

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)

CAIR is a non-profit, grassroots membership organization dedicated to presenting an Islamic perspective on issues of importance to the American public.

No part of this report may be reprinted or stored in a retrieval system without prior written approval from CAIR. Additional copies of the report are available for \$5. Add \$2 for shipping and handling.

Address all correspondence to:

CAIR Hate Crimes Report
1511 K. Street, N.W., Suite 807
Washington, DC 20005
Tel: (202) 638-6340
Fax: (202) 638-6412
E-Mail: cair1@ix.netcom.com

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 95-70692

© 1995 Copyright, Council on American-Islamic Relations

0012 0086

5

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	iv
FORWARD	v
GLOSSARY OF MUSLIM TERMS	vii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	viii
INTRODUCTION	1
METHODOLOGY	2
SCAPEGOATING MUSLIMS	4
ANTI-MUSLIM BIAS AND VIOLENCE	9
MUSLIM RESPONSES	21
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	24
APPENDIX	25

0012 0087

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Within hours of the April 19, terrorist attack on the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, media reports and self-proclaimed "terrorism experts" linked Muslims, Arabs and "Middle Eastern-looking men" to the blast. This unsubstantiated linkage prompted stereotyping, harassment and actual attacks on Muslims and Arab-Americans around America.

These incidents mainly took the form of: 1) numerous threatening phone calls, including bomb threats, to mosques and Islamic centers; 2) verbal abuse directed at Muslims who appeared in public; 3) harassing behavior by co-workers; 4) direct physical attacks such as rock-throwing, beatings and shootings. In addition, two mosques were set on fire; one of these incidents has been officially ruled arson by fire investigators.

From these reported incidents CAIR has identified two alarming trends: (1) A growing anti-Muslim prejudice has caused Muslims to experience an increased sense of alienation; and (2) numerous incidents of anti-Muslim violence that target highly visible Muslim institutions and easily recognizable Muslims, especially mosques and women who wear the traditional Islamic *hijab* (dress covering the head and the body, with the exception of the face and hands).

To reduce the anti-Muslim sentiment documented in this report, CAIR makes the following recommendations: (1) That Congress and the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights hold hearings to investigate the extent and severity of the anti-Muslim sentiment in the country, the causes of such prejudice, and its implication for civil rights legislation. In particular CAIR urges Congress to add "persons targeted for their religious and/or ethnic attire" to the categories of persons and federally protected activities covered by the Civil Rights Statute. (2) That the media exercise restraint when reporting developments of emotionally-charged events. Much of the stereotyping and defamation of innocent Muslim citizens and residents could have been avoided if reporters had applied basic standards of journalism. (3) That police departments and Muslim communities establish better channels of communication so Muslims and Arabs feel comfortable coming forward to report their experiences of bias and hate crimes.

00 12 0000

FORWARD

April 19, 1995, marks a substantive blow to American innocence. The World Trade Center bombing of February 1993 had already demonstrated that the United States was not immune to major acts of terrorism, but now the sobering recognition that the terrorists could well be American citizens slowly dawned.

Yet this recognition came only after many among the public and in the media reached for convenient stereotypes to express their outrage. Vague descriptions of "Middle Eastern" looking suspects would have been laughable had they not been accompanied by verbal and physical abuse and intimidation of Muslims and others. Violent attacks on Muslim places of worship also occurred.

A Rush To Judgment documents such incidents that occurred in the immediate aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing. To immense tragedy was added shameful intolerance. While it would obviously be wrong to impute intolerance to American society as a whole, hatred and violence directed toward individuals because of their group affiliation - race, ethnicity, language, gender, religion - are disturbing no matter who the victims are.

The American encounter with Islam has sadly cast Americans in the role of victim - victims of hijackers, suicide bombers, hostage-takers. Mindlessly, the perpetrators of such acts in the Middle East and elsewhere came to be seen as representative of all Muslims, and Islam itself came to be equated with acts of violence which the vast majority of Muslims would condemn.

But if this "us" against "them" mentality is delusional when it comes to international relations, it makes no sense at all when it is applied to domestic society. Millions of Muslims live permanently in the United States - many American-born, most citizens or indefinite residents. To draw boundaries around what is "American" and what is not is self-defeating, and attempts to do so reduce the humanity of individuals by making them cartoonish aliens. Thus, it would appear to some that Muslims bomb and do not donate blood, Muslim women are repressed and can not serve as doctors and educators. The reality, as the various Muslim responses to the Oklahoma bombing demonstrate, is far more complex.

