the "rumor," the matter gains traction with the group as Shukri Abu Baker argues that the current organizations may be too "Islamic." Abu Baker says to the attendees: "our brother is telling you...let's not hoist a large Islamic flag and let's not be barbaric-talking. We will remain a front so that if the thing happens, we will benefit from the new happenings instead of having all of our organizations classified and exposed." Expanding on his concerns about becoming too "Islamic," he says,

"I was telling our brother Aboul Hassan [Abdelhaleem Ashqar] about Al Aqsa Organization. Why 'Al Aqsa Educational'? When you go to Oxford they will ask you: 'Sir, what is Aqsa?'. Make it the 'Palestinian General Education Academy'. Make yourself a big name like that and give it a media twinkle and there is no need for Al Aqsa, Al Ouds, Al Sakhra and all that stuff."¹⁶³

Abu Baker predicts that they may be "unable to work because all of us have become burned, all of our organizations are purely Islamic organizations..." Thus, he believes "we should start right now...begin thinking about establishing alternative organizations...whose Islamic hue is not very conspicuous."¹⁶⁴ In Abu Baker's eyes, "War is

¹⁶¹ Deborah Howell, "To Readers, Terror and War Underplayed," *The Washington Post*, July 8, 2007 and Brian Hecht, "Hamas' Mystery Media Representative in the U.S.," *The Counterterrorism Blog*, July 12, 2007.

¹⁶² U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0063, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_6.pdf.

¹⁶³ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0067, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_8.pdf.

¹⁶⁴ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0067, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_8.pdf.

deception. Deceive, camouflage...Deceive your enemy."¹⁶⁵ (Note: The theme of deception is consistent throughout the conference. For example, an unidentified speaker says, "a point which should be taken into consideration...is making available an official U.S. cover representing the Islamic community...This will achieve more than one goal...we give an official cover for the existing organizations in case they got dissolved."¹⁶⁶)

Less than enthusiastic about Abu Baker's suggestions, Omar Ahmad disputes the assertion that the organizations can hide their Islamic character. Ahmad says to the group, "I personally believe that anybody's secret will be revealed right now...no matter what names you will use they will be revealed because...you cannot hide a Muslim."¹⁶⁷ Furthermore, according to Ahmad, "we don't really have available people whom we could dedicate for the work we want to hide."¹⁶⁸

After the attendees discuss other matters, the topic resurfaces, as Osama (no further information) asks, "how is this organization going to be different in its dealing from the [Islamic] Association [for Palestine] if it is an Islamic one?" Gawad (no further information) adds new color to the debate by pointing out that "there is a clear attempt to normalize the Jewish, Arab and Islamic relationship in America" and the different sides are even meeting at the White House. In this new context, Ghassan (no further information) asserts that because IAP "is seen as an Islamic entity," "people must have another organization which addresses the [Palestinian Liberation] Organization, addresses the U.S. Administration, addresses any government, address[es]...the lobby..."¹⁶⁹ Another unidentified attendee clarifies that this new organization would serve as "a political organization and public relations" organ.¹⁷⁰

The 1994 Formation of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)

In 1994, Nihad Awad, Omar Ahmad,¹⁷¹ and Rafeeq Jaber founded the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a Washington D.C.-based organization whose stated mission "is to enhance understanding of Islam, encourage dialogue, protect civil liberties, empower American Muslims, and build coalitions that promote justice and

¹⁶⁵ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0069, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_9.pdf.

¹⁶⁶ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0059, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93philly_muin.pdf.

¹⁶⁷ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0069, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_9.pdf.

¹⁶⁸ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0069, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_9.pdf.

¹⁶⁹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0073, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_11.pdf.

¹⁷⁰ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0073, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_11.pdf.

