



Grassroots Campaign To Fight Terrorism Handbook

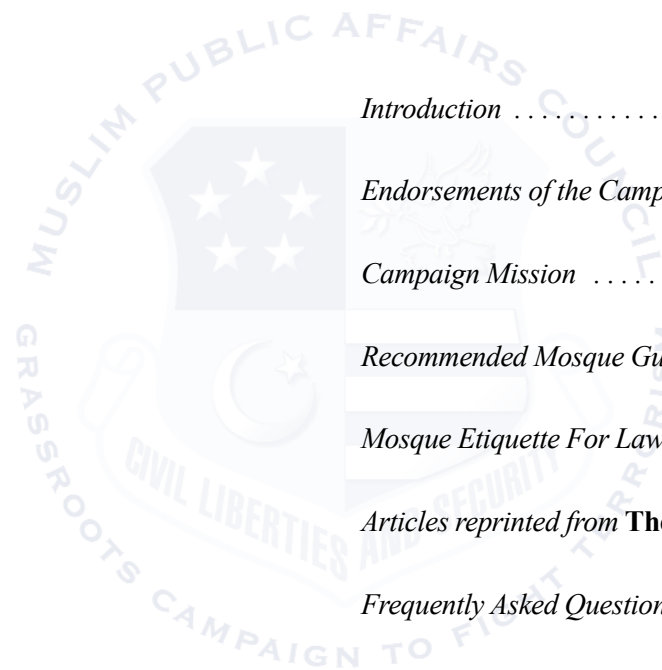
2005

A Publication of the *Muslim*
Public Affairs Council



“Whosoever killed a human being – unless it be in punishment for murder or for spreading corruption on earth – it shall be as if he had killed all mankind; whereas, if anyone saves a life, it shall be as though he had saved the lives of all mankind.” QURAN 5:33

Table of Contents



Introduction	4
Endorsements of the Campaign	5
Campaign Mission	7
Recommended Mosque Guidelines	9
Mosque Etiquette For Law Enforcement	11
Articles reprinted from The Minaret	13
Frequently Asked Questions	21

This handbook is published by the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC). All articles, artwork and photography are copyrighted and cannot be reproduced by any means electronic or otherwise without the expressed written permission of MPAC. ©2005 Muslim Public Affairs Council



Muslim Public Affairs Council
3010 Wilshire Boulevard, # 217
Los Angeles, California 90010
Phone (213) 383-3443 • Fax (213) 383-9674

Our Vision: To establish a vibrant American Muslim community that will enrich American society through promoting the Islamic values of Mercy (21:107), Justice (4:135), Peace (8:61), Human Dignity (17:70), Freedom (2:256), and Equality for all (49:13). *Quranic verse references in parentheses*

Mission Statement: To effect positive change in public opinion and in policy with the purpose of realizing the vision. The scope of the mission includes, but is not limited to, the following:
1.) Promoting an American Muslim identity; 2.) Fostering an effective grassroots organization;
3.) Training a future generation of men and women who share our vision; 4.) Promoting an accurate portrayal of Islam and Muslims in mass media and popular culture; 5.) Educating the American public, both Muslim and non-Muslim about Islam; 6.) Building alliances with Muslim and non-Muslim groups; 7.) Cultivating relationships with opinion and decision makers.

“But [since] good and evil cannot be equal, repel evil with something that is better. And lo, he, between whom and thyself was enmity, will become as though he were a warm friend” QURAN 41:34

Introduction

This guide is part of the MPAC’s broader counter-terrorism and civil rights campaign and is intended for Imams, Muslim community leaders, law enforcement, and the media. More information about MPAC and what we stand for can be found on our website at <http://www.mpac.org>

For Imams and Muslim leaders, we present to you our “Recommended Mosque Guidelines” for your review and implementation. MPAC seeks to build a relationship with you and is always interested in your feedback. Please contact us if you have any questions at (213) 383-3443. Or if you decide to implement the guidelines, please let us know.

For law enforcement, we provide our “Mosque Etiquette” and “Cultural Considerations” for interacting with the Muslim community. These guidelines were developed with the U.S. Department of Justice and other ethnic communities to educate federal, state, and local agencies about interaction with opposite gender, dress, and perception of law enforcement in general.

For the media, in addition to what you’ll find for Imams, Muslim leaders, and law enforcement, we have reprinted a series of articles from “*The Minaret*” magazine that deals with the subject at hand. Media interviews can be arranged by contacting MPAC at (213) 383-3443. If you are a local news affiliate, contact us and we will attempt to put you in touch with a local Muslim community leader in your area that can speak from a local perspective.



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الإتحاد الإسلامي في أمريكا الشمالية
The Islamic Society of North America

Statement of Endorsement from The Islamic Society of North America (ISNA)

The Islamic Society of North America is proud to endorse the National Anti-Terrorism Campaign as outlined in this booklet. As stated in our mission statement, ISNA aims to be an exemplary and unifying Islamic organization in North America that contributes to the betterment of the Muslim community and society at large. We believe that this campaign and its goal of protecting our mosques and our country against terrorism is an integral part of fulfilling our mission.

By endorsing this campaign, we stand with the majority of Muslims across the globe in rejecting terrorism perpetrated in the name of Islam, and vow to protect our mosques, our country, and our faith against those who wish to violate them. We do so while ensuring that we always guard the civil liberties we so deeply value as Americans.

