SPRING 2005

Terrorism Awareness Project

A Periodic Newsletter Updating the Chicago Connection to International Terrorism

The Jewish Community Relations Council of the Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago

Chicago Judge and Jury Find Three Local Groups and An Individual Liable for Hamas' Murder of American Teenager; $156 Million Award Set

Landmark Decision sets precedent in war on terrorism

On December 8, 2004 Chicago Magistrate Judge Arlander Keys tripled the amount awarded by the jury, as mandated, ordering three local Islamic charities and a Bridgeview resident to pay $156 million for Hamas' murder of David Boim. The 17-year-old American teenager was shot dead in a 1996 terrorist attack at a bus stop near Jerusalem.


Wildman, Harrold, Allen & Dixon, LLP

David Boim

A victory for the Boims and their dedicated attorneys, Steve Landes and Rick Hoffman of Wildman Harrold, *the decision is also a breakthrough achievement in the effort to cut-off the U.S., and especially Chicago-based, funding of international terrorism.*


Wildman, Harrold, Allen & Dixon, LLP

Landes

David's parents -Joyce and Stanley - brought the lawsuit under the provisions of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1990, which allows U.S. citizens (or their kin) who are victims of terror anywhere in the world a civil remedy against those who provided support to the responsible group(s). Defendants need only to have indirectly "aided and abetted" an individual attack by their direct, general support of a terrorist organization, such as Hamas, which claimed responsibility for Boim's murder.


Wildman, Harrold, Allen & Dixon, LLP

Hoffman

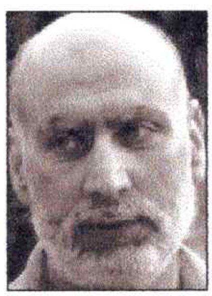
In a November 2004 pre-trial motion ruling, Judge Keys found the evidence that Holy Land Foundation (HLF), the Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP), and Muhammad Salah materially supported Hamas so overwhelming that jurors were not needed to determine if they were liable for Boim's murder. Judge Keys ruled that the evidence was less clear involving the *fourth defendant, the Quranic Literacy Institute (QLI)*, and that a jury trial would be convened to hear the case against it.

HLF's assets were frozen by the U.S. government in December 2001 for funding Hamas. In 1995 Muhammad Salah of Bridgeview was deemed a specially designated terrorist (SDT) by the U.S. government. Salah's own handwritten statement made while in an Israeli prison was entered into evidence in the Chicago trial. Thinking his readers would be other Palestinian prisoners rather than Israeli authorities, Salah detailed his involvement with Hamas.

Judge Keys' ruling on IAP was especially significant as it was the only defendant that the government *has not taken any action against.* An FBI report made public after 9/11 details a 1993 Philadelphia meeting where the very purpose of IAP and HLF's establishment was described as providing assistance to the "Movement [Hamas] outside the Occupied Territories and they should not deviate from this objective and they should concentrate their efforts on supporting Jihad."

While QLI claims that it only translates and publishes sacred Islamic texts, the Boims alleged the Oak Lawn group raised and laundered money for Hamas. In June 1998, FBI agents seized QLI's assets, alleging that the funds had been used to support Hamas. This was the first time U.S. civil forfeiture laws were used to stop the flow of money through American financial institutions in support of terrorist activity abroad.

In an unusual move, QLI's defense attorney did not participate in the trial: he declined to be involved in jury selection, to question witnesses, or to make opening or closing statements. QLI claimed that the judge's summary judgment against the three other defendants denied them a fair trial.


Daily Southtown

Salah

After deliberating for only six hours, the jury unanimously found QLI legally liable for David Boim's death, marking the first time a jury has found an American organization responsible for the terrorist murder of a U.S. citizen abroad.

