



**Council on American-Islamic Relations**

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September 4, 2014

Ms. Kathy Calvin  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
United Nations Foundation  
1750 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 300  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
Fax: (202)887-9021

Dear Ms. Calvin:

I am writing to request that the United Nations Foundation withdraw its support for a screening of the anti-Muslim Clarion Project's film *Honor Diaries* scheduled for September 11, 2014 in Washington, D.C.

The enormous importance of eradicating violence against women from all societies is undermined by the agenda of the film's executive producers, anti-Islam activists Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Raphael Shore. Hirsi Ali has a reputation for anti-Muslim and anti-Constitution rhetoric. Shore is a key member of the Clarion Project team.

**Ayaan Hirsi Ali's anti-Muslim and anti-Constitution rhetoric**

During the course of a single 2007 interview with *Reason Magazine* Ali said, "I think that we are at war with Islam" and called for Islam to be "defeated." Later in the interview, Ali suggested that the U.S. Constitution should be amended to allow for discrimination against Muslims saying, "There were no Muslim schools when the constitution was written. There were no jihadists."<sup>1</sup>

Earlier this year, Brandeis University withdrew its invitation to Hirsi Ali to receive an honorary degree at commencement ceremonies. In its statement announcing the withdrawal of Ali's invitation, the university said: "We cannot overlook that certain of her past statements are inconsistent with Brandeis University's core values."

**Raphael Shore and the Clarion Project**

The Clarion Project (formerly the Clarion Fund) is a shadowy nonprofit group that produces and distributes anti-Muslim propaganda films such as *Obsession: Radical Islam's War Against the West* and *The Third Jihad: Radical Islam's Vision for America*.

The Clarion Project first garnered significant attention in 2008 when it was accused of attempting to influence the presidential election by distributing millions of copies of *Obsession* to voters in battleground states.

Jeff VanDenBerg, director of Middle East studies at Drury University, called *Obsession* "a blatant piece of anti-Muslim propaganda." Dr. Khaleel Mohammed, a Muslim interviewee for *Obsession*, now calls the

production a "vile piece of propaganda." The Endowment for Middle East Truth (EMET), a pro-Israel think tank, also pulled its support of the project.

The *Third Jihad* made headlines in 2011 after revelations that it was used in officer training by the New York Police Department. Following these revelations, Police Commissioner Ray Kelly called the film "wacky" and "objectionable." Deputy Commissioner Paul Brown said, "[*The Third Jihad*] was reviewed and found to be inappropriate."<sup>ii</sup>

### **Anti-Muslim bias from other Clarion Project leaders**

The Clarion Project's advisory board includes a number of notable members of the U.S. Islamophobia network, including Frank Gaffney, Daniel Pipes, Zuhdi Jasser and Clare Lopez.

Gaffney has advocated renewing the House Un-American Activities Committee, a discredited McCarthy-era congressional committee that President Truman once described as "the most un-American thing in the country today." In an interview with the *Washington Times* dealing with alleged Muslim infiltration of the U.S. government, Gaffney said "What is needed is a new select committee modeled after the much-vilified, but ultimately vindicated, House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC)."

In 1990, Pipes asserted: "Western European societies are unprepared for the massive immigration of brown-skinned peoples cooking strange foods and maintaining different standards of hygiene...All immigrants bring exotic customs and attitudes, but Muslim customs are more troublesome than most." In 2004, Pipes said he supported the widely-repudiated internment of Japanese-Americans. He wrote: "Yes, I do support the internment of Japanese Americans in World War II."

Jasser's American Islamic Forum for Democracy "applauded" a 2010 amendment to Oklahoma's state Constitution that would have implemented state-sponsored discrimination against Islam. By contrast, a federal court struck the law down because it violated the First Amendment.

In 2013, Lopez told an audience, "When people in other bona fide religions follow their doctrines they become better people — Buddhists, Hindus, Christians, Jews. When Muslims follow their doctrine, they become jihadists."<sup>iii</sup>

Given this significant record of anti-Islam activity, it is unfortunate but reasonable to conclude that *Honor Diaries* is intended to further the Clarion Project's efforts to spread fear and hatred of Islam. I hope you will reconsider your group's endorsement of any screening of this film and any future cooperation with the Clarion Project. While the Clarion Project has the constitutional right to promote hate speech and films, it is vital that they are not given legitimizing partnerships such as the United Nations Foundation's good name offers.

Sincerely,

Corey P. Saylor  
Director  
Department to Monitor and Combat Islamophobia

CC: Aaron Sherinian

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<sup>i</sup> Rogier van Bakel. "The trouble is the West," Reason, November 2007, <http://reason.com/archives/2007/10/10/the-trouble-is-the-west/4>

<sup>ii</sup> Tom Robbins, "NYPD Cops' Training Included an Anti-Muslim Horror Flick," *Village Voice*, January 19, 2011, <http://www.villagevoice.com/2011-01-19/columns/nypd-cops-training-included-an-anti-muslim-horror-flick/>.

<sup>iii</sup> Debra Rubin, "AJC guest sees little moderation in Islam," New Jersey Jewish News, May 7, 2013, <http://njewishnews.com/article/17339/ajc-guest-sees-little-moderation-in-islam#.U5nWUvldWAU>.