¹⁷¹ Note: In a February 2003 court filing IAP's attorneys admitted that Ahmad was still serving on the American Middle Eastern League for Palestine's (AMELP) Board of Directors. As noted above, AMELP did business as IAP. See: Boim v. Quranic Literacy Institute (N.D. IL.), No. OO-C-2905, Defendants' Answer to Plaintiffs' Complaint, Filed February 6, 2003, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/Ahmad_AMELP.pdf.

mutual understanding.”¹⁷² In a 2000 article, Nihad Awad provided background on the group’s origins:

“After the Gulf War was over, I was offered a job with the Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP) as their public relations director...my responsibility was to explain the Palestinian experience to the public and the media. In this effort I worked closely with IAP president Omar Ahmad. Omar...had the insight to realize that the central issue facing the Muslim community in the United States was not being addressed. The core challenge, that of stereotyping and defamation, was having a devastating effect on our children and paralyzing adults from taking their due roles in civic affairs. Omar suggested to me that we leave the IAP and concentrate on combating anti-Muslim discrimination nationwide. He proposed that I move to Washington D.C., where any effective national effort would have to be based, while he tried to raise the seed money for the project.”¹⁷³

Reinforcing the assessment that CAIR is an offshoot of IAP, CAIR’s third incorporator, Rafeeq Jaber, has served as IAP President.¹⁷⁴ There is still other evidence of personnel overlap between IAP and CAIR. For example, as noted previously, Ghassan Elashi incorporated HLF¹⁷⁵ and IAP¹⁷⁶ and was a founding board member of CAIR’s Texas chapter.¹⁷⁷ Moreover, the same year that CAIR incorporated, HLF wrote the group a \$5,000 check.¹⁷⁸

Additional evidence of CAIR’s true identity lies in the fact that a number of one-time CAIR officials have also held positions at organizations the U.S. government has identified as part of the Hamas or Muslim Brotherhood U.S. infrastructure. For example, former HLF board member¹⁷⁹ Riad Abdelkarim served as an official with CAIR’s California branch.¹⁸⁰ And CAIR Research Director¹⁸¹ Mohamed Nimer previously served on UASR’s Board of Directors,¹⁸² while Anisa Abd el Fattah was a CAIR board member and the editor of UASR’s *Middle East Affairs Journal*.¹⁸³ What’s more, the co-founder of CAIR’s

¹⁷² “Our Vision, Mission, and Core Principles,”

<http://www.cair.com/AboutUs/VisionMissionCorePrinciples.aspx>.

¹⁷³ Nihad Awad, “Muslim-Americans in Mainstream America,” *The Link*, February-March 2000.

¹⁷⁴ IAP Board of Directors,

http://web.archive.org/web/20000816224509/www.iap.org/contact_us.htm.

¹⁷⁵ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 011-0032,

http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/AOI_OLF.pdf.

¹⁷⁶ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 011-0033,

http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/IAP_Elashi.pdf.

¹⁷⁷ Testimony of Matthew Epstein before the United States Senate Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Technology, and Homeland Security, “Saudi Support for Islamic Extremism in the United States,” September 10, 2003.

¹⁷⁸ http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/hlf_cair_5k.pdf.

¹⁷⁹ IRS Form 990, Holy Land Foundation, 2000,

http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/HLF_IRS990_2000.pdf.

¹⁸⁰ Riad Abdelkarim, “True Face of Islam,” *The New York Times*, October 24, 2001.

¹⁸¹ “CAIR National Board and Staff,” October 30, 2007,

<http://www.cair.com/AboutUs/CAIRNationalBoardandStaff.aspx#MohamedNimer>.

¹⁸² O’Neill v. Al Baraka (S.D. N.Y.), Civil Action No. 03-MDL-1570, Plaintiff’s More Definite Statement/Additional Allegations as to Defendant Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and CAIR-Canada, Filed September 30, 2005.

¹⁸³ Guest CV, Dr. Anisa Abd el Fattah, Islamonline.net.