As I have stated before, whenever Muslims have worked together, they have accomplished great things. As the nation's largest American Muslim umbrella organization, we are pleased to be an integral part of disseminating such an important campaign to mosques and other Islamic institutions across the nation.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sayyid M. Syeed
Secretary General, ISNA

P.O. Box 38 (mail) • 6555 South County Road 750 East (delivery) • Plainfield, IN 46168 – U.S.A.
Phone: (317) 839-6157 • Fax: (317) 839-1840 • E-mail: isna@surf-ici.com • Website: www.isna.net
Constituent organizations include: The Muslim Students' Association of the U.S. and Canada (MSA) • The Association of Muslim Scientists and Engineers (AMSE) • Islamic Medical Association of North America (IMANA) • The Association of Muslim Scientists and Engineers (AMSE) • Islamic Medical Association of North America (IMANA)

Endorsements of the Campaign



U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Washington, D.C. 20535-0001

For Immediate Release
July 9, 2004

Washington D.C.
FBI National Press Office

Department Of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation Reinforce Commitment to working with leaders of Muslim, Sikh and Arab-American Communities

Washington, DC – Attorney General John Ashcroft and FBI Director Robert S. Mueller III recently met with national leaders of Muslim, Sikh and Arab-American organizations to address issues including hate crimes and civil rights violations, and to enlist the assistance of these communities in the current challenges in the war on terror. The Director's meeting was his sixth bi-annual meeting since September 2001 focusing on the FBI's commitment to the Muslim, Sikh and Arab-American communities.

Recent meetings focused on Director Mueller's directive given to the leaders of the FBI's 56 field offices to increase contacts with Muslim, Sikh and Arab-American leaders within their territories beginning July 9, 2004 and to personally address concerns and issues in the community during the 2004 threat period. This initiative is a continuation of a tasking Director Mueller ordered in late 2001 for each FBI field office to establish contacts with community organizations and leaders in their territories.

"Credible reporting indicates that al Qaeda is planning a large-scale attack in America in an effort to disrupt our democratic process. While we currently lack precise knowledge about when, where and how they are planning to attack, we are actively working to gain that knowledge. As part of that effort, we are again reaching out to our partners in the Muslim and Arab-American communities for any information they may have. Their assistance has proven valuable in the past, and we continue to seek their help in this time of enhanced threat," said Attorney General John Ashcroft. "In addition, our outreach to those perceived to be of Muslim, Arab and Sikh descent is part of our strong ongoing campaign to prosecute bias-motivated attacks. American ideals and values are not limited by race or religion, and freedom-loving people are our greatest allies in the war on terrorism. Today, we reaffirm our commitment to working with and protecting those who love freedom."

Dr. Maher Hathout of the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) said, "MPAC's National Grassroots Campaign to Fight Terrorism and Hate Crimes underscores the importance of the American Muslim community as part of the solution in its commitment to protect our country in partnership with law enforcement." The Attorney General and Director recognized the importance of MPAC's anti-terrorism initiatives, and encouraged similar efforts to educate the Muslim community about federal counterterrorism efforts.

Manjit Singh, President of the Sikh Mediatwatch and Resource Task Force (SMART) stated, "The Justice Department has done a phenomenal job of bringing us together and they have shown that they recognize that many in the Sikh American community continue to face hate crimes. We have laid the foundation for consistent outreach from FBI field offices around the country, and we look forward to continuing to train new and existing agents to effectively work with the Sikh American community."

As Director Mueller stated in his recent testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee, "none of these successes would have been possible without the extraordinary efforts of our partners in state and municipal law enforcement and our counterparts around the world. The Muslim, Iraqi, and Arab-American communities have also contributed a great deal to our success. On behalf of the FBI, I would like to thank these communities for their assistance and for their ongoing commitment to preventing acts of terrorism. All of us understand that the evolving threats we face today, and those we will face tomorrow, can only be defeated if we work together."



“There is no compulsion in religion. Surely, the right way has become distinct from error; so whosoever refuses to be led by those who transgress, and believes in Allah, has surely grasped a strong handle, which knows no breaking.” QURAN 2:256

In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

It is our duty as American Muslims to protect our country and to contribute to its betterment. Since September 11, 2001, intelligence reports indicate that international terrorist networks continue to plan attacks against the United States. In the face of such a frightening possibility, and being aware of the disastrous consequences that may befall the country as a whole and the Muslim community in particular, it is obvious that Muslims should be at the forefront of the effort to prevent this from happening. While we find ourselves in the same line with most American citizens, there is the fear that those who are hateful fanatics or special interest opportunists will insist to marginalize Muslims and depict them as suspects to be watched. We owe it to our religion, our country and our new generations to expose this fallacy and to change this perception. We ought to be proactive and demonstrate that we are part of the solution.

The Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) took the initiative to launch the National Grassroots Campaign to Fight Terrorism. The campaign is composed of three main components:

- 1. Religious awareness and education to create a strong Islamic environment that does not allow terrorism to be considered as a form of struggle in Islam. The different acceptable forms of struggle in Islam are part of the noble concept of jihad. This doesn't tolerate hurting civilians, suicidal destruction of human life or inflicting harm on non-combatants.*
- 2. Controlling the inter-mosque environment and activities to prevent intruders and unauthorized, unknown persons from exploiting the open environment of the mosque, which is accessible to all who seek its spiritual, educational and social benefits. We know that the vast majority of mosques are already doing what is appropriate, yet the Qur'an teaches us that reminding will always benefit the community*

of believers (Qur'an 51:55). We have to emphasize that mosques are and should always be open, public places. There is no complete guarantee that the leadership can know about every person or every piece of literature that is brought to the mosque without authorization. A mosque that is applying the appropriate measures should not be held responsible for the behavior or mishaps caused by individuals.

