



BLACK AMERICA, PRISONS AND RADICAL ISLAM

A REPORT

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individuals incarcerated in the federal, state, municipal, and local
correctional systems in the U.S.*

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PREFATORY NOTES

Black America, Prisons and Radical Islam is a scholarly work of great merit by the Center for Islamic Pluralism (CIP), highlighting a national security need which deserves urgent attention.

The disproportional number of African American young, discontented, and often repeated offenders in the U.S. correctional system provides a captive audience for the Wahhabi ideology of radical Islam, with its alleged universal appeal and sense of brotherhood. While this problem may be recognized by the concerned authorities, finding a solution in a bureaucratic and increasingly politically-correct environment, with commitment of limited government resources, may appear daunting.

The problem of Islam in prisons requires a complex and honest discussion of the subject. It is bound to be controversial because of the real and perceived social inequities and injustices experienced by the large African American population subjected to slavery in the U.S. However, as highlighted in this CIP report, it is imperative for the federal and other correctional authorities to be fully educated about this critical issue.

The report makes several valid points in identifying the challenges of radical Islam in prisons. First is the need for understanding Islamic concepts and terminology. Second and more important is a more thorough screening during recruitment of religious service providers for Muslim inmates, to prevent prisoners falling prey to radical Islamic indoctrination. Because of the complexity of the issue, coupled with the scant resources within the correctional system, it is only prudent that this process should engage the expertise of individual Muslims and organizations with a record of denouncing radical Islamist teachings and analyzing sentiments of social disaffection.

The suggestion to scrutinize the foreign funding and travel of potential volunteers as religious service providers also has merit but would invariably require assistance from Muslim personnel with expertise overseas, who can recognize the geographical centers of radicalism. Many places offering jihadist teachings (*medresas*) are located in countries allegedly friendly to the U.S., such as Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

While the role of the Joint Intelligence Coordinating Council (JICC) has been correctly highlighted for implementation of official recommendations, it would be preferable, if found to be constitutionally permissible, for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to monitor for substantial periods applicants for Muslim chaplaincies and other Muslim religious service providers as part of their initial screening.

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This Report was prepared by Center for Islamic Pluralism Fellow **Imaad Malik** in cooperation with CIP staff. Brother Malik was born in 1965 in Michigan and resided in Canada from 1982 to 1998. He received his Bachelor's degree in Social Science from the University of Western Ontario in 1998. He then returned to the U.S. where he now lives.

ENDORSEMENT

Brooklyn, New York

September 11, 2008

11 Ramadan 1429

BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF ISLAM:

THE AHLUL BAYT MOSQUE, INC., (formerly the “Brooklyn Mosque”), an American Muslim Community of all nationalities comprised mostly of African-American, West Indian and Hispanic American believers (located in downtown Brooklyn), has long supported —and been supported by — the Center for Islamic Pluralism (CIP) in its struggle against the monopoly over prison Islamic chaplaincies held by the Wahhabi movement in the U.S.

We fully endorse the documentation and analysis included in the new CIP report, *Black America, Prisons, and Radical Islam*, as reflecting the unfortunate reality faced by incarcerated Muslims in confronting the Wahhabi domination over Islamic religious life behind bars in the U.S.

Shia inmates continue suffering undue harassment in their struggle to practice Islam according to the teachings of the Ahlul Bayt. Prison chapel libraries include few works of Shia devotion or theology.

Your distribution of and support for the present report will greatly facilitate the struggle to secure the religious rights of all Muslims in U.S. correctional institutions.

Thank you very much for your support and may Allah (SWT) reward you for your efforts.

Shaykh Kadhim Mohamad

Islamic Scholar and Imam of the Ahlul Bayt Mosque, Inc.

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A Garveyite family, Harlem, 1920s

Black America, Prisons and Radical Islam

1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents a commentary and contextual framework for understanding a major challenge to the security of the U.S. and other Western societies in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001: the disclosure that Muslim chaplaincies in U.S. prisons function under monopoly control by representatives of Wahhabism. The Wahhabi interpretation of Islam is the official religion in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which has used its considerable oil revenues to diffuse Wahhabi attitudes, justifying violence, separatism, and hostility to Western society, throughout the worldwide Muslim community. Along with radical Shia Islamist ideology emanating from Iran, Wahhabism is a major inspiration for global terrorist activity.

The achievement of Wahhabi control over American prison chaplaincies is inseparable in history from the rise and fall of the so-called “Nation of Islam” (NOI) or “Black Muslims,” a black separatist movement, and similar developments that preceded and followed NOI. Agitation for black separation from the majority of American society became transmuted by a sense that Islam, as a religion foreign to America and powerful in Africa, would provide cultural, spiritual, and world-spanning legitimacy for a concept that was previously shocking to enlightened black and white America alike: the maintenance of segregation between the two leading American racial communities.

Wahhabism preaches division between Muslims and non-Muslims in a manner

similar to how the NOI promoted a permanent split between blacks and whites, and for that reason if no other, the transition of many blacks, including those in prisons, from the NOI to Wahhabi Islam, has been easy. But for correctional inmates, the reinforcement of alienation between blacks and whites, as well as between Muslims of differing religious views, represents a serious danger to the security of correctional institutions, as well as for society as a whole. Prisoners indoctrinated in Wahhabism may be encouraged to resume criminal activity after leaving custody, and, worse, will be obvious targets for terrorist recruitment.

Because of the functional relations between prison life, separatist beliefs, and Wahhabism among blacks, our report begins, in this Introduction, with a discussion of the present situation of cultural and social dislocation in American black society. The moral crisis facing black Americans contributes directly to the high rate of incarceration of young blacks.

The report then proceeds, in section 2, to a survey of separatist ideology in black American history, beginning with the most notable early example — the Marcus Garvey movement — and proceeding to discussion of “Islamized” forms of separatism, including the so-called Moorish Science Temple and NOI, as well as gang-style phenomena such as the “Five Percenters” and “Prison Islam.” The same section also takes up the influence of dissident and normative forms of Islam including the Ahmadi and Wahhabi sects. Section 2 identifies and analyzes the activities of leading radical Islamist personalities in

black American life today, including Warith Deen Umar, former chief Muslim chaplain in the New York Department of Correctional Services (NYDOCS), Imam Siraj Wahhaj, Mahdi Bray, and Imam Jamil Al-Amin. The report recounts the emergence of protest against the role of the Wahhabi chaplains, originating among Shia Muslims, and the recent status of a legal case against the Wahhabi prison clerics. In this controversy, Warith Deen Umar played a prominent role, and the report further examines the activities of W. D. Umar and others he recruited to work in prisons, as extremist figures.

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has carried out a limited series of actions regarding the problem of Wahhabism in prisons, including a general study of religious conversions behind bars. A summary of that paper concludes section 2.