New Jersey office, Magdy Mahmoud, has been on the national Executive Board and chaired the Chapters Committee of the Muslim Arab Youth Association (MAYA),¹⁸⁴ an organization federal prosecutors have named as a member of the U.S. Muslim Brotherhood.¹⁸⁵

Reflecting this web of connections, the U.S. government has labeled CAIR a member of the U.S. Muslim Brotherhood's Palestine Committee.¹⁸⁶

Protecting their Own – CAIR Defends 1993 Philadelphia Meeting Attendees

In addition to lobbying Congress, appearing frequently in the national media, and serving as an outspoken critic of any organization or individual that purportedly defames Muslims, CAIR has been a vociferous defender of members of the alleged Hamas network. Particularly notable is CAIR's support for those who attended the 1993 Philadelphia meeting with Omar Ahmad and Nihad Awad. The following review provides key examples of CAIR's actions.

- **Infocom:** Following the FBI's September 2001 raid of Ghassan Elashi's computer company, Infocom, Nihad Awad appeared at a press conference outside Infocom headquarters to blast the government's actions as an "anti-Muslim witch hunt."¹⁸⁷ When Infocom and the Elashis were indicted in December 2002 for engaging in "financial transactions with [Mousa Abu] Marzook after his designation as a terrorist," CAIR Dallas Fort-Worth issued a statement "express[ing] our shock and dismay at yesterday's arrest of four prominent, respected members of our community." The release added, "How does the arrest of these four men make America safer? The significance of these arrests is clearly exaggerated for political purposes. One is left wondering whether these arrest orders were issued from Tel Aviv or Washington, D.C!" Finally, the release stated, "we are concerned that these charges result from what appears to be a 'war on Islam and Muslims' rather than a 'war on terror.'"¹⁸⁸
- **Holy Land Foundation:** After the U.S. government shut down HLF in December 2001, CAIR released a statement that said, "We ask that President Bush reconsider what we believe is an unjust and counterproductive move that can only damage America's credibility with Muslims in this country and around the world and could create the impression that there has been a shift

¹⁸⁴ Magdy Mahmoud biography, <http://web.archive.org/web/20031017201804/www.cair-nj.org/biomahmoud.html>.

¹⁸⁵ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, List of Unindicted Co-conspirators and/or Joint Venturers, Filed May 29, 2007,

http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/US_v_HLF_Unindicted_Coconspirators.pdf.

¹⁸⁶ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, List of Unindicted Co-conspirators and/or Joint Venturers, Filed May 29, 2007,

http://www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/US_v_HLF_Unindicted_Coconspirators.pdf.

¹⁸⁷ "Raid on Texas Business in 'Anti-Muslim Witch Hunt' Say Muslim Leaders,"

<http://web.archive.org/web/20011012101228/www.iap.org/theraid.htm>.

¹⁸⁸ CAIR Dallas-Fort Worth Press Release, "DFW Muslim Leaders Issue Statement Regarding Elashi Family Arrests," December 19, 2002.

from a war on terrorism to an attack on Islam." On the same page, CAIR reprinted HLF's statement proclaiming its innocence.¹⁸⁹

The July 2004 indictment of HLF led CAIR to warn in a press release that "The government should not use evidence apparently tainted by foreign intelligence sources from a nation that has its own political agenda."¹⁹⁰ During the trial, CAIR participated in the "Hungry for Justice" coalition, which argued that the government was "criminalizing humanitarian aid using guilt by association in a politically driven prosecution."¹⁹¹ The Chairman of CAIR National and the Executive Director of CAIR Dallas-Fort Worth served as two of the four "media contacts" for the coalition.¹⁹² And the day the HLF verdict was announced, Nihad Awad spoke at a press conference at the Dallas courthouse, praising the result and comparing today's environment to "the McCarthyism era."¹⁹³ The same day, CAIR issued a press release labeling the verdict a "stunning defeat" for the Department of Justice.¹⁹⁴