- 3. Acquiring skills to detect any potential criminal activity to be able to thwart them; for this effort, open forums and training classes should be organized and facilitated by mosque officials and law enforcement agencies.*

While this plan is launched, Muslims should be equipped to prevent and report all kinds of hate speech and hate crimes; they should be encouraged to guard their civil liberties and exercise their right of dissent and free expression as guaranteed by the constitution and exercised within the bounds of the law of the land.

Your participation and support is critical for the success of such a campaign. Please find the material which may help in implementing this plan. You should find the following pieces in this handbook: the campaign's 4-step program; Mosque Guidelines, Mosque Etiquette: Cultural Considerations for Interacting with American Muslims and Arab Americans, and articles addressing terrorism from the Islamic perspective. If there is a need for more material or consultation, contact MPAC's national office at (202) 547-7701.

May God bless your efforts. Wa'salaamu Alaikum wa' Rahmatullah,

Dr. Maher Hathout
Coordinator of the Campaign



Recommended Mosque Guidelines

“And worship Allah and associate naught with Him, and show kindness to parents, and to kindred, and orphans, and the needy, and to the neighbor who is a kinsman, and the neighbor who is a stranger, and the companion by your side, and the wayfarer, and those whom your right hands possess. Surely, Allah loves not the arrogant and the boastful;” QURAN 4:36

To date, MPAC's National Anti-Terrorism Campaign (NATC) has received the support of hundreds of Mosques across the country through the official endorsement of the Islamic Society of North America - the largest Muslim organization in the U.S.

The NATC guidelines are as follows:

1. Mosques and Islamic centers should accurately maintain their financial records, with specific attention to sources of income and items of expenditure with accurate, professional and transparent bookkeeping and financial statements.
2. All activities within the mosque and Islamic centers should be authorized by legitimate, acknowledged leadership, and unauthorized private group meetings and speeches should be prohibited.
3. Most of our mosques do not have permits to allow overnight lodging facilities. It is therefore important that strict regulations about the opening and closing of the mosque be maintained.
4. Traffic inside the mosque should be directed and managed. Designated people should be given the responsibility of providing the specific services people need, such as information about prayer, classes, councils, cafeteria, etc.
5. During Fridays and other days when a large audience is expected, special attention should be paid to bags and other stored items, etc.
6. In case of guest speakers, it is prudent to know who the guest is and the content of the talk he or she is about to deliver.
7. Talks should focus on harmony, emphasizing the fact that we are Muslims and Americans. We need to represent the great values of our religion and constructively engage our country in dialogues leading to improved life for all people. Irresponsible rhetoric used should be avoided.
8. Mosques should have a relationship that involves public meetings with the FBI's regional office and local law enforcement.
9. Special programs should be arranged in cooperation with local law enforcement agencies to educate and train the community on how to really detect criminal activities.
10. The mosque should develop a rapport with local media and elected officials in the area. One spokesperson should be responsible for issuing statements and giving interviews that represent the authentic opinion of the legitimate authority of the institution.
11. Meetings and other programs should be held in cooperation with civil rights organizations for awareness and education.
12. It is highly recommended that the mosque be part of an interfaith dialogue and civic alliances and activities.

Mosque Etiquette For Law Enforcement

“Ye who believe! Be steadfast in the cause of Allah, bearing witness in equity; and let not a people's enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be always just. That is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah. Surely, Allah is Aware of what you do.” QURAN 5:8

Cultural Considerations for Interacting with American Muslims (During Non-Emergency or Non-Crisis Situations)

This material published in Building Cultural Competency Training: Arab, Muslim and Sikh Americans Presented by US Department of Justice Community Relations Service, Connecting Cultures, and Sikh Mediawatch and Resource Task Force (SMART).

Perception of Law Enforcement Officials

1. Police are perceived in the same as in country of origin: corrupt, open to bribery, brutal
2. Arab and Muslim American males believe they are automatic suspects
3. There is generally a high respect for authority
4. Law enforcement agencies are perceived to be the same authority (FBI, INS, US Marshal, Customs, LEO)
5. There is a general mistrust and a belief that homes, phone use, financial transactions are bugged or traced

Dress

1. Modest dress for men and women
2. Men may have beard, wear skullcap or loose gown
3. Women may cover hair and face with a scarf (Hijab), and wear loose attire
4. Avoid touching opposite gender or removing scarf forcibly
5. If scarf must be removed, request her to remove Hijab herself in private area away from the view of other males, or have female officer remove

Handling Religious Texts or Quran (Holy Book for Muslims)

1. Allah is Arabic word for “The God” (of Abraham)
2. Do not throw, write on, or place something on top of Quran or place it on the floor
3. It is common to keep a Quran in car, purse, bags, etc.