DOJ's most significant response to the problem of radical Islam in prisons came in 2004 when the department's Office of the Inspector General (OIGDOJ) released *A Review of the Federal Bureau of Prisons' Selection of Muslim Religious Services Providers*, including a series of ameliorative recommendations. In section 3, the report analyzes the *Review* and responses to it by the DOJ Bureau of Prisons (DOJ-BOP), along with reply comments by the OIGDOJ. We consider the OIGDOJ *Review* the sole meaningful action by the U.S. government in this area, and it is therefore the central focus of our report.

In 2008, the only publicly-disclosed fulfillment of the OIGDOJ *Review's* recommendations came about when the DOJ-BOP released an inventory of prison chapel holdings in Islamic religious literature. Section 4 of our report embodies our preliminary analysis of the inventory. Section 5 introduces recent observations about radical Islam in British prisons. CIP offers its conclusion and recommendations in section 6.

1.1 The Ravages of Moral Decay and Endemic Pathologies in African American Society

The African American community presently suffers the ravages of moral and social decay. Many of the maladies devastating the black community can be attributed to the collapse of the nuclear family and its substitution by dependence on government programs.

Driven by the disintegration of families, pathologies eroding life in the black community include a steep adolescent birth rate, high infant mortality, gang violence, black-on-black crime, and the degeneration of educational values.

A vacuum appeared during the last half of the 20th century, quickly filled by moral relativism, hedonism and materialism. This crisis has left black America in a malaise of despair, anxiety, frustration, envy and, above all, increasing poverty.

The productive life-style necessary for the success of the black community has been definitively eroded. Pathologies are becoming established as mores. Government entitlements and subsidy programs have created new forms of poverty.

The African American community, during most of the 20th century, has been victimized by social engineering; government assistance is a new form of slavery.

By all economic, social, and cultural measurements, as urban crime increases, the African American community is in serious trouble. Chicago, Detroit, Baltimore, Washington, DC, and other metropolitan areas with large black American communities have become enclaves of extreme violence. For some thirty years, Detroit and Washington competed for the ignoble title of "homicide capital" of the United States. More recently, Baltimore has claimed this "honor."

The erosion of marriage, the family, and the support networks associated with them has fatally undermined black American society.

1.2 The Destruction of the Black Family

Black and other poor Americans are caught in a trap of dependency on a governmental system that perpetuates inequities. Welfare has obliterated the black work ethic, subverting education and increasing the poverty gap among blacks. Millions have spent their entire lives as recipients of government payments. Few are now prepared for daily-life struggles. Health insurance and quality health care are unaffordable or inaccessible to large sections of the black community. Local clinics and hospital emergency rooms are overcrowded and underfunded.

Black leaders argue that a systemic problem must be resolved through further expansion of entitlements. Initiative and enterprise from below are absent. Community organizers administer grants and other handouts rather than creating strong community-based institutions. Internal drives and ambition have diminished, and, with them, achievement in test scores as well as academic performance.

The decline of the family is an unarguable feature of contemporary American society. Divorce, once an object of stigma, has become the norm, enabled by welfare entitlements. Marriage, once viewed as a life-long, sacred commitment, has been reduced to an inconvenience in the daily pursuit of material possessions. American children today rarely live in a stable, two-parent home. Whatever the outcome for the broader society, the negative effects of this phenomenon in the black community are overwhelming.

Fatherless homes have become typical among African Americans. The role of father is essential to the health and well being of any society, but fathers are unseen and unheard in African American communities. Black fathers are presumed either incarcerated or dead due to the violence that has overwhelmed the community.

Unwanted adolescent pregnancy has also become a pathological norm. No longer is shame or guilt associated with adolescent childbearing. It is now viewed as ordinary, while waiting for marriage is treated as an antiquated tradition. Sexual promiscuity among teenage boys and girls is not only celebrated but promoted in the popular culture.

The revolution in morality during the late 1960s introduced novel standards regarding sexuality and reproduction. Religion and the family were abandoned and promiscuity flourished. Sex with multiple partners and co-habitation prior to marriage were fully accepted.

These attitudes about sex were, indeed, radically new. The ready availability of birth control was accompanied by a leap in the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases.

Today it is estimated that 70 percent black female adolescents become pregnant before marriage. Meanwhile, so-called community leaders place the blame on lack of financing for contraception.

African Americans are disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS. Although African Americans made up 13 percent of the U.S. population they accounted for 50 percent of new HIV infections and 40 percent of new AIDS cases reported in 2001. [1]

With promiscuity glorified in black society, 53 percent, or more than half of African American families are headed by a single parent, and 45 percent of such families are headed by women. [2]

1.3 Corruption of Education and Culture

Corruption of education and culture accompanies the destruction of the nuclear family.

Traditionally, education was viewed as a means to lift one's self up and improve the

condition of the community. Generations of black Americans encouraged and inspired their children to attain a good education, not only to obtain well-paid jobs but to gain knowledge and build a legacy for the future.

Education has collapsed with the family, as the end of a two-parent upbringing reinforces illiteracy. Public and even private schools have become institutions with no resistance to sociopathic behavior. Authority has disappeared from public schools and violence by children against teachers is now common.

Graduation from high school has declined among the majority of black American children. While Chicago has reported a 55.7 percent graduation rate, Baltimore has the worst performance with a rate of 34.6 percent. [3] Illiteracy and moral decline are also parallel phenomena. Academic standards have been “dumbed down” to accommodate failure. Black children now receive black racial indoctrination at the expense of English, mathematics and the sciences.

Even those who graduate from high school often can barely read, while many cannot. Reading comprehension, creative thinking, and writing are far below the needs of a globalizing world. While today’s children may possess computer skills, their proficiency in the latest entertainment-driven technological products appears along with poor knowledge of language and disastrous reading habits.

Illiteracy has made writing skill irrelevant. Production of literary works that cultivate the mind and spirit is absent from black America. Literature is replaced by pornographic output that requires minimal literacy.

Mass illiteracy aggravates the high dropout rate among African American high school students. Even the urban black youth

in America who graduate from a post-secondary institution lack adequate intellectual development, and have no knowledge with which to develop insight and reason. Their assumptions and views of the world go unchallenged and they do not know how to argue or defend ideas. They have been indoctrinated in extremist — typically leftist or anti-American — ideologies and nothing more.

Colleges and universities across America have created racially-designed departments and courses. Upon enrollment in a post-secondary institution, black students will gravitate toward courses and disciplines that support racial ideologies. Black nationalism and Afrocentrism will be all they know.

High school graduation of illiterates (“social promotion”) deprives black youth of the capacity to compete in a free market economy, making mass unemployment and underemployment structural and leaving blacks more disfranchised than in the past. Urban blacks do not consistently rise into the middle class

1.4 Demagogy and Ideological Zealotry

With all the chaos that has descended upon the black community since its decline began in the aftermath of the 1960s, a professional class of demagogues has emerged: a multilayered caste system of race-baiters who exploit the misery and alienation of the community. The old black intelligentsia, who challenged community corruption, has disappeared, as demagogy has become malignant in national black organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The government-backed black power structure frames all political issues and agendas.

The vast majority of African Americans subscribe to a mild form of black nationalism.