The media, of course, bear a special responsibility for the misunderstandings that arose after the bombing. Many journalists and commentators, along with government spokespersons it must be said, demonstrated caution and restraint, eschewing conclusions until reliable evidence was in hand. But others took to the airwaves or the editorial pages to express unfounded suspicions or frank hostility to Muslims. It is one of the deleterious qualities of the "sound bite" and the "op-ed" piece in modern communications technology that rarely does anyone but those maligned or attacked remember misjudgments. A sense of responsibility for distortion or error is often as ephemeral as the expertise proffered, and the harm to those wronged or offended is only compounded. There will be no surprise in the pages that follow that many Muslims regard media

0012 0089

reporting as often biased or ill-conceived. Even though attention has now passed to other groups, they may well worry that it will return to them once the next act of terrorism is perpetrated.

This study effectively presents a side of the story that is rarely heard and is never irrelevant: the human consequences of turning people into scapegoats.

James Piscatori
Professor and Personal Chair
Department of International Politics
University of Wales, Aberystwyth
England

0012 0090

GLOSSARY OF MUSLIM TERMS

<i>Allah</i>	The most commonly used name for "God" in Arabic, which is used also by Christian Arabs. Allah is not the "Muslim God," but is the same God worshipped by Christians and Jews.
<i>hijab</i>	Islamic dress for females covering the head and the body, with the exception of the face and hands.
<i>jihad</i>	Literally, <i>jihad</i> means striving, struggle, or exertion of effort. The term does not mean "holy war." It is a broad Islamic concept that includes struggle against temptations, struggle to improve one's life, or fighting against tyranny or oppression. The equivalent of the term "holy war" in Arabic, the language of the Quran and prophet Muhammad, is " <i>harb muqaddasah</i> ," a term that can not be found in the Quran or the prophet's sayings.
<i>masjid</i>	The Arabic word for mosque.
<i>mosque</i>	A place dedicated to worship.
<i>niqab</i>	Face veil.

00 12 0091

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Council on American-Islamic Relations wishes to thank the following groups and individuals for their contributions to this report:

American Muslim Council (AMC)
Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC)
American Council for Public Affairs (ACPA)
Islamic Society of North America (ISNA)
Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
Arab American Institute (AAI)
Islamic Public Affairs Council (IPAC)
Islamic Networks Group (ING)
Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR)
Council on Islamic Education
Dr. Mohamed Nimer, Researcher
Mas'ood Cajee, Community Gathering Committee, Oklahoma

0012 0092

INTRODUCTION

There are an estimated six million Muslims in the United States. The Muslim population is comprised of people from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds and national origins. According to demographers, Islam is the fastest growing religion in America. The Muslim world, including members of the Muslim faith in the U.S., is experiencing a grassroots religious revival that has often been misunderstood, and/or misrepresented to the public. As of 1990, there were more than 1,000 mosques, Islamic centers, and Islamic schools in the U.S.¹

Despite the domestic growth of Islam in America, some groups and individuals cling to the portrayal of Islam and Muslims as a foreign threat. Hours after the April 19 bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, politicians, former officials, and self-styled "terrorism experts" rushed to lay the blame on Arabs and Muslims using unfounded reports linking men "with Middle Eastern background" to the incident. Stereotypical media reporting and special political interests converged to create an anti-Arab, anti-Muslim hysteria which spawned intimidation and violence across the country. As a result, Arab and Muslim individuals and community organizations became the secondary victims of the bombing.

Bias is not a unique experience to Muslims. However, the tragic experience of Muslims in the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing is unique because they have suffered retribution for an act that neither involved their community nor implicated any one of its members.

In 1990, President George Bush signed the Hate Crimes Statistics Act requiring the Attorney General to collect data on crimes that manifest evidence of prejudice based on ethnicity or religion. This report is the first of its kind to be issued by an American Muslim organization. It is intended to educate members of the news media, government and law enforcement agencies about the seriousness of bias targeted at Muslims in America.

This report is also addressed to members of Muslim community in the U.S. It documents the U.S. Muslim community's reaction to the blast in Oklahoma City. Findings show that although they were subjected to acts of harassment, threat, and assault, Muslims did not submit to fear and helplessness. They acted, like other individuals and communities in the United States, by strongly condemning the bombing, praying for the innocent victims, and helping in the relief effort.

Because they realized their suffering in wake of this incident was the result of a general lack of understanding of Islam and Muslims, Muslim organizations decided that education and increased communication would be the best and most positive ways in which to deal with the aftermath of the tragic blast.