Visiting a Mosque or a Masjid

1. Separate entrances are sometimes used for men and women
2. Avoid stepping on prayer rug / carpet with shoes, remove shoes or place paper/mat over carpet to walk on
3. Prayer occurs five times a day and it is common for there to be activity at the mosque between dawn to night
4. Avoid interrupting, walking in front of or trying to talk to person during prayer
5. Female officer may cover hair with hat/scarf
6. Friday is day of communal worship; lasts 60 - 90 minutes in early afternoon

Interaction with Opposite Gender

1. Be mindful of modesty issues
2. Do not physically touch opposite sex
3. Avoid direct consistent eye contact
4. Maintain physical distance
5. Interaction should be formal
6. If available, use same gender officer to interface with same gender

“And abuse not those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they, out of spite, abuse Allah in their ignorance. Thus unto every people have We caused their doings to seem fair. Then unto their Lord is their return; And He will inform them of what they used to do.” QURAN 6:108

The Suicide Culture | By Dr. Maher Hathout, April 2004

The idea of glorifying self-destruction to destroy others for whatever cause is as ancient as pre-Biblical times. We can fairly say that this style of fighting was scarce and rare throughout the history of Islamic civilization with the exception of the aberration of the assassins in the early Dark Ages. It is very alarming to see that this ugly, anti-Islam, anti-nature and anti-life phenomena is reappearing and growing among Muslims nowadays.

In spite of our deep understanding and sympathy towards the Palestinian suffering and the frustration of trying to move the conscience of the world through peaceful means and throwing rocks, and in spite of our condemnation of the brutal practices of the Sharon apartheid regime, we still took a clear stand against suicide bombing that compels a person use his or her body as a weapon to destroy noncombatants.

We took that stand conscientiously based on our understanding of Islam, as well as the awareness that once we glorify death and cheapen human life, it takes us to a downhill spiral that does not limit itself to one field or one cause. Now we see what we were dreading happening daily, resulting in the killing of Iraqis in Iraq, the Shias, in Pakistan, the Kurds in Mosul. Suicide killing has become a “modus operandi,” not a desperate aberration.

It is horrifying that this is a way to settle differences or express anger, soon it may become a way of revenge or even to achieve nothing but to die!

We claim to believe in a religion that is a call to life “O ye who have attained to faith, respond to God and His apostle as He calls you to what

will give you life,” (8:24), that endows all the sacredness imaginable to human life “If anyone slays a human being – unless it be in punishment for murder or for spreading corruption on earth – it shall be as though he had slain all mankind; whereas, if anyone saves a life, it shall be as though he had saved the lives of all mankind,” (5:32), that orders “Do not throw yourself into destruction by our own hands” (2:195), and that showed us through the example of Prophet Muhammad and the treaty of Hudaibiyah that utmost self-restraint and flexibility are necessary in order to avoid exposing the lives of the inhabitants of Mecca to danger. If we truly believe in this religion, we ought to go through very serious questioning and soul-searching.

How did we, as a group, fail to nip this ugly phenomenon in the bud? How did we indulge in the luxury of theoretical debates, and craft all kinds of euphemisms to let this go on, spill

out and grow?

Did the intellectual and spiritual leadership of the umma take on this issue with its due seriousness? If they did not, isn’t it about time? How long will demagoguery, emotionalism, and superficiality keep fueling the fire of hatred by the lives of zealots?

How long will Islam be exploited to mislead the credulous young and send them to die for the unknown agendas that continue to benefit the unknown sharks and tycoons?

*How long will demagoguery,
emotionalism, and superficiality
keep fueling the fire
of hatred by the lives of zealots?*

*Muslim
Public Affairs Council*

In Whose Name Do They Kill? | By Dr. Aslam Abdullah, April 2004

Over a million people end their lives every year globally by committing suicide. Those killed also include many that never intended to commit suicide. Suicide bombers first appeared among the Jewish Sicaris in the 1st century. Ten centuries later, Muslim Hashishiyun practiced it while Asians in the 18th century revived it. The beginning of the 21st century has seen an unprecedented rise in incidents of suicide killing.

The world has witnessed some 400 suicide bombings employed by about 15 different outfits in different countries between 1980 to 2000. The figure has gone up considerably since then.

The fear now stalking the people's minds is whether suicide bombers will now resort to mass-murder — methods employing the use of the nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. All monotheistic religions believe that God is the creator, and the giver of life, and He alone has the right to end it. Yet, the followers of this message have always fallen short of respecting the most essential divine principle of life. In recent times, Jews, Muslims and Christians have equally raced against each other in violating the sanctity of human life under various labels.

Christian Hitler's Germany caused the holocaust of the Jewish people. Christian Orthodox Serbs caused hundreds of Catholics and Muslims to perish through systematic genocide committed in the mid-1990s.

The subjugation and massacres of more than 95 percent of native citizens of what became the United States was caused by people who were influenced by Christian values and faith. Millions of blacks perished

during slavery officially practiced by nations that held the banner of Christianity, Judaism and Islam higher.

Over five decades, thousands of Palestinian Muslims and Christians have been massacred by the state taking pride in its Judaic roots. Over 80,000 killings have occurred in the Indian side of Kashmir at the hands of people who claim to be the followers of Hinduism. More than 3,000 people perished in the United States when those claiming to be Muslims led the suicidal attacks in New York and Washington. And the killing of civilian Jews at the hands of the occupied Palestinians have been hitting the headlines for almost two decades.