As a result there is a shared collective morality within the community. Black nationalism has transformed itself from an organic movement into a multi-billion dollar industry. It simply dominates all spheres of African American life. In contemporary America, black nationalism is the prism through which history, present and future are viewed. This is true in every sphere in life, such as society, culture, politics, economics, foreign relations and foreign policy and of course domestic policy.

Dissent is not allowed. This prevents the community from cultivating a range of dynamic, vibrant scholars, activists who could bring bold ideas and a new vision to the fore, charting a productive course for blacks in the globalizing world. Those who challenge the black power structure are maligned, ridiculed and ostracized.

Distinguished public servants like U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas are never allowed a voice that would promote an alternative perspective in black society, because they do not uphold political demagoguery.

Politicians at the state, municipal and federal levels of government use crime, poverty and related issues to increase budgets and seek re-election. Churches and nonprofit organizations pose as agents of change in the black community, but exploit their parishioners and members by manipulating their fears and ignorance of the issues that drive the community.

As outstanding demagogues one need look no further than to national leaders such as Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton, and the Congressional Black Congress (CBC). All use racial politics for their own political power and financial gain — black politics has become a clinic for professionals learning to prey on their own community, perpetuating anti-Americanism, class hatred and racial resentment.

1.5 Promotion of Violence

The promotion of violence and gang crime has become accepted. Black popular culture has degenerated into the celebration of brutality and misogyny among young black males. The culture also promotes negative images of young black females. The success of Black Entertainment Television (BET), since 1980, is a leading example of how popular culture defines black identity and then exploits pathologies in black America.

Headed by Robert Johnson, BET has spent 30 years targeting the black consumer market. Although accused of “Blaxploitation,” Johnson claimed that major advertisers would pay for time on BET because black Americans watch more television than white Americans.

Criminal violence, however, quickly became the BET brand. Demented brutality characterizes rap videos, CDs, DVDs, magazines and video games. Periodicals like *Jet* and *Ebony* acclaim celebrities accused of lawbreaking, including drug sale, and such results of gang behavior as murder or manslaughter leading to prison convictions.

On the covers of successful new magazines such as *Vibe*, America sees the idols of young blacks — gangster rappers who have served prison time, or who have been killed. Contemporary black society has embraced a culture of death.

Black Americans spend an excessive share of their income on entertainment. This economic drain brings about further impoverishment. The incarceration rate of young black males in jails and prisons has risen as entertainment glorifies violence and prison culture. Crime, illiteracy and the collapse of the family have increased the difficulties for blacks entering the American mainstream, accelerating the spiral of descent for black society.

Paradoxically, black Americans enjoy a vastly improved social status compared with the past. Blacks work as top business executives, are elected to high office, serve

with distinction in the armed forces, and excel in many other fields of endeavor. Yet while blacks have gained an acceptance in America symbolized by the Democratic presidential candidacy of Barack Obama, upward mobility has reinforced, rather than diminishing social pathologies. As blacks rise in society, pride turns to heedlessness, and criminality becomes a symbol of achievement. Black America seems to have lost its moral compass, and to be headed for annihilation.

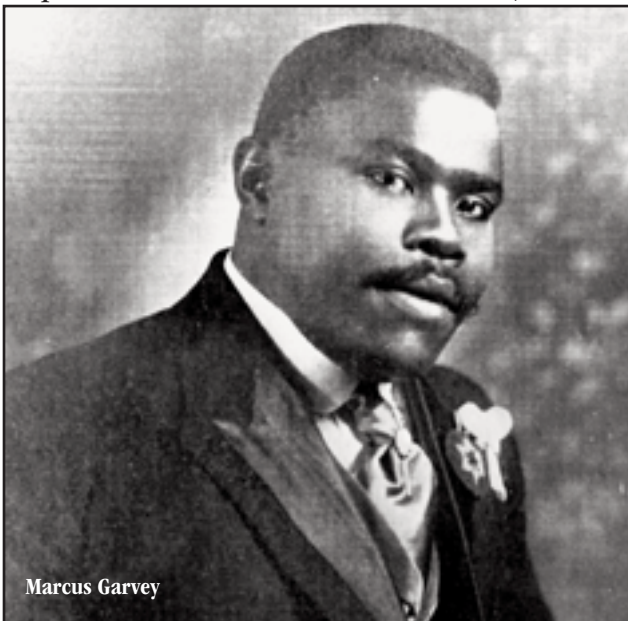
2. BLACK SEPARATISM, PSEUDO-ISLAM AND ISLAM, AND AFRICAN AMERICANS IN PRISON

2.1 Marcus Garvey

Beginning in the 20th century, the dilemmas facing black Americans found expression in a separatist impulse, eventually leading to the ascent of Wahhabism in black American Islam, and the dominance of Wahhabi prison chaplains in prisons, i.e. among a significant share of blacks.

The separatist trend began with Marcus Garvey (1887-1940), a Jamaican by birth. Garvey was the first black leader in the Western Hemisphere to proclaim an ideal of separatism.

He created the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), which



Marcus Garvey

presented a vision of return to Africa through establishment of independent economic enterprises, including a shipping company, the Black Star Line, and, in general, expressed hostility to Western society and idealization of Africa, or pan-Africanism. After establishing his organization in the Caribbean, Garvey immigrated to the United States and focused his agitation in Harlem.

Garveyism, as it is known, was also more generally called the “Back to Africa Movement.” It allegedly recruited millions of members, and influenced numerous African American radicals. Black American Communists debated whether to support Garveyite radicalism or to oppose the Garvey movement as rivals for black support. In his native Jamaica, Garveyism became an element in the emergence of nationalist syncretism in the Rastafari movement, which constructed a spiritual system that exalted the then-ruler of Ethiopia, emperor Haile Selassie, an Orthodox Christian.

Garveyism declined in the U.S. after the founder’s conviction for mail fraud in the promotion of the Black Star shipping line. (It should be noted that U.S. mail regulations were frequently employed in the first half of the 20th century as a means of suppressing non-conforming opinion.) More significantly, however, Garveyism had little to do with the realities of black daily life, and could not respond to the challenges of integrationism or socialist radicalism. Garvey



Marcus Garvey (center) in a plumed hat, and officers review a UNIA parade, Harlem, 1920s

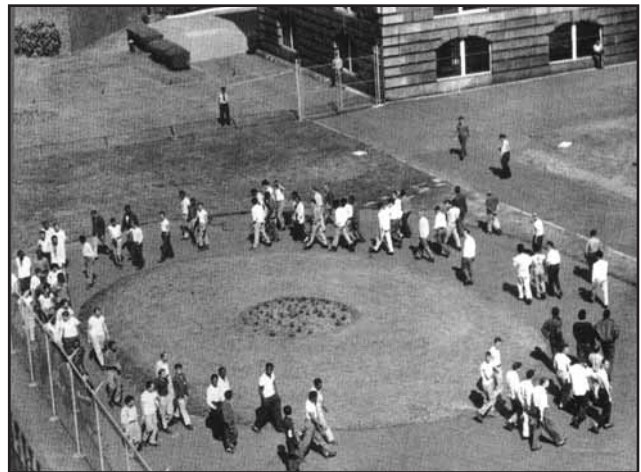
was strongly opposed by W.E.B. DuBois, a leading black intellectual and prominent figure in the NAACP. DuBois also criticized the gradualist integrationism of Booker T. Washington, by calling for political efforts to effect equality. DuBois himself, who lived past 100 and left America for Ghana, became aligned in the late 1940s with pro-Soviet Communism, after years of opposing it as fiercely as he had the Garvey movement.