¹Houghton Mifflin Company, *The 1991 Almanac*, 44th edition; The American Muslim Council, *The Muslim Population in the United States: A Brief Statement* (Washington, DC: n.p., 1992), 15. For scholarly research on the Muslim population in the U.S. see: Yvonne Haddad, *Muslim Communities in North America* (Albany, NY: The State University of New York Press, 1994)

0012 0093

METHODOLOGY

Following Justice Department guidelines, each "operation" or act of harassment, assault, etc., is counted as one regardless of the number of victims or offenders.² For example, two teenagers phoned an Islamic school in Seattle, Washington, and threatened to bomb the building. Such communication was counted as one act because the two offenders spoke from the same phone at the same time with regard to the same building. In contrast when a mosque received four hate phone calls from different sources, these phone calls were counted as four acts of hate. However, a series of related offenses are counted as one if they were integral parts of a whole act. Furthermore, in keeping with Justice Department guidelines, this report distinguishes between bias and bias crime (also known as hate crime). Bias is a "preformed negative opinion or attitude toward a group of persons based on their race, religion, ethnicity/national origin, or sexual orientation."³ A hate crime is a "criminal offense committed against a person or property which is motivated, in whole or in part, by the offender's bias against a race, religion, ethnic/national origin group, or sexual orientation group."⁴

After reviewing reports received by CAIR, the author attempted to verify incidents whenever possible by contacting the victims directly, and obtained tapes of hate and threat messages as well as copies of police reports (See a copy of one police report regarding an offense in Richardson, Texas). Some reports received from individuals have been excluded here because the information was too vague or inconsistent. Examples of such reports include a message received from one organization citing numerous threats to Arab-American businesses in the New York City area. Other examples of excluded messages on bias and hate crimes include a report which contains very broad language such as "several incidents of beatings and physical assaults have been reported." Reports that did not appear to have been linked to events in Oklahoma City have also been eliminated. However, in keeping with Department of Justice guidelines, incidents that seemed partially linked to the public atmosphere of anti-Muslim prejudice following the Oklahoma bombing have been included. One example of such incidents involves a handicapped sixty-three-year old citizen of Indian origin. He was allegedly pulled off a public bus and roughly searched by two policemen in connection with his attempt to report an arson crime in his residential building.

²The 1993 U.S. Department of Justice Hate Crime Statistics offers the following methodological guideline: "For counting purposes, one offense is counted for each victim of a 'crime against person.' One offense is counted for each distinct operation of 'crime against property,' regardless of the number of victims." See: U.S. Department of Justice, *Hate Crime Statistics: 1993* (Revised edition) (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1995), 5.

³U.S. Department of Justice, *Hate Crime Data Collection Guidelines* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993), 4.

⁴*Ibid.*

0012 0094

Of 250 reported incidents, the researcher rejected twenty-eight reports that were considered unreliable. The statistical data on the anti-Muslim prejudice and violence do not include the biased media statements which Muslims believe contributed to the public hysteria that gave rise to the violence.

While this report is indicative, it by no means includes all incidents of anti-Muslim violence and prejudice, primarily because many incidents may have not come to CAIR's attention. This report also does not include occurrences of racial slurs and violence that may have been directed at other ethnic and religious (especially non-European immigrant) minorities in wake of the Oklahoma City bombing. Indeed, some members of the Muslim community in Oklahoma reported that Buddhists and Sikhs in their neighborhoods were subjected to bias-motivated offenses. Such cases are not discussed in the report because the information on them was inadequate.

The researcher organized the reports according to region and type of victim. CAIR has maintained confidentiality in regard to the names of individual victims. No stated incident date means that the incident took place most likely between April 19 and April 21. Early undocumented reports show that most incidents occurred within forty-eight hours after the bombing (i.e., before the authorities televised sketches of the two suspects of European heritage).

To measure the level of apprehension and fear among Muslims following the Oklahoma City bombing, CAIR distributed a questionnaire to 1,600 individuals and Islamic institutions across the country. The questionnaire was made up of multiple choice and open-ended questions designed to learn how Muslims felt and acted following the bombing. As of June 15, CAIR had received 162 responses. Although not scientific (i.e., statistically non-random), the sample data provide a general idea of the emotions dominant among Muslims, especially in the few days that followed the bombing.

The body of this report consists of three main segments. First, media reports that may have contributed to anti-Muslim/anti-Arab violence are examined. Second, incidents of bias and bias-motivated violence are classified, described, and analyzed. Third, responses from the Muslim community to the bombing are discussed. The conclusion summarizes the findings and offers a set of recommendations which could help prevent similar tragic occurrences in the future.

SCAPEGOATING MUSLIMS

Media outlets rushed to broadcast rumors and speculations linking Arabs and Muslims to the bombing in Oklahoma City. Below are citations selected from media networks which Muslims believe have contributed to the atmosphere of anti-Muslim violence.⁵

Television

- CNN, April 19

Former Congressman David McCurdy made the following remark immediately after the blast in Oklahoma: "Well, my first reaction when I heard of the explosion was that there could be a very real connection to some of the Islamic fundamentalist groups that have, actually, been operating out of Oklahoma City." McCurdy also refers to the Steven Emerson documentary "*Jihad* in America."