Religious justification of taking human life has become a popular hobby of public officials and religious scholars in our times. Everyone gives religious and political explanations for their action of taking life, without realizing that life is a sacred trust that the

Religious justification of taking human life has become a popular hobby of public officials and religious scholars in our times. Everyone gives religious and political explanations for their action of taking life, without realizing that life is a sacred trust that the Divine has reposed in human hands since the time of original creation.

Divine has reposed in human hands since the time of original creation. Rather than defending human life and saving it from those who often intend to destroy it in name of their religion, region, nation, ethnicity and race, scholars, laity and clergy in general play the politics of words where each tries to prove to the world the inhumanity of the other thus creating more tensions, controversies and reasons for further killing.

According to the Muslim belief system, the divine message as revealed through successive generations of human beings can be summarized in the following verse of the final scripture as revealed to Prophet Muhammad: *"Do not kill yourselves, for Allah is compassionate towards you. Whoever does so, in transgression and wrongfully, We shall roast in a fire, and that is an easy matter for Allah"* (4:29-30).

“And if any one of the idolaters seeks protection of thee, grant him protection so that he may hear the Word of Allah; then convey him to his place of security. That is because they are a people who have no knowledge.” QURAN 9:6

Respecting and protecting human life are acts of submission and worshipping to God. Submission has many great lessons for all of us that hear and watch on TV the scenes of a place after suicide bombing. The bomb does not know the difference between a soldier, a child, a mother, a grandfather or a grandmother. It is an awful and horrendous scene that we all wish to never see or witness.

Islam totally disagrees with this kind of behavior and condemns the action that causes this. Sometimes some people try to argue that their enemy is killing children and mothers as well and that is why they justify actions that result in their destruction. But according to the divine faith, evil must be not repaid with evil and animosity must not be returned with animosity.

Those who claim to follow the final divine scripture must live up to highest moral standards, not to evil choices, and respect human life regardless of the label that it carries. The

Divine demands from the follower of His message to work for peace and justice through peaceful means, not through violence or anger. The Divine demands that His followers should never lower their moral standards to the standard of the people who fight them. Following God's law guarantees peace and victory while breaking it only guarantees more misery to all those involved.

The Quranic verses are very distinct on the subject: “You shall spend in the cause of God; do not throw yourselves with your own hands into destruction. You shall be charitable; God loves the charitable” (2:195).

“O you who believe, do not consume each other's properties illicitly - only mutually acceptable transactions are permitted. You shall not kill yourselves. God is Merciful towards you.”

“God also wants us to make peace with our neighbors and the people we know, even with our enemies” (4:29).

“If they resort to peace, so shall you, and put your trust in God. He is the Hearer, the Omniscient” (8:61).

“You shall resort to pardon, advocate tolerance, and disregard the ignorant” (7:199). “God advocates justice, charity, and regarding the relatives. And He forbids evil, vice, and transgression. He enlightens you, that you may take heed” (16:90).

“O people, we created you from the same male and female, and rendered you distinct peoples and tribes, that you may recognize one another. The best among you in the sight of God is the most righteous. God is Omniscient, Cognizant” (49:13).

Peace is not an alternative; it is a necessity for the true comprehension of the divine message. One does not attack those who are the intended recipients of the divine message. If we

want to show our commitment to peace, then we must go beyond words and rhetoric. The least that we can do is to express our condemnation of the killing done in the name of religion regardless of the victims and perpetrators. The self-killing that is directed deliberately at innocent people is not part of the divine faith: “None despairs of God's grace except the disbelieving people” (12:87).

*The Divine demands
from the follower of His message
to work for peace and justice
through peaceful means,
not through violence or anger.*

Terror is Not Islam | By Dr. Kari Ann Owen, April 2004

The Quran states that Muslims may *“Fight in the cause of God against those who fight against you, but do not transgress limits. Lo! God loves not aggressors...”* (2:190).

What are those limits? *“It is not fitting for an Apostle (believer in Islam) that he should have Prisoners of war until he has thoroughly subdued the land... You look for the temporal goods of this world, but God looks to the Hereafter: and God is Exalted in Might, Wise”* (8:67).

The clear implication here is that war is permitted only for self defense and not for “territory or trade, revenge or military glory.” (Comment on the above verse by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, The Holy Quran: Text, Translation and Commentary).

Civilian slaughter is clearly forbidden: *“Let there be no hostility except to those who practice oppression”* (2:193).

Suicide is also clearly forbidden: *“Make not your hands contribute to (your) destruction; but do good; for God loves those who do good”* (2:194).

Certain recent television broadcasts and even admissions by persons alleging themselves to be Muslim have rationalized or justified what is clearly forbidden by God’s revelation to the Prophet Muhammad. These individuals have stated they were taught that if they commit several forbidden acts at once – slaughter of non-combatants, suicide – they will be given a special place at the side of God once they ascend to heaven. Perhaps they were shown this verse: *“Think not of those who are slain in God’s way as dead. Nay, they are alive, finding their sustenance in the*

presence of their Lord” (3:169).

Yet, this passage does not contradict the strict conditions on those who would use force: *“Let there be no*

hostility except to those who practice oppression” (2:193). And it is clearly implied that it is God and God only who chooses martyrs: *“He chooses of his apostles for the purpose whom he pleases. So believe in God and His apostles: and if ye believe and do right, you have a reward without measure”* (3:179).