Garveyite separatism was resuscitated in America by the pseudo-Islamic Nation of Islam (NOI) or “Black Muslims.” But the NOI transformed black separatism by merging it with Islamic vocabulary, although NOI black supremacism is hostile to the universalist religious tradition of Islam.

2.2 Islamist Ideologies, Pseudo-Islam, and Prisons

Currently, blacks are targets for Islamist, and especially Saudi-and Pakistani-inspired Wahhabi and jihadi indoctrination and recruitment to radical ideology. African American correctional inmates are particular targets for exploitation by Islamists because of their pre-existing hostility to America and its justice system. Religion can provide a stabilizing effect and help inmates adjust to the confined and harsh existence of prison life. African American inmates seek religious participation for various legitimate and non-legitimate spiritual and practical needs. But Islam is a faith practiced in a vacuum by prison inmates who have committed heinous crimes, such as rape, murder, assault and armed robbery and who are often the least educated among Americans.

This problem has two aspects: one is the prison outreach practiced by such ultraradical groups as the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA), a front for paramilitary Pakistani jihadis. ICNA requires new members to visit prisoners and spread the organization’s extremist



propaganda. The other element of the picture comprises the officially-sanctioned activities of Wahhabi chaplains in the U.S. and other Western prison systems.

Islamist radical recruiters and extremist Wahhabi clerics use their demagoguery to attract the disfranchised, disgruntled and others who may feel marginalized. Large numbers of blacks in America would fit the criteria for seduction by Wahhabis and other Islamists.

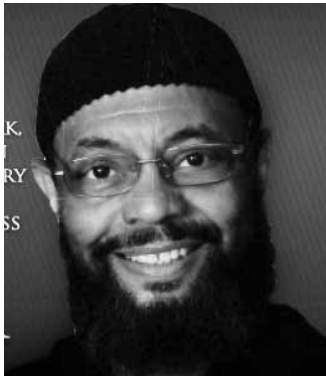
In 20th century America Islamic symbols and terminology became strongly associated with radicalizing elements in the black community. This was especially true for the permanent underclass. The 1960s and the growth of the black power movement saw many black radicals join the NOI, a nationalist and racist phenomenon with no authentic Islamic content. Many such individuals had already displayed an appetite for crime and social disorder, both of which are condemned in traditional Islam.

Eventually, following the example of Malcolm X, who publicly abandoned NOI racism after making the *hajj* pilgrimage to Mecca, some NOI adherents moved away from the bizarre, cult activities they had pursued to accept Sunni Islam. But the association of Malcolm X and others with radical leftism and Third Worldism, along

with links to gangs (e.g. the former Blackstone Rangers in Chicago), made the faith of Islam appear synonymous with a revolutionary, oppositional criticism of America. Islamists encouraged black Americans to abandon their historical association with Christianity and to embrace Islamic culture as an “official” identity.

Black Americans began alleging that Islam had been the faith of their slave ancestors, a claim for which there is little serious evidence, since slaves were typically captured in the animist regions of West Africa. This is demonstrated by the durability of West African polytheist traditions in Haiti, Cuba, elsewhere in the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico, and Brazil, and the absence of significant Islamic religious remnants anywhere among blacks in the Western Hemisphere. Islam was brought to the Caribbean and South America by Indian and Malay immigrants to British and Dutch colonial possessions. Nevertheless, for several generations, numerous blacks in America have been drawn to Muslim or pseudo-Islamic conceptions of social redemption.

A personality who today, long after the death of Malcolm X, notably embodies the transition of black separatism to Islamist radicalism, including a key role in the problem of Wahhabi prison chaplaincies, is Warith Deen Umar, born Wallace Gene Marks, and, as noted, past chief Muslim chaplain in the New York State Department of Correctional Services (NYDOCS). Umar, who was instrumental in recruiting radical prison



Warith Deen Umar

chaplains and imposing an extremist outlook on Muslims behind bars, was appointed a New York State prison chaplain in 1975.

Umar publicly declared his

support for the hijackers who attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. Umar stated, “those who say they are against terrorism secretly admire and applaud them.” Umar also identified African Americans as natural candidates for terrorist recruitment. According to Umar, the *Qur’an*, Islam’s sacred text, does not forbid terrorism even against the innocent. “This is the sort of teaching they don’t want in prison,” he said. “But this is what I’m doing.” Umar was discharged from duties with the federal BOP and banned from entering New York State prisons.

2.3 Influence of Ahmadiyya

Beginning in the 1920s some American blacks joined the Ahmadiyya movement in Islam. *Ahmadiyyat* is controversial among Muslims because of its belief that Mirza Ghulam Ahmed (1835-1908) appeared as a *mahdi* or Islamic messiah in India. Official sanctions against Ahmadis in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere have led to gross abuses of human rights. During the 1950s a number of distinguished and widely influential American jazz performers, including Ahmad Jamal, Yusef Lateef, Art Blakey, and McCoy Tyner, were affiliated with Ahmadiyya. [4]

Other conceptions are embodied today in three major black nationalist organizations. In order of their historic emergence, these are the Moorish Science Temple of America (MSTA), the NOI, which became the most prominent, and the more eccentric Five Percenters, which split from NOI.

2.4 Moorish Science Temple

These three groups embody pseudo-Islamic nationalism in the black community today: The Moorish Science Temple of America (MSTA) was founded in 1913 by Timothy Drew, a former member of the black wing of the Shriners, a Masonic order. Drew styled

himself Noble Drew Ali and a prophet. MSTA argued that American blacks are descended from “Moors,” a term for Moroccans that is no longer used in standard literature. The essential premise of MSTA is to “Uplift fallen humanity by learning to love instead of hate;” and to free blacks from ignorance and oppression. Membership in MSTA is exclusively black and it does not admit members not of African descent; it further anticipates the extinction of whites.

Like the Shriners, the MSTA required its members to adopt Arabic names and crescent-star symbolism, to wear a red fez and to add the titles “El” or “Bey” to their names. But a white member of the “Ancient Arabic Order, Nobles of the Mystic Shrine” and wearing a fez has not become Muslim; nor did Moorish Science or its successors ever participate in the worldwide community of Islamic believers. Indeed, the Masonic origin of black pseudo-Islam in America contrasts strongly with conspiratorialist hatred of Freemasons found in many Muslim countries, and most often traced to the role of Turkish Masonic lodges in the fall of the Ottoman caliphate. A prominent (white) American Mason, when hearing that the NOI was not Islamic, but derived from Masonry, commented, “they may not be good Muslims, but they aren’t good Masons, either.”