- CBS Evening News, April 19

In a report by Anthony Mason, Steven Emerson said: "Oklahoma City, I can tell you, is probably considered as one of the largest centers of Islamic radical activity outside the Middle East."

- CBS Special Report, April 19

Interviewing James Fox, former head of the New York FBI office, John Roberts asked whether it was surprising that the bombing was carried out while the trial of the World Trade Center bombing suspects is underway. James Fox answered:

"Actually it does surprise me. We thought that we would hear from the religious zealots in the future, that they would be a thorn in our side for years to come. But that there would not be a direct terrorist act until after this trial was over and they saw how, for instance, the Sheik [i.e. Omar Abdul-Rahman] is being treated and whether he would be found guilty or not."

John Roberts then interviewed Steven Emerson, who pointed out that before considering a response to the bombing "the West and the U.S. in particular" must be prepared to "recognize that there is an extremist fringe within the Islamic community in the U.S....a minority fringe that sees the West and the U.S. as a target."

- ABC World News, April 19

John McWethy reported,

"Sources say that the FBI has been watching dozens of suspicious Islamic groups in cities in the Southwest and several in Oklahoma City. As a further indication where the

⁵This section is not intended to evaluate media performance in covering the Oklahoma bombing. Indeed, it would be a mistake to conclude from the following pages that the media is a monolithic entity. Muslims who followed media coverage noticed variation in the way different media sources performed. See below an examination of Muslim grassroots view of media coverage of the blast in Oklahoma City.

0012 0096

investigation is heading, ABC has learned that the FBI has asked the U.S. military to provide up to ten Arabic speakers to help in the investigation."

- NBC Nightly News, April 19

Jim Cumins stated that the bombing "resembled Beirut."

Commenting on the bombing in an interview with Tom Brokaw, Raymond Kelly, former New York police commissioner, remarked: "The genie is kind of out of the bottle after the World Trade Center bombing."

- CBS Evening News, April 19

Connie Chung states that "U.S. government sources told CBS News that it [the bombing] has Middle East terrorism written all over it."

CBS reporter Jim Stuart first suggested that the bombing may have been a revenge attack linked to Branch-Davidians. But the reporter quickly dismissed the possibility noting that: "Now, the bidding here, however, is on Middle East terrorists with a far bigger agenda."

Connie Chung stated: "Today's attack is similar to the World Trade Center in 1993 and similar to attacks on U.S. forces in Beirut in the 1980s. That has investigators looking at possible Middle East terrorists right here in the American Midwest."

Steven Emerson is featured stating that: "This (the bombing) was done with the intent to inflict as many casualties as possible. That is a Middle Eastern trait."

- ABC Nightline, April 19

Ted Koppel cited a clip from a local TV station in Oklahoma City which showed an anchorwoman stating that the police were looking for two Middle Eastern-looking men.

- ABC World News, April 19

John McWethy cites local police and FBI sources who said the police and the FBI were looking for three men believed to be of Middle Eastern origin driving in a brown pickup truck.

- CBS Evening News, April 20

Referring to the false arrest and return of Abraham Ahmad from London, Connie Chung described the pursuit of two suspects (i.e., the Caucasian male suspects) as only one of the leads, "some of them stretch overseas."

- PBS, April 20

In a PBS interview with Robert MacNeil, Larry Johnson, identified as an international security expert, insisted that pictures of the bombing site were similar to pictures of bombings in Beirut, and that

"the threat [of terrorism] has narrowed -- in that it is focused more on Islamic groups, increased activity on the part of Islamic groups in Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Pakistan and the Philippines. This strike in the heart of America is probably the Pearl Harbor of terrorism. This one is going to resonate with us in ways that the take-over of the embassy in Tehran never did."

Robert MacNeil then refers to the former CIA director William Woosley as saying that the Oklahoma bombing was "the true globalization of the terrorist threat."

- CNN, April 20

Commenting on the official release of sketches of two Caucasian suspects, Wolf Blitzer insisted that: "There is still a possibility that there could have been some sort of connection to Middle East terrorism. One law enforcement source tells me that there's a possibility that they may have been contracted out as freelancers to go out and rent this truck that was used in this bombing..."

- CNN, April 21

Wolf Blitzer, backtracking on his previous speculation that the bombing suspects may have been contracted by Middle Easterners, explained that "...one of the assumptions is that Islamic fundamentalists do not normally hire white individuals...They don't trust them...."

Radio

- Excerpts from the Bob Grant Show (WABC), April 20

Grant: Tommy from Brooklyn, hello.

Caller: How you doing Mr. Grant?

Grant: What's on your mind, sir?

