

Al-Jazeera: Cross-Cultural Understanding

News, May 2010

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Florida Republican Candidate for Congress, Dan Fanelli, Runs Anti-Arab, Anti-Muslim Ads, CAIR Demands GOP's Repudiation

CAIR, May 8, 2010

CAIR Asks GOP to Repudiate Racist, Anti-Muslim Ads

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) today called on national Republican leaders to repudiate campaign advertisements for a Florida GOP candidate that advocate racial profiling and promote Islamophobia.

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In one ad, Republican candidate for Congress Dan Fanelli points to a white man and asks, "Does this look like a terrorist?" He then turns to a "Middle Eastern" man and asks, "or this?"

Another ad has Fanelli saying, "This is a terrorist," as he presents a "Middle Eastern" man strapped with a "bomb" and wearing what appears to be a dish towel "turban."

Yet another ad shows two Arabic-speaking "terrorists" constructing a bomb while discussing "martyrdom" and "killing infidels." The ad also mocks long-standing due process rights such as Miranda warnings and access to lawyers.

SEE: Fla. Candidate Produces Racist, Anti-Muslim Ads (Video)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MclCacLSk6w>

"This type of overt racism and contempt for constitutional rights has no place in a multi-cultural and multi-faith state like Florida," said CAIR-Tampa Executive Director Ramzy Kılıç.

"These outrageously racist and Islamophobic political appeals indicate that Mr. Fanelli falsely believes his constituents are as bigoted and intolerant as he obviously is," said CAIR Legislative Director Corey Saylor. "Local, state and national GOP leaders must speak out strongly against such racist and un-American campaign tactics."

Saylor said a number of recent terror incidents – including the suicide plane attack on an IRS facility in Texas, the shooting of Pentagon guards and the alleged Christian militia plot to kill police officers – disprove the crude stereotypes promoted by Fanelli's ads.

He said the anti-Islam hostility generated by the ads could result in ordinary Florida Muslims being targets for discrimination or even hate crimes.

Saylor noted that just yesterday, Southern California Christian leaders urged a Republican councilwoman to stop engaging in anti-Muslim rhetoric.

SEE: Christians Urge CA Councilwoman to End Anti-Muslim Rhetoric

<http://tinyurl.com/358xnnz>

CAIR is America's largest Muslim civil liberties and advocacy organization. Its mission is to enhance the understanding of Islam, encourage dialogue, protect civil liberties, empower American Muslims, and build coalitions that promote justice and mutual understanding.

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