Organizations like the MSTA, NOI, and the Five Percenters are radical black nationalist entities inciting racial hatred and anti-American attitudes while using Islam or Islamic-appearing customs, tenets or texts as a source of legitimacy. Such habits are grounded in the image of Africa as an Islamic continent, even though persistent elements in African culture are Christian — most notably in Ethiopia, a country that as a Christian kingdom had an important role in early Islam — or polytheistic. MSTA refers to Noble Drew Ali as a “Moorish American,” a meaningless term. Yet this trope was reinforced in NOI and the Five Percenters.

2.5 Nation of Islam

Founded by Wallace Ford, who renamed himself Wallace D. Fard, and was later referred to as W. Fard Muhammad, NOI originated in a faction of the MSTA, after the death of Noble Drew Ali in 1929. Ford’s background is obscure and is still debated. According to the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, Ford was born in New Zealand and was incarcerated in California in the 1920s, before moving to Detroit, where he set up the predecessor of NOI in 1930. [5]

Ford began to attract the attention of poor blacks. He disappeared in 1934 and his lieutenant Elijah Poole, a native of Sandersville, Georgia, took over leadership of the organization. Elijah Poole renamed himself Elijah Muhammad; his biography is much less contested than that of Wallace Ford. [6] Poole transformed NOI and elevated it to national standing. He polished the black separatist message, and appeared to incorporate more Islamic concepts into NOI



Elijah Muhammad and his son, the former Wallace D. Muhammad, in front of a portrait of Wallace Ford, founder of the Nation of Islam



Elijah Muhammad, probably around the time of his wartime incarceration in the 1940s

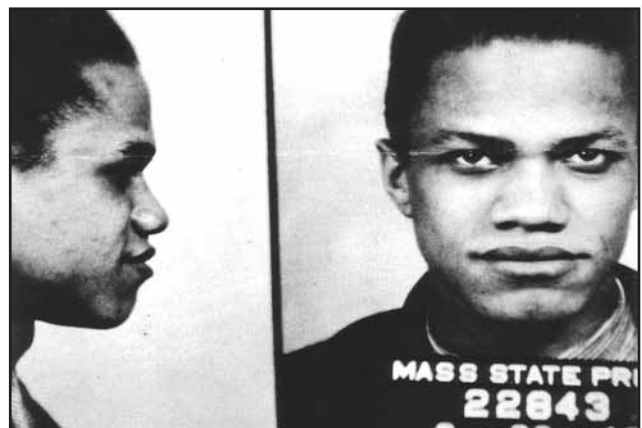
praxis, although the faith of Islam has never had an explicitly racial message — notwithstanding Wahhabi Arabocentrism and emphasis on religious, rather than racial, separatism. In addition, the NOI claim that Wallace Ford was an incarnation of Allah is even more unacceptable to normative Muslims than the Ahmadi belief that the Islamic *mahdi* appeared in India in the 19th century.

In 1942, Elijah Muhammad was incarcerated for draft refusal, with a federal penitentiary term of four years. For some time previous, seditious movements among American blacks had been subsidized by the Japanese government, which employed rhetoric claiming that Japan was a “colored” empire fighting against white imperialism. Other adherents of NOI were similarly imprisoned for opposing U.S. authority during the war. During this period NOI commenced its prison missionization program. [7]

NOI today enjoys a reputation for combating drug use, alcoholism, and the decay of the family in the black community.

NOI preaches self-reliance and black empowerment through work and economic independence, but the content of its message has always been separatist and counterposed to the long-standing advocacy of black leaders for racial integration. NOI separatism is based in a demand for an independent black country, based on a division of the United States, although the location and territory of such a state has never been specified. In the aftermath of the second world war, the NOI recruited Malcolm Little, who chose the name Malcolm X. Like Elijah Poole, Little was a former convict, although he had been incarcerated for criminal activities rather than a political offense. [8]

Malcolm X, a profoundly charismatic personality, became the most loyal acolyte of Elijah Muhammad, and a prominent figure in American life, thanks to his dramatic oratory. With the emergence of Malcolm X, NOI, widely known as “the Black Muslims,” began to increase its membership. Suddenly, NOI challenged the old-line civil rights groups like NAACP for leadership of the black community. It even appeared as an alternative to the newer organizations active in the Southern civil rights movement, such as the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), which was instrumental in organizing the integrated “Freedom Ride” protests against segregation in interstate transportation throughout the American South. Malcolm X and NOI openly repudiated the struggle of the Freedom



Mugshot of Malcolm Little, 1946

Riders and Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., for integration and American principles of equality and fairness.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the focal period of the NOI's expansion, the established civil rights leaders neglected the situation of incarcerated blacks, and NOI filled the gap. Malcolm X himself became the ideal of the prisoner recruited to black nationalism through NOI. Many blacks have gravitated to Sunni Islam after an experience with the NOI, including convicts. Warith Deen Umar, the fired head chaplain in the New York correctional system, was known in the NOI as Wallace 10X. [9]

2.6 The Five Percenters/Nation of Gods and Earths

As NOI was a splinter from MSTA, the Five Percenters began as a faction that split from NOI. Founded in 1964 by NOI member Clarence J. Smith, known as Clarence 13X, a follower of Malcolm X, Clarence 13X rejected the idea that Wallace Ford was an incarnation of God, but designated himself and his followers as Gods. Clarence 13X was murdered in 1969, in a case still unsolved. [10]

While distant from mainstream Islam, such beliefs are reminiscent of theosophical teachings in certain Shia Muslim sects, such as Ismailiyya, the Syrian Alawites, and related communities. The Five Percenters have further developed a system of esoteric numbers and letters known as “supreme mathematics” and the “supreme alphabet.” The term “Five Percenters” derives from their belief that five percent of the black population are enlightened beings, 10 percent are knowledgeable and insightful but unjust exploiters, and 85 percent make up the unschooled mass.

The Five Percent message is popular among rap musicians as well as in the convict population. Their association with rap music

as well as convicts has led many to view them as merely a gang.

2.7 “Prison Islam”

Within American correctional systems, another phenomenon has emerged, known as “prison Islam.” “Prison Islam” is neither a manifestation of the faith of Islam nor a black nationalist movement comparable to Moorish Science, the NOI, or the Five Percenters. “Prison Islam” is, rather, an amorphous presence in convict populations, through which individuals may adopt Muslim names or idioms while dealing drugs, exploiting other prisoners sexually, and otherwise engaging in the typical activities of prison gangs. “Prison Islam” opportunistically draws on the broader black idiom of nationalism, separatism, supremacy, and “black liberation theology.”

2.8 Wahhabi Prison Chaplaincies

While black nationalist movements may be disruptive of public order and the administration of correctional systems, a greater threat to American national security is represented by the domination over African American Muslim inmates, who adhere to mainstream Sunni, Shia, and Sufi Islam, by Wahhabi chaplains employed by the official correctional authorities.