Caller: Well, I'd like to say that it's very amazing that... they're talking about Muslims and Mr. Salameh and all this, this is what you're saying, and no one ever saw anything. That's just as worse --

Grant: Now -- yeah -- we did see a lot of things... In the Oklahoma case ... the indications are that those people who did it were some Muslim terrorists. But, a skunk like you, what I'd like to do is put you up against the wall with the rest of them, and mow you down along with them. Execute you with them. Because you obviously have a great hatred for America, otherwise you wouldn't talk the way you talk, you imbecile.

Grant: Gary you're on WABC, hello.

Caller: I'd like to be standing right beside you when you do it, Bob....

[two callers later]

Grant: Jacob, you're on WABC, hello.

Caller: Bob, in the book "The Islamic Invasion" by Robert [inaudible], he infiltrated mosques all over America. And (the) way they pray, is they pray for the destruction of America, destruction of Israel and Jews and even the children pray like this. So Bob, [laughs] we're going to have more bombings, and we can't stop it, because these people -- like you said, it's a violent religion.

Grant: It is violent. It is violent. We're supposed to be fake, phony frauds and say, 'oh, no, it's fine.' No it's not fine, cause they preach violence for heaven's sake!

Caller: Bob, they actually pray like this and he has tapes and I saw a documentary on Channel 13 that showed the same thing, so when the hell are we going to wake up?

Grant: I don't think we will. Because for every guy like you and every guy like me there's a guy like the jerk who was on two calls ahead [sic: behind]. And it's obvious what he's about.

Caller: He's probably a Black Muslim.

Grant: Yeah.

Caller: No question about it.

Grant: Yeah. Thank you, Jacob.

[Next caller suggests taking the culprits and putting their bodies in pig skin so they won't be "going on to Allah."]

Newspapers

- *The Washington Post*, April 20

"The FBI has been aware of the activity of Islamic student groups meeting recently in Oklahoma City, Dallas and Kansas City.... Hamas and another militant group, Islamic Jihad, were among the speakers at an Islamic conference held in the Oklahoma Convention Center in 1992 (referring to the annual Muslim-Arab Youth Association conference)."

- *The New York Times*, April 20

"Some Middle Eastern groups have held meetings there (Oklahoma), and the city is home to at least three mosques."

- *USA Today*, April 20

The paper quoted Daniel Pipes, editor of *Middle East Quarterly*: "People need to understand that this is just the beginning. The fundamentalists are on the upsurge, and they make it very clear that they are targeting us. They are absolutely obsessed with us."

- *The Chicago Tribune*, April 21

The paper published an editorial written by the syndicated columnist Georgie Anne Geyer under titled "The 'no questions asked' country for terrorists." The columnist relies on Steven Emerson's erroneous information to assert that the Oklahoma City area is "one of the centers for Islamic radicalism outside the Middle East."

Findings

- Muslim bashing crossed the line from criticizing "Muslim extremists" and "Muslim fundamentalists" to outright defamation of Islam. The mere presence of Islamic religious institutions in a particular area (Oklahoma City) was sufficient to infer criminality. This is evident, for example in *The New York Times* attempt to correlate the bombing to the fact that Oklahoma City is home to three mosques. (See the above quote from *The New York Times*, April, 20).
- Some media outlets engaged in scapegoating of Muslims. Even after the possibility of Muslim or Arab involvement in the blast had been ruled out by the authorities, some media sources insisted on maintaining the link (See comments of Wolf Blitzer in p. 25 above; see also *The Cincinnati Post* cover story in Appendix).
- It must also be acknowledged that certain "terrorism experts" have a political agenda that includes demonizing Islam, Muslims and Arabs. Some of these "experts" did not even check the facts before making television statements that provoked viewers to act against Muslims in America.

Are hasty speculations about a Middle East connection justifiable? The facts suggest otherwise. The Oklahoma City Police Department has denied ever calling for the arrest or pursuit of "men with Middle Eastern appearance." The assignment desk editor for Channel 4, the local NBC affiliate in Oklahoma City, indicated that they heard the call for such suspects on the scanners of police officers and Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) agents. Thus rumors that were circulating in private communications were passed off as news of government moves by

local reporters. National reporters away from the scene did not care to check the credibility of their local affiliates.

Some argue that in the absence of evidence, analysts have to use the benefit of history. Muslim militants were convicted of bombing the World Trade Center. Instead of seeing this incident as an isolated attack by few extremists, Steven Emerson produced a film, which was broadcast by the PBS under the title "Jihad in America," warning of an "Islamic terrorist threat" on U.S. soil.