"This is an important case because it sends the message that people who pay for terrorism are going to wind up paying the victims of terrorism," said the Boims' attorney, Steve Landes of Wildman Harrold.

continued on page 2

17

1

Whether the Boims are likely to receive the $156 million awarded to them is yet to be seen, since about $4.5 million in assets of HLF, QLI and Salah were frozen by the U.S. government and federal prosecutors are seeking forfeiture of those assets through the criminal indictments filed against HLF and Salah. Joyce and Stanley Boim say they are not concerned with collecting the money, and that they filed the lawsuit to stop the flow of money to Hamas. Joyce realizes that, "It could be billions of dollars. It's not going to bring David back."

Speaking at the annual Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago's candle lighting for the first night of Chanukah, Mrs. Boim thanked JUF for their support and solidarity throughout the trial. She commented that the final arguments, which had just ended as the Festival of Lights was approaching, were hopefully a harbinger of more freedom for all people.

Samirah Files New Appeal

Shortly after the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear the appeal of a lower court decision that Sabri Samirah had no grounds to challenge the government's decision to keep him out of the country, he filed yet another appeal with a federal court in November 2004.

Samirah is the former president of the Palos Hills-based United Muslim American Association (UMAA), a political action committee that endorsed and contributed money to political candidates, and the former chairman of the Islamic Association for Palestine. He is asking the Northern District of Illinois to approve his return home to Orland Park from his native Jordan, where he has been living for two years.

On his way home in January 2003, immigration officials stopped Samirah at an airport in Ireland and told him he could not re-enter the U.S. According to the government, Samirah was deemed a "national security risk." The 7th Circuit previously turned down Samirah's appeal, citing their lack of jurisdiction to overturn the Attorney General's national security determinations. In the new petition, Samirah's lawyer, Mark Flessner, challenged the constitutionality of denying his client a hearing when they barred him from re-entering the U.S.

Prior to 9-11 and the government's crackdown on the U.S.-based support of international terrorism, UMAA and Samirah were enjoying substantial media coverage, political access, and growing ties with other communities. In the two years since Samirah has been denied re-entry to the U.S., UMAA has become a mostly dormant operation and filed for dissolution with the State of Illinois in 2004.

HLF Fundraiser Deported

In February 2005, a federal immigration judge ordered the deportation of Abdel Jabbar Hamden. Hamden was a fundraiser for the Holy Land Foundation (HLF), a "charity" that funneled more than $12 million to the terrorist organization Hamas and other Palestinian organizations that support terrorism. HLF had offices in Bridgeview, Illinois until the government froze its assets in December 2001.

Although other officers of HLF were indicted last summer and subsequently arrested, Hamden was not charged. Instead, he was picked up and detained on a violation of a student visa that was granted 25 years ago.

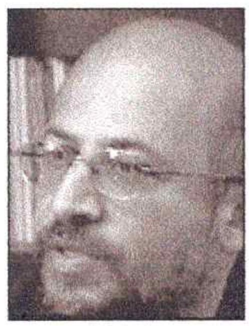
Hamden denied having any knowledge of HLF supporting terrorism. The government, however, presented videotapes of meetings Hamden attended that included Hamas members. The judge ruled that Hamden knew or should have known that the funds he was raising were being used to support terrorism. Hamden's attorney said he would likely appeal the decision.

HLF's De Facto Successor, Kinder-USA, Gives Up Fundraising

Claiming that it has been unfairly targeted by a government investigation, Kinder-USA has ceased all fundraising. Kinder-USA's board members feared that the government would seize the assets of the charity, as it had with other Islamic charities. "We cannot in good faith continue to solicit donations when there are no safeguards in place to guarantee that the federal government will not seize these funds and divert them from their intended, legitimate destination," the board wrote.

Although the government has refused to confirm the investigation, Kinder-USA does have ties to the Holy Land Foundation. Kinder-USA was founded shortly after the government froze HLF's assets in 2001. Five of HLF's officers are facing trial in 2006 for supporting terrorism— two others are fugitives. Kinder-USA's Executive Director, Dallel Mohmed, worked for HLF until its closing. One of Kinder-USA's board members, Riad Abdelkarim, was HLF's Board Secretary in 2001. During one of their relief trips in May 2002, the Israeli government temporarily detained Mohmed and Abdelkarim, accusing them of aiding terrorists.