The particular meaning of Islam is submission. The frail human will is yoked in a positive and rational, not slavish and degrading, sense to a higher, more benevolent and compassionate will and deeply, lovingly connected to creation. Examples formally recognized in Islam include Abraham, Moses and Jesus. Indeed, limitation of truth to one culture is not recognized in the Quran: *“To God belong the East*

and the West. Whithersoever you turn, there is the Face of God” (2:115). In the words of Rabia Harris, a Muslim Peace Fellow with the Fellowship of Reconciliation, “Truth is not limited, but is to be discovered and honored everywhere. Both traditional and modern cultures have something important to contribute to the service and contemplation of God.”

And God is above all merciful and benevolent as He adjures humans to be. The prayers spoken by 1.5 billion Muslims five times a day begin with the words, “In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful...” Clearly, if mercy is the primary quality of God, it is the quality Muslims are first called upon to imitate and practice. All Muslims are instructed to pursue this path of spiritual evolution toward this quality, and this struggle

Civilian slaughter is clearly forbidden:

*“Let there be no hostility except to those
who practice oppression” (2:193)*

“Say, ‘O people of the Book (Christians and Jews)! Come to a word equal between us and you - that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partner with Him, and that some of us take not others for Lords beside Allah.’” QURAN 3:64

toward the good is called jihad, and no word in modern times has been more misunderstood or more misinterpreted by Muslim and non-Muslim alike.

For in that rare state of spiritual grace, concern for others and humanity at large displaces vicious egotism and violent greed, resulting in those astonishing human beings we call men and women for others. Such persons could no more turn themselves into flying bombs than they themselves could sprout wings and fly... not if they believe in the submission to God which is the core of Islam.

It is time for all who share this planet to contemplate the words of St. Paul: “The spirit of the word gives life but the letter kills.” Individual passages in both the Quran and the Old and New Testaments can be angry, even vilifying, but the spirit of religion and its behavioral disciplines are loving and above all merciful, demanding humility and a renunciation of hate both in the soul and society.

I implore those who call themselves Muslims, Christians, Jews or anything else while committing irreligious acts to have mercy on the hope religion offers... particularly Islam, which is providing help to many young men and women in the West seeking a disciplined life of sobriety, education, sexual and moral responsibility, leading to that victory one may call oneness with God and others merely call responsibility, or grace.

Kari Ann Owen received her Ph.D. in religion and literature from The Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CA and is a produced playwright, published poet and columnist for Abled Woman! magazine.

The Real Origins of Suicide Bombings | April 2004

There are many motives for suicide attacks: religious beliefs, nationalistic ideologies, obedience to charismatic and authoritarian leaders, or desire for political change. The modus operandi may vary, whether to use one or several suicide bombers, whether to use men or women. The explosives can be concealed on the human body, on an animal, or in a vehicle, and conveyed by sea, or over land. The targets can be senior government officials, military targets, economic installations, or public transport vehicles, while the level of operations can range from scores of attacks to solitary or sporadic attacks.

For most of the organizations who have used these tactics, the common denominator is their success in causing large-scale casualties and negatively influencing public morale, while at the

same time entirely failing to change regimes or to force their governments to surrender to their strategic demands.

As of the beginning of 2004, there have been well over 300 suicide attacks carried out in 14 countries by 17 organizations.

Modern suicide bombings was introduced by Hezbollah in 1983 in Lebanon, and it was in Lebanon that this modus operandi was refined throughout the 1980s. During the 1990s, the attacks continue, but declined in frequency. All together, 50 suicide bombings were carried by secular communist and nationalist organizations, including the Lebanese Communist Party, the Socialist-Nasserist Organization, the Syrian Ba’ath Party, the PPS, and the other half by Hezbollah and Amal.

The perpetrators of the suicide bombings in Lebanon did not achieve

As of the beginning of 2004,

there have been well over

300 suicide attacks carried out

in 14 countries by 17 organizations

Muslim Public Affairs Council

strategic results. Hezbollah succeeded in hastening the withdrawal of the foreign forces from Lebanon and harassed the IDF in Lebanon. However, the suicide bombings were not a significant factor in Israel's decision to withdraw from the security zone.

Moreover, in the 1990s, Hezbollah drastically reduced the number of suicide attacks due to "rational" cost-benefit considerations.

The Lebanese success in this sphere was mostly in achieving respect; the group became a symbol of sacrifice and a source of inspiration for several organizations worldwide. In Sri Lanka, Turkey, Egypt, Chechnya and others, militants adopted and even improved on the suicide bombings of the Lebanese group.

The most prominent of these organizations was the LTTE, "The Tamil Tigers." This organization, currently fighting for an independent Tamil state, began carrying out suicide bombings in 1987 and has since perpetrated over 200 such attacks. These bombings were particularly lethal and caused hundreds of casualties. Their targets are usually senior political and military officials in Sri Lanka. This organization is the only one in the world to succeed in assassinating two heads of state by suicide bombings. A suicide attack killed former India Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, while he was on an election campaign tour in Madras on May 21, 1991. Then, in May 1993, President Premadasa of Sri Lanka, was killed by a suicide attacker, along with 22 other people. On Dec. 17, 1999, the organization attempted to assassinate Chandrika Kumaratunga, President of Sri Lanka, using a female suicide bomber who blew herself up at an election rally. The President was wounded but survived the attack.