- Abdel-Jabbar Hamdan: When Hamdan was arrested the day HLF was indicted, CAIR's Southern California office announced that it would "hold a news conference to outline concerns about allegations that a local Muslim is being threatened with deportation as a 'pressure tactic' to gain information about an Islamic charity." CAIR-Los Angeles' Communications Director remarked, "Our legal and immigration systems should be used to punish criminals and protect our borders, not as psychological thumb-screws to extract information."¹⁹⁵
- Islamic Association for Palestine: As noted above, in December 2004, a federal magistrate judge found IAP and HLF (and others) civilly liable for \$156 million in the death of U.S. citizen David Boim in a Hamas terrorist attack.¹⁹⁶ Upset with a ruling during the trial, CAIR Chicago's Yasser Tabbara told the media, "At the end of the day...what we are witnessing is a modern day lynching and a mockery of justice."¹⁹⁷
- Abdelhaleem Ashqar: CAIR has also been a passionate defender of Abdelhaleem Ashqar. For example, a July 2007 CAIR-Chicago press release stated, "Through its targeting of Mr. Salah and Dr. Ashqar, the Bush administration has attempted to criminalize charitable aid to Palestinians...The defendants are neither terrorists nor criminals for having supplied charitable

¹⁸⁹ CAIR Press Release, "Freeze on Group's Assets Questioned by U.S. Muslims," December 4, 2001.

¹⁹⁰ CAIR Press Release, "CAIR to Monitor HLF Indictments," July 27, 2004.

¹⁹¹ "About Us," <http://www.h4jusa.com/intro>.

¹⁹² "Media Contacts," <http://www.h4jusa.com/media+contacts>.

¹⁹³ Video of press conference following the HLF verdict, October 22, 2007.

¹⁹⁴ CAIR Press Release, "CAIR: HLF Mistrial a 'Stunning Defeat' for Prosecution," October 22, 2007.

¹⁹⁵ CAIR Press Release, "California Muslims Decry 'Pressure Tactics,' Used on Detainee," July 29, 2004. Note: Hamdan was released on bond in 2006 and the government is continuing its efforts to deport him. See: "Islamic Charity Fundraiser Released," *CBS News*, August 1, 2006.

¹⁹⁶ Boim v. Quranic Literacy Institute (N.D. IL.), No. OO-C-2905, Judgment, Filed March 4, 2005,

http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/Boim_v_OLI_Judgment.pdf.

¹⁹⁷ "Muslim Groups Claim Injustice in Boim Trial," *NBC 5*, December 6, 2004.

aid to the most vulnerable factions of their occupied and war-ravaged country of origin, Palestine."¹⁹⁸

Despite CAIR's track record, federal, state, and local law enforcement have consistently received "diversity training" from CAIR. For example, according to CAIR, the organization has "conducted sensitivity training for the FBI in Orlando and Jacksonville" and "participated in more than a dozen diversity training programs for Orange County [CA] Sheriffs."¹⁹⁹ CAIR has also met with an array of high-ranking U.S. officials, including then-President Clinton,²⁰⁰ President Bush²⁰¹ and then-Secretary of State Colin Powell.²⁰² CAIR's stature has even earned it international access; in November 2005, CAIR was invited to serve as a representative of the American Muslim community at a meeting of American and European leaders organized by the U.S. Embassy in Belgium.²⁰³

Conclusion

The dozens of pages of transcripts from the 1993 Philadelphia conference provide a veritable roadmap of the strategies HLF, IAP, and CAIR would employ in the coming years to establish themselves as mainstream organizations in the U.S. The key officials in these organizations display an acute awareness of the language they must use, the institutions they must "infiltrate," and the manner in which they must exploit the media and Congress to achieve their goals.