Malcolm X was the first major figure in black American life to embrace Sunni Islam, and to renounce the racist separatism of the NOI. Malcolm X was murdered in 1965. In the aftermath of this event, NOI underwent a long crisis. A son of Elijah Muhammad, the late Wallace D. Muhammad, inherited the leadership of NOI after the death of Elijah Muhammad in 1975. But with internal discontent undermining the appeal of NOI, Wallace D. Muhammad was inspired by the experience of Malcolm X and led other disillusioned ex-NOI adherents to form a new

entity following Sunni Islam. Wallace Muhammad changed his name to Warith Deen Mohammed and his group also underwent various name changes; it was last known as “The Mosque Cares.” [11] Notably, Warith Deen Mohammed continued to employ idioms absent from normative Islam, such as celebration of “Savior’s Day,” the birthday of Wallace Ford on February 25. The global Islamic community or *ummah* nowhere employs the term “savior” to refer to any Islamic or pre-Islamic theological figure. As we will see, many other individuals moved from the NOI subculture to Sunni Islam, including the ultrafundamentalist Wahhabi sect.

2.9 Imam Siraj Wahhaj

Imam Siraj Wahhaj is a central figure in Wahhabi Islam among black Americans. Siraj Wahhaj has served as a vice president of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), established in the U.S. as a Saudi-Wahhabi organization. He has also served as a board



Siraj Wahhaj

member of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), widely considered a front for the terrorist organization Hamas.

Siraj Wahhaj was born in New York as Jeffrey Kearsse. Wahhaj passed through the NOI on his way to Sunni Islam, much like Warith Deen Umar. In February 1995 Wahhaj was named by U.S. Attorney Mary Jo White an unindicted co-conspirator in the plot to blow up the World Trade Center in 1993. He also testified in defense of a convicted terrorist, the “blind sheikh” Omar Abdel Rahman.

2.10 Mahdi Bray

As described by the Center for Islamic Pluralism (CIP) [12], Mahdi Bray’s assumed name excites questions as well as jokes. On becoming Muslim, did he really imagine himself the *mahdi*, or Islamic messiah? Can one imagine a convert to Judaism naming himself Moshiah, or to Christianity, taking the name of Jesus? Mahdi Bray is spokesman for the so-called Muslim American Society (MAS) Freedom Foundation, a front for the ultra-radical Muslim Brotherhood, based in North Africa. But he has a long résumé as a promoter of radical Islam, including employment by the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), and he has brayed in his eponymous manner on behalf of the criminals in the Northern Virginia “paintball jihad” conspiracy. The latter network was composed of Wahhabis who harassed the authentic friends of Bosnian Islam in America, while recruiting for terrorist operations to be carried out in Afghanistan and Kashmir, since bloodshed had ended in the Balkans. The leading members of the “paintball jihad” including a white radical Muslim, Randall Ismail Royer, sentenced to 20 years in prison on firearms and explosives charges. Mahdi Bray has further involved himself in efforts to ally Muslims with radical leftist groups in

opposition to U.S. foreign policy — an old pattern in black American society.

2.11 Imam Jamil Al-Amin

After Malcolm X, Jamil Al-Amin is probably the most famous of the prisoners who became Muslims. Born Hubert Gerold Brown, and known during the 1960s as an extreme black militant under the name of H. Rap Brown, he became chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), originally a product of the civil rights struggle in the South, in 1967. That year he was arrested in Cambridge, Md. for inciting a riot and became a wanted fugitive. He was famous in the '60s for such incendiary rhetoric as “Violence is as American as cherry pie” and “If America don’t come around, were gonna burn it down.” Posters of Brown with a lit match in his hand appeared in black communities. He was convicted for his involvement in a shootout with New York police, and served five years in prison. Therein he accepted Islam, and became Jamil Al-Amin, affiliated with a small but militant Sunni Muslim network called Dar ul-Islam (House of Islam), with paramilitary features. He moved to Georgia and was involved in a series of criminal cases during the 1980s and 1990s.

On March 16, 2000, Al-Amin was arrested after two Georgia deputies went to



Imam Jamil Al-Amin

a small business he operated to serve a warrant after he failed to appear in court for a traffic citation and a charge of impersonating a law officer. Both deputies were shot, and one, Ricky Kinchen, was killed. Al-Amin fled to Whitehall, Alabama where he was arrested.

In 2002, Al-Amin was brought to trial on 13 criminal charges, including the murder of a deputy. He was found guilty on all counts and sentenced to life imprisonment without parole.

To emphasize, since the 1920s black nationalism has undergone a metamorphosis. It now embodies a perverse reflection of the religious culture of Islam.

2.12 Anti-Wahhabi Protest

Shia and Sufi Muslims in the U.S. prison population, although small in numbers, are resentful of the monopoly on chaplaincies held by Saudi-inspired Wahhabis. In 2003, after refile of a suit by Shia convicts in the state of New York challenging the Wahhabi control of prison chaplaincies, the founder and current Executive Director of the Center for Islamic Pluralism (CIP), Stephen Suleyman Schwartz, brought about the submission of an *amicus curiae* brief to the U.S. court in New York. [13] The suit is designated in 2008 as *Orafan vs. Rashid*; the burden of pursuing this issue has been assumed by and remains with CIP, alone among Muslim and antiterror groups in the U.S. The 2003 *amicus* brief criticized “the system adopted by the [New York State] DOC of choosing clerics to serve the entire Islamic prison population exclusively from a radical sect known as Wahhabism which presents a theology both incompatible and hostile to Shias and other Islamic groups.”

In September 2007, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, sitting in New York City, found that two unresolved issues remained in the case of *Orafan vs. Rashid*.

These are whether the Shia plaintiffs could be denied a separate congregational Friday prayer (*Jumaa*) service, as they argued was caused by the Wahhabi monopoly on chaplaincies, and whether the New York State DOCS could accommodate a separate Shia service without jeopardizing legitimate prison objectives. At the time of publication of this report, the New York district court must decide these issues, on which CIP will continue to work in favor of the Shias and of pluralism. [14]

The 2003 *amicus* brief noted that prior court decisions supporting the position of the Wahhabi chaplains were based exclusively on testimony by Warith Deen Umar, who would be barred from the NY State prisons in 2003. The *amicus* brief described W. D. Umar, based on his own statements, as “a Sunni Muslim cleric, certified by the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences [known in 2008 as Cordoba University, located in Ashburn, Va], and confirmed by the Fiqh Council of North America. These organizations are stated to look to the ultimate authority of the Fiqh Council of Saudi Arabia, where... the Wahhabi sect is the official Islamic sect, and all Shia and other traditional Muslim forms of worship are barred by law... DOCS official policy in effect adopts and endorses the Saudi-Wahhabi doctrine prohibiting Shia and traditional Muslim practices, and unconstitutionally denies Shia prisoners freedom of religion while simultaneously establishing the Wahhabi sect as the official Islamic interpretation in the State of New York’s correctional system.”

