

FACT SHEET: REAL FACTS ABOUT ISLAMOPHOBIC FAKE FACTS

The Islamophobia network in America builds much of its case around two propositions. One is that organized Muslim activists under the direction of the Muslim Brotherhood are engaged in "civilization jihad" -- actively carrying out a long-standing, well-developed conspiracy to subvert American legal and government institutions to bring the United States under Sharia law. The other is that the Brotherhood secretly controls major mainstream Muslim American organizations and that those organizations have ties with violent Islamic terrorist groups.

Both those charges are repeated incessantly and vociferously in public statements and publications and on anti-Muslim websites. But the movement has offered no plausible evidence for either of them. Here are some facts about those claims:

-- The only "proof" ever presented for the civilization jihad story is a single 26-year-old document customarily characterized by anti-Islamist activists as the Muslim Brotherhood's "master plan" to "conquer and Islamize the United States." In fact, the document is no such thing. It was written by a single Brotherhood member in 1991 and neither the anti-Islamists or anyone else have found any indication that it was read by anyone beside the author until it was unearthed in an FBI search in 2004 and then made public in court proceedings three years later. The wording makes clear the writer was proposing a strategy *to* the leadership, not announcing a plan approved *by* any governing authority. The document is not mentioned in any known Brotherhood records, its phraseology does not appear in other writings, and there is no evidence that the plan it outlined was ever adopted -- or even seen -- by the Brotherhood's ruling council.

-- There is no known U.S. terrorism case where the motive bore any resemblance to the civilization jihad idea. Terrorists have sought revenge for American support of Israel or for U.S. actions in Iraq and other wars, or to defend their religion against the West's perceived war on Islam. There is no record suggesting that any terrorist acted to Islamize the United States or replace the American legal system with Sharia law.

-- The charge that mainstream Muslim American organizations, in particular the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), have "terror ties" similarly rests almost entirely on one circumstance that -- like the Brotherhood civilization jihad plan -- does not prove what the Islamophobes claim it proves. That one circumstance was the Holy Land Foundation trial, in which five leaders of the Texas-based charity were found guilty of providing funds to charitable programs linked with Hamas, a designated terrorist organization. In that case, prosecutors named CAIR and several other Muslim organizations on a list of more than 300 "unindicted co-conspirators," though without alleging any criminal act.

-- The Holy Land case itself is somewhat ambiguous (the foundation was not charged with directly aiding any terrorist activity) and the connection with CAIR is even more so. The only link with CAIR was that its founder, Omar Ahmad, was associated with the U.S. Palestine Committee, an umbrella group for Holy Land and other organizations. Ahmad's activities took place in the early 1990s before Hamas was declared a terrorist group.

-- In 2010 an appeals court found that the co-conspirator list was "unaccompanied by any facts" indicating a possible terrorist connection, though it did not remove CAIR from the list. The Justice Department, meanwhile, concluded that no criminal investigation was called for.

-- The complete lack of evidence has not stopped anti-Islamists from repeatedly linking CAIR to terrorism ("a terrorist organization and its leaders are terrorists," one activist called it). Because its officials are in a wider web connecting with many other advocacy and charitable groups, the "terror tie" label is regularly applied to other Muslim American organizations as well. However, no one implicated in any terror attack in the United States since 2001 has had any connection of any kind with CAIR or any of the other organizations.

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