Al-Arian Trial Delayed...Again


abcactionnews.com
Al-Arian

In March 2005, a federal judge decided to once again delay the trial of a former University of South Florida professor charged with financing the Palestinian Islamic Jihad based upon a request by both prosecutors and defense attorneys. Additional time was needed so that both sides could review some 165 translated conversations before the trial in order to agree on the translations.

The trial date has been delayed until May 16th. U.S. District Judge James Moody also cancelled jury selection, which was scheduled to begin in April. Al-Arian's attorneys now say they will seek a change of venue for the trial citing prejudicial pretrial media coverage and use of the case in the U.S. Senate Campaign in Florida last fall. In addition, Hatem Fariz a co-defendant in the case, has hired an expert to study whether a change of venue is appropriate as well.

Al-Arian and three Chicago-area men are charged with several counts of racketeering and conspiracy. Prosecutors allege that Al-Arian, who has been held for two years, used a university think tank and a Palestinian charity to raise money for the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, which is responsible for more than a 100 deaths as a result of suicide bombings in Israel.

Controversial Bridgeview Mosque Loses Bank Account

The Bridgeview Mosque's bank closed its account due to recent donations to an Islamic charity now under federal scrutiny. Family Bank and Trust of Palos Hills notified Mosque leaders that their account would be closed following two donations last August and September totaling $10,000 to the Islamic American Relief Agency (IARA), a group whose assets were frozen by the Treasury Department in October 2004 for giving hundreds of thousands of dollars to Al Qaeda and helping to raise $5 million for another Osama bin Laden-related group. According to the Mosque's annual reports, it made two other donations - in 1992 and 1999 -to the charity totaling $20,393.

This is not the first time that activities by the Bridgeview Mosque have been questioned. The FBI has reportedly investigated the Mosque for its alleged links and support of international terror groups. The mosque gave a total of about $374,000 to three other charities that were later shut down by the federal government for links to terrorism: Holy Land Foundation, Benevolence International Foundation and Global Relief Foundation.

Among other connections, former Mosque board member Muhammad Salah was indicted last year for funding the terrorist group Hamas over a 15-year period. A February 2004 Chicago Tribune expose on the Mosque and its spiritual leader Sheik Jamal Said's worldview and connections, headlined the feature story, "Hard-liners won battle for Bridgeview mosque."


Associated Press

Damra

Damra's Appeal Unanimously Denied

In March 2004 a federal appeals court upheld the conviction and sentence of the leader of Ohio's largest mosque, paving the way for federal prosecutors to begin deportation proceedings for Fawaz Damra.

Damra, the Palestinian-born Imam of a suburban Cleveland mosque, was convicted last June for failing to reveal on his 1994 citizenship application his ties to three organizations the government has classified as terrorist organizations. He was also found guilty of incitement for a 1991-videotaped speech in Chicago showing Damra urging the audience "to direct all rifles at the last and first enemy of the Islamic nation, and that is the sons of monkeys and pigs, the Jews."

In their unanimous decision, the U.S. Court of Appeals said that it is clear that Damra engaged in fund-raising activity for a terrorist organization.

Trial Begins For HLF and IAP Officials Charged With Providing Funds to a SDT

The trial of three brothers — Ghassan, Basman and Bayan Elashi — accused of transferring funds to a Hamas leader and U.S. Specially Designated Terrorist (SDT) opened in Dallas March 31, 2005. The government claims they funneled thousands of dollars through business dealings to Mousa Abu Marzook, Deputy Chief of Hamas' Political Bureau and designated by the U.S. in 1995 as an SDT.

This is the second of two trials against the Elashi brothers. In July 2004, the three, along with their brothers Hazim and Ihasan, as well as Marzook and his wife Nadia Elashi, were convicted of illegally selling regulated computer equipment to Syria and Libya, both of which were on the U.S. roster of state sponsors of terrorism. These transactions occurred via InfoCom, a business with ties to HLF, IAP and Marzook.

