



Dar al-Hijrah Mosque

Falls Church, VA

Al Qaeda, Hamas

The Department of Treasury's Enforcement Communications System (TECS) records note that Dar al-Hijrah "is a mosque operating as a front for Hamas operatives in U.S.," "is associated with Islamic extremists," "has been under numerous investigations for financing and providing aid and comfort to bad orgs and members," has "been linked to numerous individuals linked to terrorism financing," and "has also been associated with encouraging fraudulent marriages."^[1]

An Imam at this mosque in mid-2001, Anwar al-Awlaki (also mentioned in *Rabat Mosque*), is considered an important spiritual advisor for two 9/11 hijackers, Khalid al-Mihdhar and Nawaf Al-Hazmi.^[2] White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs said the following of Awlaki on *CBS' Face the Nation* on May 23, 2010:

"I think Mister Awlaki is – despite telling the world he's a cleric, you see on videotape that he supports al Qaeda's agenda of murder and violence. In fact, in recent videotapes, he said he's a member of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, who has an agenda just like al Qaeda to strike targets in Yemen, throughout the world, including here in the United States."^[3]

Gibbs added that the U.S. Government is "actively trying to find" Awlaki. ^[4] Awlaki has been said to have influenced both the attempted Detroit airplane bomber and the Fort Hood shooter.^[5]

Additionally, Abdulhaleem al-Ashqar served as a board member of the mosque.^[6] Ashqar, who was indicted in August 2004 for allegedly participating in a 15-year racketeering conspiracy to finance Hamas' activities,^[7] organized a 1993 meeting in Philadelphia of US-based Hamas leaders and supporters.^[8] Prosecutors say, "[t]he purpose of the meeting was to determine their course of action in support of Hamas' opposition to the peace plan and to decide how to conceal their activities from the scrutiny of the United States government."^[9]

Ashqar was acquitted of charges in the Hamas conspiracy but convicted of contempt and obstruction.^[10] He was sentenced to 11 years in prison in November 2007.^[11]

Ismail Elbarasse is one of Dar al-Hijrah's founding members.^[12] Elbarasse worked as Hamas leader Musa Abu Marzook's assistant from as early as 1990, and the two shared a joint bank account.^[13] Moreover, in the months before the Philadelphia meeting in support of Hamas, Elbarasse wired \$735,000 to Hamas operative Mohammad Salah,^[14] who was indicted with Ashqar and Marzook in 2004.^[15]

In 1998, Elbarasse was jailed with Ashqar for refusing to assist a grand jury investigation of Hamas' U.S. activities.^[16]

Elbarasse was named as an unindicted co-conspirator in two Hamas-support trials.^[17] He was also arrested in August 2004 after his wife, who was sitting in the passenger seat of Elbarasse's car, was caught videotaping the Chesapeake Bay Bridge.^[18] A search of Elbarasse's home turned up the "Anarchist Cookbook," a "Spreadsheet of Trained Pilots, 'Law Enforcement Only,'" and a piece of paper containing the address of the Norfolk Naval Station.^[19] Neither Elbarasse nor his wife were charged with a crime in that incident.

Extremist Rhetoric

In addition to the legal cases involving these Dar al-Hijrah leaders, extremist rhetoric has peppered the mosque's sermons and *khutbahs*. In a speech given by Imam Shakir El-Sayed at Dar al-Hijrah on January 9, 2009, Imam Shakir condoned the use of violence in a variety of unfavorable situations for Muslims:

"Islam does not accept peace when its communities are humiliated, when it is exploited, when it is manipulated, when our rights are taken away, when our communities are being killed or attached, the blood is being shed, then **this is not time to talk about peace. It will only be time to fight back.**"^[20][emphasis added]

Imam Shakir specified in his message that the conflict brewing in Palestine is included in the conditions that permit violence saying that, "in Palestine, in Gaza there is a war going on, **there is no allowance for a Muslim in that region or in that area to sit still or call for anything other than carrying the arms.**"^[21] [emphasis added]

Imam Shakir made similar comments in a sermon at Dar al-Hijrah later that month, on January 30, 2009. He once again preached violence as the answer to oppression and injustice saying, "then the only thing left for Muslims is to raise their hands and to ask Allah to establish justice. Wars do not come to nations every year once or twice. But they are such **so-called natural phenomena, which are in reality the soldiers of Allah that he send upon communities to wake us up to remember,**" that it is "us who wage the war, but it is Allah who is going to finish it."^[22][emphasis added]

Dar al-Hijrah has also hosted Sami Al-Arian, who pleaded guilty in 2006 to conspiring to provide goods or services to the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ).^[23] During a speech at Dar al-Hijrah on March 8, 2002, several years before his guilty plea, Al-Arian defended the Holy Land Foundation (HLF), Benevolence International Foundation (BIF), and the Global Relief Foundation (GRF).^[24] Al-Arian lamented, "[L]ook at what happened to some of the charitable organizations ... who have been working for years ... trying to establish their names, trying to work tirelessly ... for many projects around the world."^[25] At the time of Al-Arian's speech, the assets of both BIF and GRF had been frozen by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC).^[26] HLF, like Al-Arian, would eventually be convicted for terrorism related support activities; HLF would be convicted of funneling money to Hamas in November 2008. ^[27]

In a 1998 *khutbah* given by Mohammed al-Hanooti, who still speaks at Dar al Hijrah, ^[28] several radical statements were made regarding the U.S. strike in Iraq:

"We have to do everything we can to help the Iraqi people from tyrannies... we all have to be ready for the jihad with our properties and our souls."^[29]

"Allah will rain his curse on the Americans and the British." ^[30]

"Just like Allah promises us, he will stand in his promise and the curse of Allah will become true on the Jews. The curse of Allah will become true on the Americans and the tyrannies."^[31]

He also commented on the role of Dar al-Hijrah, saying that the Islamic Center "will be the greatest example in loyalty, in liberation and [will bring] the jihad with Allah calls for."^[32]

see: [USA v. Marzook, Salah, Ashqar](#)

[USA v. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, et al.](#)

[USA v. Sami Al Arian](#)

^[1] TECS Records, ICE 2010FOIA1510000001.