The LTTE has also targeted politicians from the Sinhalese majority,

pragmatic politicians from the Tamil minority, and senior military officers, as well as boats, command centers, and economic installations, such as fuel depots. The organization has never been particularly mindful of

the safety of passers-by and has never spared innocent bystanders who happened to be in the vicinity of their attacks.

The LTTE suicide squads draw their inspiration from a combination of a strong nationalistic motive and the charismatic leadership of the head of the organization, Parabakaran. The LTTE is still the most active group using suicide terrorism, but has so far not succeeded in achieving its declared strategic aim — an independent Tamil state.

The Kurdish PKK, a secessionist "secular" movement, perpetrated 16 suicide attacks in the years 1996-1999 (plus five foiled attacks), which killed 20 people and wounded scores.

However, these suicide attacks did little to persuade the Turkish government

to accept the organization's demand for Kurdish autonomy. The PKK suicide attacks were inspired and carried out on the orders of the organization's charismatic leader, Ocalan, who was perceived by the members of his organization as a "Light to the Nations." Following his arrest and death sentence in 1999, his organization ceased its suicide bombings.

The Egyptian organizations, "Gama'a al-Islamiyya" and "Egyptian Jihad," carried out two suicide attacks—one in Croatia in October 1995, and the other at the Egyptian embassy in Karachi, Pakistan in November 1995.

Osama bin Laden's organization was responsible for two simultaneous suicide bombings against the U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam, in which 224 people were killed and about five thousand wound-

*The perpetrators of the
suicide bombings in Lebanon
did not achieve strategic results.*

“Mankind, We have created you from a male and a female; and We have made you tribes and sub-tribes that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable among you, in the sight of Allah, is he who is the most righteous among you.”QURAN 49:13

ed. But these attacks, too, failed to obtain their strategic political aims beyond the casualties which they caused.

Another suicide attack carried out apparently by al-Qaida, or at least in collaboration with it, was perpetrated by two suicide bombers who blew themselves up in a boat in Aden harbor next to the USS Cole, killing 17 U.S. sailors.

In June and July 2000, Chechen militants fighting against the Russian army joined the circle of suicide bombers. To date, the Chechnyan suicide bombers have carried out at least seven attacks, in which scores were wounded and over one hundred Russian soldiers and police officers were killed.

In India, at least two suicide attacks have been carried out against military targets. The most recent was perpetrated against an army camp in Srinigar, by a young British citizen of Pakistani origin who was recruited into an organization called “Jaish Muhammad” (Muhammad’s Army). Ten soldiers were killed in this attack.

Religious Views on Suicide | April 2004

Suicide is the act of ending one’s own life. It is considered a sin in many religions and a crime in some jurisdictions. On the other hand, some cultures have viewed it as an honorable way to exit certain shameful or hopeless situations.

To be considered suicide, the death must be a central component and intention of the act and not just an almost certain consequence. Hence,

suicide bombing is considered a kind of bombing rather than a kind of suicide, while martyrdom is characterized by self-sacrifice in the service of others in emergencies and reckless bravery in battle usually escape religious or legal proscription.

*...one’s life is the property of God,
and that to destroy one’s own life
is to wrongly assert dominion
over what is God’s.*

Buddhism | According to Buddhism, our past heavily influences our present. Furthermore, what an individual does in the present moment influences his or her future, in this life or the next. This is cause and effect, as taught by Gautama Buddha. Otherwise known as karma, intentional action by mind, body or speech has a reaction and its repercussion is the reason behind the conditions and differences we come across in the world.

One’s suffering primarily originates from past negative deeds or just from being in samsara (the cycle of birth and death). Another reason for the prevalent suffering we experience is due to impermanence. Since everything is in a constant state of flux, we

experience unsatisfactoriness with the fleeting events of life. To break out of samsara, one simply must realize their true nature, by enlightenment in the present moment; this is Nirvana.

For Buddhists, since the first precept is to refrain from the destruction of life (including oneself), suicide is clearly considered a negative form of action. But despite this view, an ancient Asian ideology similar to seppuku persists to influence Buddhists by, when under oppression, committing the act of “honorable” suicide. In modern times, Tibetan monks have used this ideal in order to protest the People’s Republic of China’s occupation of Tibet and the China’s supposed human rights violations against Tibetans.

Christianity | Christianity is traditionally opposed to suicide and assisted suicide. In Catholicism specifically, suicide has been considered a grave and sometimes mortal sin. The chief Catholic argument is that one's life is the property of God, and that to destroy one's own life is to wrongly assert dominion over what is God's. This argument runs into a famous counter-argument by David Hume, who noted that if it is wrong to take life when a person would naturally live, it must be wrong to save life when a person would naturally die, as this too seems to be contravening God's will.

On a different line, many Christians believe in the sanctity of human life, a principle which, broadly speaking, says that all human life is sacred – a wonderful, even miraculous creation of the divine God – and every effort must be made to save and preserve it whenever possible. Nevertheless, even while believing that suicide is generally wrong, liberal Christians may well recognise that people who commit suicide are severely distressed and so believe that the loving God of Christianity can forgive such an act.

Hinduism | In Hinduism, murdering one's own body is considered equally sinful as murdering another. However, under various circumstances it is considered acceptable to end one's life by fasting. This practice, known as prayopavesha, requires so much time and will power that there is no danger of acting on an impulse. It also allows time for the individual to settle all worldly affairs, to ponder life and to draw close to God.