In the new case, Ghassan, Basman and Bayan face 21 counts of conspiracy, money laundering and dealing in property of a terrorist. The transactions occurred after Marzook was designated an SDT for his Hamas ties. The brothers allegedly were laundering the funds and intentionally failing to file required reports about the transactions to the proper U.S. authorities. The indictment does not allege that financing was directly given to Hamas or that the funds went to support terrorist activities.

According to the indictment, Marzook invested $250,000 in InfoCom in the early 1990's in exchange for 40% of the company's profits to be given to Nadia Elashi, Marzook's wife and a cousin of the Elashi brothers. The alleged intent of this business deal was to hide Marzook's assets. InfoCom, Marzook and Nadia, who held a key position at InfoCom, were also named in the indictment. Marzook and his wife are currently living abroad and are considered fugitives.

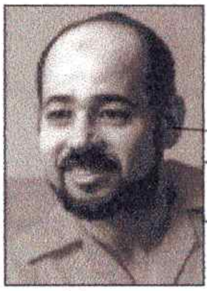
Close ties exist between the Elashi brothers, Marzook, InfoCom and Holy Land Foundation, a "charity" whose assets were frozen by the government in December 2001 for ties to Hamas. InfoCom's offices are located directly across from HLF's headquarters. According to InfoCom's attorney, Mark Enoch, during the raid InfoCom employees relocated to the HLF's offices to try to continue their business. Ghassan Elashi was the chairman of HLF and according to tax records Marzook provided $210,00 in start-up money to HLF in 1992.

Marzook insists that his "fundraising activities were separate from Hamas attacks."

A Publication of the Jewish Community Relations Council of the Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago

A Closer Look Special Report:

Mousa Mohammed Abu Marzook: Hamas Leader Created Chicago-based U.S. Network



Associated Press

Marzook

Background:

The most common thread weaving through the Chicago Connection to International Terrorism is Mousa Abu Marzook. He was the founder and lead donor establishing several groups and the coordination between them. Throughout the 1980's and much of the 1990's, he launched the Islamic Association for Palestine, the Holy Land Foundation, the United Association for Studies and Research, and InfoCom.

Born in 1951 in the Gaza Strip, Marzook studied engineering in Cairo and then worked as a factory manager in the United Arab Emirates. At age 30 he moved to the U.S., earning a Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering. Upon arriving in the U.S. in 1981, he set to work creating a number of diverse organizations that would become Hamas' U.S. support network. While building that U.S. infrastructure, he was simultaneously climbing the ranks of Hamas leadership, eventually rising to become the head of its political bureau. In that capacity he is responsible for coordinating the international aspects of Hamas' terrorist activities, specifically the organization's funding and the training of the group's operatives.

#2

IAP - supporting the Hamas message:

Marzook founded the Islamic Association of Palestine (IAP) in Palos Hills, Illinois shortly after his arrival in 1981. An FBI memo states that Marzook established a bank account for IAP, depositing a total of $125,000 during 1990 and 1991. The group supported Hamas by translating and distributing its charter and circulating its recruitment videos. IAP conferences, featuring Hamas speakers, raised money (and popular support) for the terrorist group. IAP's support for Hamas has been established in two verdicts in separate federal cases. In an August 2002 federal court decision involving the freezing of the assets of the Holy Land Foundation (another Hamas supporting organization), the judge found that "the Islamic Association for Palestine has acted in support of Hamas." IAP, based upon its support of Hamas, was also found liable in a Chicago federal court in December 2004 for the terrorist group's 1992 murder of 17 year-old David Boim. A $156 million judgment was rendered against IAP and three other defendants.

UASR - the "intellectual" dimension:

Marzook also played a central role creating the United Association for Studies and Research (UASR) in Oak Forest, Illinois, serving as its first political director. At one point UASR employed Muhammad Salah who, under the direction of Marzook and while later working for the Quranic Literacy Institute, was one of two Palestinian-Americans arrested and convicted in Israel for bringing funds into the country to support Hamas terrorism.