However, the history of domestic terrorism in the U.S. contradicts the mythical image of "Muslim terrorism." According to government figures, radicals from Muslim background carried out only one terrorist attack in the United States - the World Trade Center bombing. In contrast, the following figures on domestic terrorist attacks are reported by the FBI in the period of 1982-1992: Puerto Ricans, seventy-seven attacks; left-wing groups, twenty-three attacks; Jewish, sixteen attacks; anti-Castro Cubans, twelve attacks; right-wing groups, six attacks.⁶ The same conclusion can be made with regard to anti-U.S. terrorist attacks overseas. According to the U.S. Department of State "Patterns of Global Terrorism" report, a majority of forty-four anti-U.S. attacks in 1994 took place in Latin America. In contrast, only eight were carried out in the Middle East, five in Asia, five in Western Europe, and four in Africa.⁷

⁶Federal Bureau of Investigation, Terrorist Research and Analytical Section, 1995

⁷U.S. Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1995).

ANTI-MUSLIM BIAS AND VIOLENCE

This section documents incidents of bias and bias-motivated violence directed at Muslims immediately following the blast in Oklahoma City. First, incidents reported to CAIR are classified and described briefly. Second, findings are deduced from the incident data.

Shooting

- Drive-by shootings on April 19 and 20 shattered the windows of a mosque and community center in Stillwater, Oklahoma. Fortunately no individuals were hurt in the shooting. A 35-year old Caucasian male suspect has been apprehended by Stillwater police. According to a community report, the suspect told police he was venting frustration after a friend was injured in the Federal Building explosion.
- A Muslim woman in Chicago, wearing the *hijab*, was reportedly shot at while walking on the sidewalk in her neighborhood on May 1.
- A shot was reportedly fired at Al-Fajr Masjid (mosque) in Indianapolis, Indiana, on April 19. Later, a caller said, "I just prayed to your god that you have some repentance...you will pay for this."

Beating and Physical Assault

- Sahar Al-Muwsawi, an Iraqi refugee in her mid-twenties, miscarried her near-term baby after an April 20th attack on her home in Oklahoma City. The woman heard the screech of brakes and the breaking of a number of windows in her house. Unknown assailants also pounded on the woman's door screaming anti-Islamic epithets. The woman retreated to her bathroom with her two-year-old daughter and another child in her care. She then felt a pain in her abdomen and began bleeding uncontrollably. She miscarried a stillborn baby boy several hours later at a nearby hospital. The child was named "Salaam," or "peace," and buried after a simple funeral in accordance with Muslim practice.*
- The Community Gathering Committee, Oklahoma, reported an attempted knife attack in a Norman, Oklahoma, parking lot. An international student in Durant, a small college town in southern Oklahoma, was allegedly beaten in a supermarket parking lot.
- A 7th Grade Muslim student at the Richardson Middle School in Torrance, California, was slandered with words such as "camel jockey" and accosted physically in wake of the Oklahoma City bombing. Apparently, the English language arts teacher included the word, "bomb," in the vocabulary list and illustrated the term by using the sentence, "Muslims

*On this case see: *The Daily Oklahoman* and *Houston Chronicle*, April 25, 1995.

...bombed Oklahoma City because Allah (God) told them to do so." The remark led to a physical attack on the Muslim student by his peers

- An African-American Muslim woman in Wilmington, Delaware reported that she was physically assaulted by an African-American man. As the attacker attempted to pull-off her *niqab* (face veil), he shouted: "Is this for real?" The assailant ran away when the woman fought him back

Robbery

- The Islamic Society of Greater Houston reported that one member of their community was robbed while carrying flyers and posters about Islam on April 21.

Property Damage and Vandalism

- The Islamic Center of High Point, North Carolina, burnt to the ground in the early morning of April 26. Community members believe the fire was related to the Oklahoma City bombing. Prior to the Oklahoma City blast, the community had experienced incidents of harassment, including break-ins and stone throwings. (Fire inspectors do not confirm arson.)
- The Muslim community in Springfield, Illinois, reported a suspected attempted theft and arson attack on the Islamic Center during the early morning hours of June 6. The fire was first reported by neighbors of the mosque at 12:10 A.M. The blaze apparently began on the building's exterior and worked its way inside. On June 14, Detective Mike Pennington of the Sangamon County Sheriff's Department confirmed that the mosque fire was ruled arson, but said no suspects have been identified. Fire Marshall Cliff Garst said that the building suffered an estimated \$30,000 in fire and heat damage.
- A raw egg was broken on the driver's side glass of a Muslim's parked car in front of his house in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

Stalking

- A Kuwaiti student at the University of Oklahoma, reported that his wife was stalked for an hour at her apartment on April 20.