^[2] *The 9/11 Commission Report*, Chapter 7: The Attack Looms, "The Move to San Diego," p. 218-221.

^[3] Transcript of CBS News' Face the Nation, May 23, 2010, http://www.cbsnews.com/htdocs/pdf/FTN_052310.pdf (accessed May 28, 2010).

^[4] Transcript of CBS News' "Face the Nation," May 23, 2010, http://www.cbsnews.com/htdocs/pdf/FTN_052310.pdf (accessed May 28, 2010).

^[5] Transcript of Hearing on the Current and Projected Threats to the U.S., House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, February 3, 2010.

^[6] Caryle Murphy, "In Washington, Muslims and Jews Despair Over Mideast Violence," *The Washington Post*, October 13, 2000.

^[7] *USA v. Marzook*, 03 CR 978, "Indictment," (N.D. Tex. August 19, 2004).

^[8] *Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development v. Ashcroft*, (D.D.C.02-442 GK), Memorandum Opinion, at 22. See also Action Memorandum, Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development International Emergency Economic Powers Act, from Dale Watson, Assistant Director FBI Counterterrorism Division, to Richard Newcomb, Director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control, US Department of Treasury, November 5, 2001, at p.9.

^[9] *USA v. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development*, "Indictment," (N.D.Tex. July 27, 2004).

^[10] *USA v. Ashqar*, 03 CR 978-3, "Judgment," (N.D.Ill. November 21, 2007).

^[11] *USA v. Ashqar*, 03 CR 978-3, "Judgment," (N.D.Ill. November 21, 2007).

^[12] Caryle Murphy, "Facing New Realities as Islamic Americans," *The Washington Post*, September 12, 2004.

^[13] *USA v. Marzook*, 03 CR 978 "Indictment," (N.D. Tex. August 19, 2004).

^[14] Action Memorandum, Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development International, Emergency Economic Powers Act. From Dale Watson, Assistant Director FBI Counterterrorism Division to Richard Newcomb, Director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of Treasury, November 5, 2001, pg. 11.

^[15] *USA v. Marzook*, 03 CR 978, "Indictment," (N.D. Tex. August 19, 2004).

^[16] Shawn S. Devroude, "Affidavit in Support of a Search Warrant," (E.D.VA. August 20, 2004). See also: Benjamin Weiser, "2 Men Jailed Over Refusal to Aid Inquiry," *New York Times*, April 18, 1998.

^[17] *USA v. Marzook*, 03 CR 978 "Indictment," (N.D. Tex. August 19, 2004). *USA v. Holy Land Foundation*, 3:04-CR-240-G "List of Unindicted Co-conspirators and/or Joint Venturers," p. 6.

^[18] Maryland Transportation Authority Police Department Incident Report, Complaint #04L010168, August 20, 2004.; *U.S. v. Ismail Selim Elbarasse*, 02 GJ 369, "Warrant for Arrest," (N.D. Ill. August 20, 2004).

^[19] Erich Rich and Jerry Markon, "Va. Man Held as Witness in Case Tied to Hamas," *The Washington Post*, August 23, 2004.

^[20] Shakir El-Sayed, "Scholars Condemn Gaza Holocaust," Dar al-Hijrah Islamic Center, Falls Church, Virginia, January 9, 2009.

^[21] Shakir El-Sayed, "Scholars Condemn Gaza Holocaust," Dar al-Hijrah Islamic Center, Falls Church, Virginia, January 9, 2009.

^[22] Shakir El-Sayed, "Islamic Thoughts on the Financial Crisis," Dar al-Hijrah Islamic Center, Falls Church, Virginia, January 30, 2009.

^[23] *USA v. Al Arian, et al*, 03-CR-77, "Plea Agreement," 1563 (M.D. Fl. April 14, 2006).

^[24] Sami al-Arian, Solidarity International USA, Dar al-Hijrah Islamic Center, Falls Church, Virginia, March 8, 2002.

^[25] Sami al-Arian, Solidarity International USA, Dar al-Hijrah Islamic Center, Falls Church, Virginia, March 8, 2002.

^[26] "Recent OFAC Actions," Office of Foreign Assets Control, December 14, 2001.

^[27] *USA. v. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development et. al.*, 3:04-CR-240-P, "Jury Verdict," (N.D.Tex. November 24, 2008).

^[28] Dar Al-Hijrah Newsletter, "Upcoming Activities and Jummah," June 17, 2010.

^[29] Mohammed al-Hanooti, "Friday Khutbah," Dar al-Hijra Islamic Center, Falls Church, Virginia, December 18, 1998.

^[30] Mohammed al-Hanooti, "Friday Khutbah," Dar al-Hijra Islamic Center, Falls Church, Virginia, December 18, 1998.

^[31] Mohammed al-Hanooti, "Friday Khutbah," Dar al-Hijra Islamic Center, Falls Church, Virginia, December 18, 1998.

^[32] Mohammed al-Hanooti, "Friday Khutbah," Dar al-Hijra Islamic Center, Falls Church, Virginia, December 18, 1998.

[BACK](#)