Philadelphia meeting attendees also demonstrate a cold-heartedness that is in stark contrast to the warm public face that many of them adopt. For example, Shukri Abu Baker's complaint that the "Dawa'a value" of "children's day care centers" "is close to zero" speaks volumes about HLF's true priorities²⁰⁴ and clashes with his claim that he is committed to improving "the lives of the most vulnerable" in order to "build peace and empower future generations."²⁰⁵ Abu Baker's acknowledgement that donations to non-Islamists were only made to keep the organization "on its legal track"²⁰⁶ is quite telling as well. And for Omar Ahmad – Chairman Emeritus of an organization that purports to be "a natural ally of groups...that advocate justice and human rights in America and around

¹⁹⁸ CAIR-Chicago Action Alert, "Please Attend Muhammad Salah Trial Sentencing," July 9, 2007, http://cairchicago.org/actionalerts.php?file=aa_salah_trial07092007.

¹⁹⁹ "CAIR: Work with Law Enforcement Authorities," <http://web.archive.org/web/20070204140940/http://www.cair-net.org/default.asp?Page=CAIRsWork>.

²⁰⁰ CAIR Press Release, "American Muslims Mark End of Ramadan at White House Gathering," January 11, 2000.

²⁰¹ CAIR Press Release, "President Bush Again Meets with US Muslim Leaders," September 26, 2001.

²⁰² U.S. Newswire, "U.S. Muslims Meet With Powell on Foreign Policy," June 17, 2004.

²⁰³ CAIR Press Release, "CAIR Participates in Dialogue with European Muslims," November 18, 2006 and "Muslim Communities Participating in Society: A Belgian-U.S. Dialogue," http://belgium.usembassy.gov/muslim_communities_participating_in_society_a_belgian-u.s._dialogue.

²⁰⁴ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0061, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_5.pdf.

²⁰⁵ "A Message from HLF President," <http://web.archive.org/web/20011128010658/www.hlf.org/hlf-message-sep2001.shtml>.

²⁰⁶ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0057, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_4.pdf.

the world”²⁰⁷ – the Oslo Accords were “between infidels and infidels”,²⁰⁸ while convicted terrorist Omar Abdel Rahman was merely the victim of an “overwhelming”²⁰⁹ media campaign.

When these transcripts are paired with the treasure trove of other exhibits released during the HLF trial, there is now a mountain of evidence providing unparalleled insight into the true agenda of a number of American Muslim organizations. In its October 2007 analysis, “The Radical Dawa in Transition,” the Dutch General Intelligence and Security Service (AIVD) makes a frank assessment about “the ultimate aim” of the Muslim Brotherhood in Western Europe, one that undoubtedly applies to the U.S. as well.

“Not all Muslim Brothers or their sympathizers are recognizable as such. They do not always reveal their religious loyalties and ultra-orthodox agenda to outsiders. Apparently co-operative and moderate in their attitude to Western society, they certainly have no violent intent. But they are trying to pave the way for ultra-orthodox Islam to play a greater role in the Western world by exercising religious influence over Muslim immigrant communities and by forging good relations with relevant opinion leaders: politicians, civil servants, mainstream social organizations, non-Islamic clerics, academics, journalists and so on. This policy of engagement has been more noticeable in recent years, and might possibly herald a certain liberalization of the movement’s ideas. It presents itself as a widely supported advocate and legitimate representative of the Islamic community. But the ultimate aim – although never stated openly – is to create, then implant and expand, an ultra-orthodox Muslim bloc inside Western Europe.”²¹⁰

²⁰⁷ “Our Vision, Mission, and Core Principles,”

<http://www.cair.com/AboutUs/VisionMissionCorePrinciples.aspx>.

²⁰⁸ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0071, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_10.pdf.

²⁰⁹ U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation (N.D. TX.), No. 3:04-CR-240-G, Government Exhibit 016-0069, http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/HLF/93Philly_9.pdf.

²¹⁰ General Intelligence and Security Service of the Netherlands (AIVD), “The Radical Dawa in Transition: The Rise of Islamic Neoradicalism in the Netherlands,” http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/FeaturedDocs/AIVD_RadicalDawaTransition.pdf.