Warith Deen Umar, the epitome of Wahhabi prison outreach, is himself a career criminal who represents a wide range of pathologies among African Americans. At the beginning of 2006, police seized a 12-gauge shotgun and a .22-caliber rifle from his home in the Greater New York area, and in September of that year Umar was sentenced to a year of home detention.

Umar assembled a major cadre of extremist clerics for “service” in the New York DOCS. They included Imam Salahuddin M. Muhammad, chaplain at Fishkill Correctional Facility in Beacon, N.Y.

In the complaints brought by Shia convicts in New York, Salahuddin Muhammad was alleged to have referred to Shia prisoners as “infiltrators and snitches” during his Friday *khutbat* or sermons. He is also one of many prison chaplains who have circulated a notorious anti-Shia pamphlet produced by Saudi-Wahhabis, titled “The Difference Between the Shiites and the Majority of Muslim Scholars,” signed by Saeed Ismaeel and published by the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY), an official Saudi-Wahhabi agency. Through the distribution of such materials, the Shia prisoners allege that Wahhabi chaplains have created an environment of intimidation, leading to such incidents as a Shia inmate requesting placement in solitary confinement to escape physical threat, and the knifing of a Shia convict.

Other peers of Umar include Umar Abdul-Jalil, whose extraordinary case came to light in March 2006. As the executive director of ministerial services and chief Islamic chaplain in the New York City Department of Corrections, Umar Abdul-Jalil was reported to have said in a speech that the “greatest terrorists in the world occupy the White House,” Jews control the media, and Muslims are being tortured in Manhattan jails. Abdul-Jalil ministered to Muslim inmates at one of New York’s most problematical facilities, Rikers Island. New York City’s then-mayor Michael Bloomberg, on free speech grounds, refused to dismiss Abdul-Jalil, although the chaplain received a two week unpaid suspension.

The El-Hindi case represented another link to the Islamic prison milieu. Marwan Othman El-Hindi, a Jordanian-born American citizen, was one of the three individuals

indicted in *U.S. v. Amawi et al*, in Toledo, Ohio, a month before the Abdul-Jalil incident. In that case, Mohammed Zaki Amawi, a dual Jordanian-American citizen and El-Hindi, along with a Lebanese immigrant, were charged with soliciting volunteers to fight in Iraq against U.S. and coalition troops.

Before he was involved in plotting terror, El-Hindi served as imam at the Toledo Correctional Institution. He was fired from the job in 2003 for violating prison rules against smuggling of food. In the 2006 Toledo indictment, El-Hindi was also charged with attempts to finance terrorism by fraudulently applying for government grants for charitable activities. El-Hindi and the other Toledo defendants were convicted of Conspiring to Commit Terrorist Acts Against Americans Overseas in June 2008.

These episodes were not isolated variations from a generally-benevolent pattern. In a related incident, Imam Intikab Habib was forced to resign in 2005 as a Muslim chaplain for the Fire Department of New York. after he publicly questioned the official account of the September 11, 2001 attack on the Twin Towers.

2.13 U.S. Justice Department Commissioned Study on Prisons and Religious Conversion

In December 2007 the text of a research paper written by Mark S. Hamm, Ph.D and commissioned by the United States Justice Department, on Islam in U.S. prisons was made public. [15] Hamm's report described a five-point paradigm for Islamic conversions in correctional systems.

1. The Crisis Convert: This type enters religion because of a personal breakdown, perhaps based on the shock of incarceration and its attendant isolation from friends, family, and daily life. In prison subcultures, the inability to cope is viewed as a sign of weakness, and vulnerability is dangerous in prisons.

2. The Protection-Seeking Convert: While it appears as little more than a variation on the experience of the "crisis convert," this category of conversions is treated separately by Hamm. Clearly, identification with an existing prison community is a major guarantor against exploitation of convicts by gangs.

3. The Searching Convert: These converts are affected by the importance of religious options present in prisons, to which they may have been indifferent in the outside world.

4. The Manipulating Convert: Such individuals convert to a religion to gain advantages in prison diet, availability of literature, social interactions, and similar benefits.

5. The Free-World Convert: These enter a religion because of outreach programs originating with religious institutions and programs outside prisons.

All such "converts" (a term eschewed by mainstream Muslims, who prefer to refer to those who have not been born into the religion, but who voluntarily accept it, as "new Muslims") are susceptible to the influence of radical Islamist chaplains. Such prison imams may offer personal counseling to resolve a crisis and relief against loneliness along with protection, a spiritual vision, special privileges in diet and reading matter, and connection with powerful international networks dedicating to the spread of extremist doctrines. Given such relationships, prison recruitment for terrorism appears almost unavoidable.

3. U.S. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT FEDERAL BUREAU OF PRISONS INSPECTOR GENERAL'S 2004 REVIEW ON TRAINING OF MUSLIM PRISON CHAPLAINS

In 2004, the Office of the Inspector General of the U.S. Justice Department (OIGDOJ) released a report [16] titled *A Review of the Federal Bureau of Prisons' Selection of*

Muslim Religious Services Providers. The document, which reflected a survey of 105 Federal correctional institutions, was issued in response to concerns expressed by CIP supporters and other moderate Muslims, working with U.S. Senators Jon Kyl (R-Arizona) and Charles Schumer (D-New York) about the Wahhabi domination of Muslim prison chaplaincies in the U.S. The document was flawed in its analysis, although much less so in its recommendations; we here offer specific criticisms of the OIGDOJ *Review* that may be compared with the online text.

3.1 Research Issues

The OIGDOJ *Review*, in addressing Islamic chaplains' work in correctional systems, included numerous shockingly disclosures. For example, in a footnote on page 48 [.pdf version], it admitted that the extremist conduct of Warith Deen Umar had been observed but tolerated. Further, the DOJ-BOP stopped employing chaplains endorsed by the Saudi-Wahhabi backed Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) in 2003, because the Federal Bureau of Investigation had not determined that ISNA was non-radical and did not have terrorist links. But the *Review* also offered a fulsome defense of ISNA as an allegedly-moderate entity, as noted further below.

The *Review's* description of its standards and practices was dismaying in numerous other ways. One BOP official asserted that the doctrinal beliefs of chaplain candidates were secondary to their pledge to fulfill their regular tasks, a light-minded attitude toward the problem of radical Islam. The *Review* declared that a prison with a large community of Sufi Muslims would not be assigned a Sufi chaplain because such would require an unacceptable discrimination in hiring. But it then stated that an institution housing numerous Shia convicts could ask for a Shia

contractor or volunteer, rather than a chaplain, but that such assignments were not made because the chaplaincy services had difficulty determining the denominations or sects to which inmates belonged. It is hard to imagine a more obtuse approach to the observation of Islamic religious life, since the affiliation of a Muslim to the Sunni or Shia community can be determined by a simple query.

But the *Review* presented a mass of denials, evasions, and disingenuous exercises so extensive that to sort them all out would require a long and ultimately unproductive analysis; its errors were in the past, and the task is to change its policies in the present and future. Suffice it to say that the federal prison system had badly compromised itself in the employment of Muslim chaplains, and was under pressure to resolve its situation. Even in the OIGDOJ *Review*, it demonstrated gross errors in research, failed to assure transparency and candor in dealing with the challenges of this topic, and therefore showed ignorance of and indifference to the real nature of the problems. These comprise the issues of the Wahhabi monopoly among the prison chaplains, and the need for Islamic pluralism in a prison setting.