HLF - Hamas' lead U.S. fundraiser:

In 1992, Marzook donated $210,000 to the newly established Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development (HLF). One of its co-founders, Ghassan Elashi is a cousin of Marzook's wife. HLF, with offices in Bridgeview, Illinois and Richardson, Texas, described itself as the largest American Muslim charity: in 1992 it reported raising $13 million. An FBI memo states that in 1994 Marzook designated HLF as the primary fund-raising entity for Hamas in the U.S. In December 2001 the U.S. government froze HLF's assets because of its connections to Marzook and Hamas. In July 2004, seven accused Hamas members were indicted in Dallas for providing material support to the terrorist group through HLF.

InfoCom - providing technical support:

HLF co-founder Ghassan Elashi, also founded InfoCom, an Internet company shut down by the U.S. government on September 5, 2001 for alleged support of terrorism by American Islamic networks. According to the FBI, Marzook was responsible for his wife's $250,000 investment in the company. InfoCom and HLF shared both office space and employees. In July 2004, seven other suspected Hamas members - six InfoCom officers and Marzook (who was no longer in the country) - were convicted of illegally selling regulated computer equipment to Syria and Libya, both of which were on the U.S. roster of state sponsors of terrorism.

A Possible Al Qaeda Link Emerges:

Marzook's connections to terrorism may even extend to Al Qaeda. According to an April 19, 2004 Washington Post investigative article, Marzook, while still studying for a PhD in Louisiana, invested 50% — almost a million dollars - in a Virginia real estate development run by New Jersey based BMI Inc. Documents filed in August 2003 by the U.S. attorney's office in the Eastern District of Virginia describe BMI as being involved in an alleged money laundering/global terrorism operation. According to the government, a BMI accountant revealed that "funds the accountant was transferring overseas on behalf of the company may have been used to finance the embassy bombings in Africa," a reference to the 1998 Al Qaeda bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania that killed more than 220 people. Other investors in the project included relatives of Osama bin Laden and Saudi businessman Yasin al-Qadi, whose assets were frozen by the U.S. only a month after 9-11 and who was placed on the U.S. roster of Suspected Terrorists connected to Al Qaeda. An FBI affidavit shows al-Qadi provided $820,000 for the Oak Lawn, Illinois-based Quranic Literacy Institute's 1991 purchase of property in suburban Chicago. Based upon a jury's December 2004 verdict in a Chicago federal court, proceeds from that real estate development were used by Hamas to purchase weapons used in a 1992 terror attack.

If the allegations of investigators are correct, they would link Marzook to a major Al Qaeda attack against the U.S.

The Wanderer - Expelled, Indicted and On The Run:

In 1992 Marzook left the U.S. to head Hamas' Damascus office, eventually moving to Jordan. In 1995 the U.S. labeled him a "Specially Designated Terrorist," prompting his expulsion from Jordan. Attempting to return to the U.S., he was immediately detained at JFK airport and held by authorities until January 1997. When Israel declined to request his extradition, he was returned to Jordan, only to be expelled a second time in 1999 during a crackdown on Hamas. Landing again in Damascus, he reportedly fled to Lebanon in 2004 fearing Israeli retaliation.

In August 2004, a Chicago grand jury indicted Marzook yet again; this time with Muhammad Salah and Abdulhalim Ashqar. According to then Attorney General John Ashcroft, "all three are charged with racketeering, conspiracy for allegedly conducting, with named and unnamed co-conspirators, the affairs of Hamas." The indictment describes a fifteen-year conspiracy raising funds and handling all facets of Hamas decision-making and preparation for actual terrorist attacks.

Wherever he is now, and whether or not he ever faces trial, Mousa Mohammed Abu Marzook's legacy - originating in Chicago – is the creation of a U.S.-based network of organizations supporting Hamas' terrorism.