Police Abuse

- Abraham Ahmad, a U.S. citizen and long-time Oklahoma resident who happened to be traveling to the Middle East on the day of the bombing, was detained at London's Heathrow Airport and then returned to Washington, DC. He reports suffering rough treatment, especially at the hands of British authorities. Despite the lack of any evidence, Ahmad was initially thought to be a suspect in the Federal Building bombing. Mr. Ahmad was placed under arrest and returned to Washington's Dulles International Airport accompanied by federal agents. He was kept overnight in Washington on April 20, even as government officials were releasing the sketches of two Caucasian males suspected of having rented the

truck used in the bombing. After his name was leaked to the press, people dumped trash on his lawn and spit on his wife.⁹

- In a lengthy affidavit, a sixty-three-year-old, handicapped (uses a quad-cane to walk) Muslim from Richardson, Texas, who is of Indian origin, writes that he was forced out of a public bus and roughed-up on May 23 by two policemen. In the late afternoon, the old man took the bus after he met with detectives of the National Crime Intelligence Bureau to report his suspicion of an arson crime. The policemen reportedly jumped into the bus, grabbed the old man's arm and ordered him to get off the bus. Unaware of the fact that he had surgical metal in his leg due to an injury, the policemen reportedly pressed so hard on his legs as they searched him that they caused him great pain. One policeman asked the man where he was born and whether he carried a U.S. passport. Following the man's filing a report with the Internal Affairs, he reportedly received a threatening phone call from the same policeman who abused him earlier. The policeman told the old Muslim man that he would be held responsible should his name come up again in an arson report.
- A Muslim in Norman, Oklahoma, reported being pulled over by police. The police officer asked the man, "Where are you from?" and "What religion are you?" When the man said he was Muslim, the officer "smirked" and wrote three tickets, two of them allegedly unfounded.
- A Muslim student reported that he suffered police harassment on May 21. Apparently, the student was driving from Massachusetts to Connecticut when he was stopped by a Massachusetts state trooper. The police officer asked him for his driver's license. The student handed him his international driver's license. The police officer looked at it and said: "What is that? Is that a Lebanese driver's license?" The officer threw the license on the student's chest and walked back to his car saying: "Get the f--- out of here. You mother-----." The student was so shocked that he did not catch the name of the officer or his number.

Bomb Threat

- A fake bomb was thrown into the playground of a Muslim day care in the Dallas, Texas, area. The person who threw the black bag reportedly shouted, "It's a bomb."
- The North Gate Idris Mosque in Seattle received two bomb threats by telephone.
- Two boys called the Islamic School of Seattle on the morning of April 20. One caller said: "Why are you bombing our buildings?" The other sounded very threatening when he yelled: "Why (did) you f----- bomb our building? How would you feel if your building was bombed?" The police were notified and they patrolled the area for some time.
- The Islamic Society of Central New York reported two bomb threats, one on April 19 and the other on April 20. The threats were recorded on the mosque's answering machine. The callers used obscenities in their calls and said: "You'll die."
- The Islamic Center in Spokane, Washington, reported three recorded bomb threats.

⁹For further details on the case of Abraham Ahmad see: *The New York Times*, April 24, 1995.

- The Council on Islamic Education, located in Fountain Valley, California, received the following call on April 19:
 Caller (on answering machine): "You better not come to work tomorrow, or we'll blow up your f----- building."
- One bomb threat was reported by the Islamic Center in San Francisco.
- The *Arab-American News* in Dearborn, Michigan, received two threatening calls on April 20 and April 21. Both callers identified themselves as members of a "white supremacist group." They promised retaliation for "what you [Arabs] did in Oklahoma."
- The Islamic Society of Tampa Bay Area in Florida reported four threats. These threats were comprised of nasty messages on answering machines at the Islamic Center of Tampa Bay and the Islamic Society of Pinellas County. Muslims were accused of being child killers. The messages also contained threats to bomb the centers.
- The director of the Mosque of Riverside, California reported that the mosque received three threatening calls. One caller, on April 20 at 1:00 P.M. claimed that he planted a bomb in the mosque. The other two came reportedly the following day at 8:20 a.m. and 8:35 a.m. from a caller who said: "I will kill all the children."
- The Islamic Cultural Center in Tempe, Arizona, reported that the organization received six threatening phone calls on April 19 and 20. The messages contained phrases such as: "Stop bombing Americans," and "Leave--Go home!" The messages also included insults to Muslim women and threats to bomb the center. The answering machine tape has been handed over to the local authorities.

Death Threat

- The president of the Islamic Foundation of Central Ohio reported receiving the following messages on the foundation's answering machine:
 Wednesday, 5:35 EST
 "All Muslim terrorist bastards will die, all Muslim terrorist bastards will die. You all die. You are already dead. You do not know it. You are going to die. You Islamic bastards, you sons of b---es, murderers, you will die."
 Wednesday, 5:37 EST
 "You murderers of innocent women and children. Your mosque will be burned to the ground. You will all die and burn in hell."
- The South Bay Islamic Association, located in San Jose, California, received four hate calls and death threats. One caller said, "We are sick and tired of your bombs and your religion. You'll die a horrible death. Get out of our country."
- The Muslim Community Association, located in Santa Clara, California, received five hate calls and death threats after the Oklahoma bombing.