Islam | Like other Abrahamic religions, Islam views suicide strictly as sinful and detrimental to one's spiritual journey. However, human beings

are said to be liable to committing mistakes, thus, God forgives the sins and wipes them out if the individual is truly sincere in repentance, true to the causes and determined in intention.

For those who believed, but eventually disbelieved in God in the end, the result seems unambiguously negative. In the Quran, although God is said to be 'the Most Merciful, the Most Kind' and forgives all sins, the great sin of unbelief is deemed unforgivable.

Despite this, there is an unpopular view that actions committed in the course of jihad resulting in one's own death are not considered suicide, even if by the nature of the act death is assured (e.g. suicide bombing). Such acts are instead considered a form of martyrdom. However, there is Quranic evidence to the contrary stating those involved in the killing of the innocent are wrongdoers and transgressors.

Nevertheless, some claim Islam does permit the use of suicide only against the unjust and oppressors if one feels there is absolutely no other option available and life otherwise would end in death.

Judaism | Judaism views suicide as one of the most serious of sins. Suicide has always been forbidden by Jewish law, except for three specific cases. If one is being forced by someone to commit murder, forced to commit an act of idolatry, or forced to commit adultery or incest, then in those cases alone would suicide be permissible. However, outside those cases, suicide is forbidden, and this includes taking part of assisted suicide. One may not ask someone to assist in killing themselves for two separate reasons: (a) killing oneself is forbidden, and (b) one is then making someone else an accomplice to a sin.

*The types of martyrs produced,
or the likelihood of producing a martyr at all,
depend on the degree of political independence
and state of internal authority of a society.*



“You are the best people raised for the good of mankind;
you enjoin good and forbid evil and believe in Allah.” QURAN 3:110

Frequently Asked Questions

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) about MPAC's National Anti-Terrorism Campaign (NATC)

Why this campaign?

Whether we Muslims in America like it or not, our fellow citizens continue to be confused, if not outright concerned about our community (no matter the ethnic persuasion).

Since 9/11 the detractors and foes of American Muslims have been effective in distorting Islam and Muslims. Unfortunately, their efforts are more than a mere annoyance; MPAC has seen their real impact on policy makers, law enforcement, and the public at large.

If another 9/11-like attack is committed, American Muslims will be in an untenable position amongst our fellow citizens. We must do more now before, God forbid, something happens.

This campaign is an organized, cogent and effective effort to counter the distortions of our community and faith.

It also intends to send a clear message to our fellow citizens that terrorism is not a part of our faith, and that we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with them against terrorism and religious extremism.

Why does this campaign focus just on Muslims? Why not extremists amongst Christians and Jews?

Without doubt Christian extremists such as Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, and Franklin Graham or Jewish extremists such as Daniel Pipes and Steve Emerson need to be held accountable for their falsehoods and distortions. But let's face it, if another terrorist attack occurs Christians and Jews will not be the ones rounded up or have their civil liberties effected.

Our community must deal in reality, understand how we are viewed in the nation, and work from that context to better our situation. Deflecting legitimate questions about Muslim extremism towards extremism amongst Christians and Jews will not help protect our community.

By engaging the FBI and law enforcement, aren't we collaborating with the very agencies trampling our civil rights?

Actually, it has been MPAC's experience that working with local FBI field offices helps protect our civil liberties. In working with these offices (or local law enforcement in general) MPAC has found the office becomes educated about the community and Islam and ultimately moderates their viewpoints.

Engagement of local law enforcement and local FBI field offices is absolutely critical in protecting our civil liberties. It counters the basic human weakness to make assumptions about a person/community which they have never been in contact with before.

Is MPAC asking the community to "spy" on each other?

Absolutely not. The thought is anathema to our purpose as an organization.

Rather, this campaign asks community leaders and members to simply be aware of those who are meeting in their Mosques and institutions.

This awareness should not lead to stifling of free speech or expression of thought. But it is when legitimate differences with our government's policies translate into un-Islamic and illegal behavior the Quran obligates us to speak up and act:

“O you who have attained to faith! Be ever steadfast in upholding equity, bearing witness to the truth for the sake of God, even though it be against your own selves or your parents and kinsfolk. Whether the person concerned be rich or poor, God's claim takes precedence over [the claims of] either of them. Do not, then, follow your own desires, lest you swerve from justice: for if you distort [the truth], behold, God is indeed aware of all that you do!” QURAN 4:135

How do I participate in the campaign?

There are seven steps to take if your Mosque or institution would like to join MPAC's campaign:

1. Read the guidelines: Have your Mosque/institution read and agree to the "Mosque Guidelines" that MPAC has created (see our website at <http://www.mpac.org/atc/guidelines> for details)
2. Contact MPAC at (213) 383-3443 (nader@mpac.org) to let MPAC know you wish to participate in this effort. We will list your Mosque/organization as a participant.
3. Conduct a community meeting to introduce the campaign to your membership and answer any questions. Representatives of MPAC are available to assist in this effort.
4. Conduct a press conference to announce your institution's joining MPAC's campaign.
5. Initiate meetings with local police, FBI, city council members, mayor, and any other public officials to make them aware of your participation.
6. Develop a series of lectures or Jumma Khutbah's around specific Quranic verses that emphasize terrorism not being a valid means of resistance in Islam (see selected Quranic verses at <http://www.mpac.org/atc/verses>).
7. Give MPAC feedback throughout the process on how to improve this effort.





LOS ANGELES • WASHINGTON