A Deflecting and Disturbing Defense
A Special JCRC Analysis

As criminal and civil actions have been brought against several Chicago-area groups and individuals for aiding international terrorist groups, it is often Israel and American Jews that they are inexplicably blaming for their legal problems. Drawing upon historic accusations of nefarious Jewish power and influence, the defendants, their attorneys and other supporters, are routinely scapegoating Jews and the Jewish State. Some examples:

1. In August 2001, Bank One closed the account of Holy Land Foundation (HLF), an organization shut down four months later for supporting Hamas. Responding to the Bank One action, the Palos Hills-based Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP), which in 2004 would itself (along with HLF and others) be found liable for Hamas terrorism, circulated an op-ed by Ramzy Baroud, editor-in-chief of PalestineChronicle.com charging, "...it was mere propaganda by pro-Israeli groups that finally pressured Bank One...to close the charity's bank account..." (www.iap.org; December 8, 2001.)

2. A week later the government shut down InfoCom, an Internet service provider with many links to HLF and IAP. The next day America's leading Muslim groups issued a statement that read in part: "American Muslims view yesterday's action as just one of a long list of attempts by the pro-Israel lobby to intimidate and silence [us]... We believe the genesis of this raid lies not in Washington, but in Tel Aviv...It is disturbing that American law enforcement agencies are now perceived by American Muslims and Arab-Americans as being tools in the hands of a foreign government. Our elected officials must not allow Israel to import its unjust and discriminatory policies to this country..."

   The statement was signed by: the American Muslim Council, American Muslims for Jerusalem, American Muslim Alliance, Council on Islamic-American Relations, Islamic Society of North America, Islamic Circle of North America, Islamic Association for Palestine, Muslim Alliance in North America, Muslim Public Affairs Council, and the Muslim Student Association of U.S. and Canada. (www.iap.org; September 7, 2001.)

3. When the government froze HLF's assets, IAP again came to its defense by circulating a Ramzy Baroud essay. This one argued that, "... those who followed the ceaseless attempts by pro-Israeli Jewish lobbies in the United States to halt the success of the organization [HLF] knew too well that Bush's decision was mere politics, a gift to Israel, whose insolent demands are boundless." (www.iap.org; December 8, 2001.)

4. In November 2003, one year before a suit seeking damages for Hamas' murder of 17-year old David Boim went to trial, IAP – one of the six defendants – solicited donations for its defense fund, arguing, "Boim's parents are unable and unwilling to accept their own culpability for their son's death. In fact, they are allowing American Zionist groups to exploit his death for their political purposes...the Israelis and their supporters in America want to close all the organizations that work for the Palestinian cause, and they want to silence us forever... the Zionists – exploiting David Boim – filed this suite [sic] so they can drain our financial resources through costly litigation." (www.iap.org; November 13, 2003.)

   In December 2004 the Quranic Literacy Institute (QLI) was one of four defendants found liable for $156 million in damages in the Boim case. Amer Haleem, a QLI officer, referring to the parents, threatened, "If they eat that money, if they consume it, they do more than consume the fire of hell into their bodies... they are not interested in justice, truth, innocence, they are interested in pursuing a hateful agenda and they want to carry that agenda out from occupied Palestine into America." (WMAQ, NBC-5 TV News, December 8, 2004.)

5. In January 2003, former IAP Chair and President of the United Muslim American Association (UMAA) Sabri Samirah affixed blame for his being barred from returning to the U.S. in an email to the UMAA list serve this way: "In short, our government – and under pressure from pro-Israeli groups – has unjustly brought the ceiling of our constitutional freedom to a very low point by going after community leaders..." (ummaforum@yahoogroups.com; January 24, 2003.)

6. Attorneys for the Muslim groups and individuals facing legal problems have been echoing these troubling arguments. Two months before the government froze its assets (and those of two other Chicago-area groups), Global Relief Foundation attorney Ashraf Nubani blamed the government scrutiny and media coverage on "Zionist forces in the U.S." (Chicago Tribune, October 4, 2001.)

   Another attorney, Thomas Anthony Durkin, representing Abdelhaleem Ashqar who was indicted for providing material support to Hamas, blasted the government's case as "nothing but a blatant political stunt orchestrated by the Bush-Ashcroft Justice Department to make a play for the Jewish vote." (Chicago Tribune, August 20, 2004.)