- An active member of the Islamic Foundation of Lincoln, located in Lincoln, Nebraska, reported that the local mosque and Muslim community members received five to ten anonymous phone death threats during April 20 and 21. The local police were contacted regarding these threats and responded by increasing their patrols in the area.
- Officials of the Islamic Society of Orange County, California, said that their organization received six threats.
- The Islamic Society of Milwaukee, based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, received six threats to the Islamic Center and reported that seven other threats were made against Muslim individuals.
- A Muslim community leader in Tulsa, Oklahoma, reported that, during the evening of May 27, a Caucasian man who was obviously intoxicated, drove his car around the mosque and made threatening gestures. He burned some rubber and threw it toward the mosque. When six Muslim men from the mosque went to talk to him he said: "Haven't you got the message? We don't want you here! If you haven't gotten the message, then I probably should go bring my gun and shoot you." When the man left, leaders of the mosque reported the incident to the police who identified the man.

Intimidation

- The *Muslim Community News*, located in Silver Spring, Maryland, received four faxes from Muslim individuals who were harassed and feared for their safety.
- The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) reported that a Muslim in Oklahoma City was met with hostility in her attempt to donate blood for the bomb victims.
- A member of the Islamic Center in Lafayette, Louisiana, reported that he was harassed in his political science class by a fellow student.
- An American Muslim woman in Corvallis, Oregon, was yelled at while driving in her car with her children several days after the bombing. Several men in a pick-up truck yelled at her, "Go home you, you..." (She didn't hear the rest of what they said.)
- The Great News-Islamic Information Resource Center, located in San Francisco, California, received a threatening phone call on April 19 around 6:30 p.m. The man who called told the store owner that Muslims would not get away with the bombing, and that she (i.e., the store owner) will pay for it. The owner promptly closed the store.
- The Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) in Los Angeles, California documented the following harassing calls on April 19.
 - 1:20 p.m.
 - Caller: "Did you guys support the bombing in Oklahoma?"
 - MPAC: "Sir, we had nothing to do with it."
 - Caller: "Well, we'll see you real soon."

5:09 p.m.

Caller: "What are you Muslims up to now, my God what else will you do. You all should be run out of town."

6:03 p.m.

Caller: "If it's discovered that you people are any way responsible for Oklahoma you will pay massively swift, severe retribution. Wind is starting to blow. Sweet dreams, Arabs."

The following day, April 20, the language of the calls became even more unpleasant. Tape transcript reports read as follows:

8:27 a.m.

Caller: "You should be exterminated. You people are animals. That's all I have to say."

9:20 a.m.

Caller: "Vengeance is coming."

12:04 p.m.

Caller: "Don't get too comfortable."

- A Muslim talk-show host in Seattle, Washington, reported ten cases of Muslim women being harassed verbally. Two incidents involved his mother, wife, and sister. On April 20, in a shopping mall, passers-by said to these Muslim women, "Why don't you Iranians go home?" and "Kill Muslims." In a separate incident on the same day in a grocery store, the same Muslim women were shouted at by someone who said, "F----- Iranians, go home!"
- In an English class at George Mason University, an American Muslim woman from Herndon, Virginia, was the target of many remarks regarding "Islamic terrorists." She said:
"When I tried to tell the people involved that Islam and Muslims are against such acts, one man in particular kept fueling the conversation by saying such comments as: 'I know it was you guys.' When I tried to clarify that I, as a Muslim, should not be classified as 'those guys,' he responded: 'When you join a group, you take on the whole group and their actions.' He was extremely angry and had convicted me in his mind (guilt by association)."
- A Muslim from Oaklawn, Illinois, reported that a woman who worked with him asked him, with suspicion, if his people had done the bombing.
- An American Muslim doctor from McLean, Virginia, reported that on April 20th, a contractor working for him yelled: "Go back to your f----- country!" In his report, the doctor said: "After I asked him to leave, he reacted by trying to instigate a fist fight with me. He said: 'Come and hit me, come on, come on!' After that, I left the place."
- The Director of the Milwaukee Muslim Women's Coalition, located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, reported five acts of harassment against Muslims in the area. One act involved newspaper clippings of the Oklahoma City bombing accusing "Muslim terrorists" being mailed to a prominent Muslim doctor with obscenities marked across the articles. The clippings have been submitted to the police. Moreover, the organization reported four other acts of verbal assault against three Muslims.