7. The drum beat of misplaced blame from Muslim organizations and their leaders has, predictably, been picked-up by community members. After criminal charges were filed against Ashqar, Mohammad Salah, and Mousa Abu Marzook for their ties to Hamas, an unnamed community member claimed, "It's not right for the U.S. to take the side of Israel." (Chicago Tribune, August 21, 2004.) Meanwhile, Ashqar's wife also affixed blame: "It's an Israeli witch-hunt, and the American government is acting on behalf of the Israeli government." (Chicago Sun-Times, August 27, 2004.)

America's war against terrorism requires new law enforcement strategies. People concerned about protecting civil liberties and fighting terror are challenging some of those new strategies. Such debates are healthy for American democracy. Yet most of the Muslim organizations and leaders defending themselves against charges of aiding terrorism are not doing so on these legitimate areas of law and public policy. Instead, the collective defense strategy has been offensive: a distracting, disturbing and dangerous strategy of blaming the Jews.

While this approach is failing in the courtroom, it continues being employed in the court of public opinion. Until Muslim and non-Muslim groups speak out against this scapegoating, nothing will change. For its part JCRC will persists exposing this shifting of blame, distressed by the irony that some of those appropriately denouncing the negative stereotyping of Arabs and Muslims, especially post 9-11, are the very ones engaging in base and baseless lies about Jews.

JCRC remains steadfast battling hate crimes, bigotry and intergroup divisiveness of all kinds. It does so while also combating the Chicago Connection to International Terrorism. The two are not incompatible; they are necessary and complimentary.

In Perspective

Monitoring and exposing the Chicago Connection to International Terrorism has been a signature JCRC activity for a decade. This priority project however is not conducted within a vacuum - we are sensitive to broader societal dynamics involved with these issues. Hence, JCRC public lectures on this topic always begin with following points:

1. Though the organizations in this report all describe themselves as Muslim and/or Arab, the vast majority of Arab and Muslim Americans and their organizations are not connected to or supportive of international terrorism.

2. U.S. law enforcement asserts that even in the cases of the four Chicago-area organizations whose assets have been frozen for alleged support of international terrorism, donors were deceived as to the ultimate uses of their charitable donations. Indeed, one of the charges that Enaam Arnaout, the jailed executive director of Benevolence International Foundation, pled guilty to was defrauding donors into believing that all contributions were to be used for humanitarian purposes when in fact many were being diverted to "jihad fighters" in Chechnya and Bosnia.

3. Ideally there would be non-Jewish, nongovernmental organizations monitoring and exposing the Chicago Connection to Terrorism. JCRC realizes that, as a Jewish organization, what we say, even when it is what is widely publicized in the mainstream media, is prone to be heard by many through a "filter" that absorbs the information in the context of a perceived public relations debate about the Middle East conflict between American Jews and Arabs/Muslims.

4. Nonetheless, that concern does not deter JCRC from speaking out even while waiting for other voices to be raised on this urgent issue of the Chicago Connection to International Terrorism. JCRC launched its Terrorism Awareness Project in the early 1990's shortly after the first Chicago connections to international terrorism were revealed (the arrest of Mohammad Salah in Israel for supporting Hamas). That timeframe also coincided with the first World Trade Center bombing, prompting JCRC in 1996 to draft and successfully advocate for passage of the nation's first state antiterrorism legislation, sponsor an academic conference on terrorism, and other activities.

5. As always, JCRC fights bigotry as if there is no terrorism, and fights terrorism as if there is no bigotry. Unfortunately there are occasionally those who will respond to acts of terror by committing hate crimes against innocent individuals or groups perceived as "associated" with terrorists. While unequivocally denouncing such instances and working in many ways to prevent hate crimes and to aggressively punish their perpetrators, JCRC cannot allow the despicable reality of hate crimes from preventing us to aggressively combating terrorism and exposing its local connections, regardless of the demographics of those involved.

Jewish Community Relations Council
of the Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago

The umbrella body for 47 Jewish organizations in Metropolitan Chicago and the community relations arm of the Jewish United Fund/Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago.

www.juf.org

Live Generously

For more information on the Chicago Connection to International Terrorism and copies of this document and past newsletters, visit: www.juf.org/jcrc/terrorism.asp