The summary of the history of Islam in the OIGDOJ *Review* included some of the most remarkable errors we have ever seen in any discussion of these subjects. For example, the *Review* described Sufism as "a 'mystical' form of Sunni Islam." [17] This comment betrayed a shocking ignorance of Islamic culture. Sufism is no less, and in some respects even more, a Shia than a Sunni phenomenon. The Sufi classic Rumi, whose writings are now said to be the most frequently-purchased books of poems in the U.S., are Farsi, i.e. Iranian/Persian classics, as are those of numerous other Sufi masters. Sufis have tended to seek a merger of Sunni and Shia beliefs (which has nothing in

common with the claim of Wahhabis, including prison chaplains in the U.S., that there is only one Islam and that the disagreements between Sunnis and Shias mean nothing.) But the idea that Sufism is only a Sunni phenomenon would provoke laughter from most Sufis and protest from Iranians of all persuasions, including enemies of the present clerical regime.

The *Review* further stated “Wahhabism... is practiced all over the world.” [18] This was an equally appalling mistake. Wahhabism is not openly “practiced” at all in two of the most important Muslim countries in the world: Turkey, where Sunni Islam is subject to close control by the state clerics and where Wahhabism is rigorously excluded, and Iran, which has an overwhelming Shia majority and, therefore, few Sunnis at all, but where Wahhabism is also nonexistent. Some Wahhabism exists in a clandestine form in Turkey but in Iran it is despised to such a point that no attempt at Wahhabi infiltration is conceivable except in Arab minority regions where terrorism linked to Al-Qaida has recently appeared. Wahhabism is also effectively nonexistent in Azerbaijan, which is overwhelmingly Shia.

Wahhabism is banned in Uzbekistan; CIP, however, does not favor legal proscription as a solution to the problem of Wahhabism, particularly by a regime like that of Uzbek dictator Islam Karimov, who uses the specter of Wahhabism — an interpretation with almost no support among the people of his country — as a pretext for bloody repression. The problem of Wahhabism may be dealt with juridically by removing the legal structures, whether in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia or the U.S. correctional system, that grant it a special and dominant status. But opposition to Wahhabism, although in some cases it must involve a military defeat of extremism, should better be grounded in debate and the

restoration of Islamic pluralism in the Saudi kingdom and elsewhere.

The OIGDOJ document referred to Wahhabism as “the predominant religion in Saudi Arabia,” [19] when the Wahhabi sect remains, at present, the *official* religion in Saudi Arabia. Its current position is only a function of state support. In defining the phenomenon, the *Review* stated, “Wahhabism has many connotations and means different things to different people.” [20] This represented an erroneous attempt to make Wahhabism, which is totalitarian, appear pluralistic. Wahhabism does not have many connotations. It has one main connotation: it refers to the state cult erected in Saudi Arabia, based on a fundamentalist, exclusionary, and violent interpretation of Islamic belief, in which Muslims who do not accept its commands are subject to *takfir*, or excommunication, resulting in persecution, death, expropriation of property, and sexual abuse of women. A “light” form of Wahhabism exists in the Gulf state of Qatar, but as a footnote in Islamic history. Wahhabism only means different things to different people in that Wahhabis disagree over the political decisions made by the Saudi rulers. This is not a matter of theological difference but of political expediency.

The *Review* continued, “[Wahhabism] generally refers to a movement that seeks to purify the Islamic religion of any innovations or practices that deviate from the 7th century teachings of the Prophet Muhammad.” [21] This means that the OIGDOJ accepts the Wahhabi definition of Wahhabism; if the phrase “allegedly” had been inserted before the word “deviate” this would be acceptable, but since it was not, it is not. Islam resists innovation in religion, but also recognizes good innovations and bad innovations. Thus, for example, the *Qur’an* was not collected and written down in a single transcription during the life of the Prophet, so that the *Qur’an* as it now exists is the product of



Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X at the 369th Armory, Harlem, 1960 innovations.

In addition, the Prophet never recommended the collection, transcription, and interpretation of his *hadith* or oral teachings. Schools of Islamic law or *shariah* never existed in the time of the Prophet and there is no teaching of the Prophet whatever to support such an innovation. In reality, Wahhabis allege that things they do not like, especially Shia and Sufi spiritual habits, are deviant innovations, even though these practices have been part of Islam for more than 13 centuries.

The original followers of Ibn Abd Al-Wahhab, founder of the Wahhabi sect, were so far-reaching in their condemnation of then-established Islamic practices that their movement was considered both by the Sunni clerics of his time and by Western observers of it (after the seizure of Mecca at the beginning of the 19th century brought it to Western attention) as a new, separate religion and a rebellion against Islam. Ibn Abd Al-Wahhab condemned calling to prayer from minarets, and his early followers destroyed minarets and killed callers to prayer (*muez'zins*). This radical position was abandoned, but other, equally extreme positions, were maintained, such as the systematic destruction of the tombs and historic structures associated with the Prophet and his Companions, a practice that continues in the Saudi kingdom.

The document further asserted, “Salafis,’ means ‘Unitarians,’ because Al-

Wahhab emphasized the transcendent unity of God.” [22] The word *Salafi* has nothing to do with the term “Unitarian,” for which the correct Arabic word is *muwabiddun*, a term Wahhabis do prefer to call themselves.

Indeed, the OIGDOJ *Review* immediately contradicted itself by stating, “The term ‘Salafi’ literally means ‘one who follows the Prophet Muhammad and his companions.’ This is also incorrect; the term *Salafi*, derived from *Salaf*, pl. *aslaf*, means one who follows the teachings of the pious forerunners of the present Muslims, and refers as models to the Prophet and his Companions, but also to the scholars of the generations that immediately followed them, including compilers of *hadith*.

In addition, in Islamic history *Salafi*, or imitators of the original *aslaf*, actually refers to two different groups: the first was a movement of reformers of the 19th century who sought to “modernize” Islam by simplification, returning to the habits of the past, while the second refers to Wahhabis and others who, in Sunni Islam, claim that traditional or existing Islam, in the world today, is not true Islam but is *jabiliyya*, or ignorance comparable to the state of mind existing in Mecca before the delivery of *Qur’an*. (*Jabili* also has a non-ideological meaning referring to simple ignorance of religion among Muslims.) The *Salafis* of the 19th century such as Muhammad Abduh were excessive in their reforming zeal but they were not mass murderers or terrorists. The Wahhabis today have appropriated the term “*Salafi*” in the same way that Communists once called themselves “progressives.”

Further, we believe as Muslims that Ibn Abd Al-Wahhab should never be called “Al-Wahhab” or “Wahhab,” for two reasons, one theological and one grammatical. Al-Wahhab is one of the Names of Allah —The Bestower of Gifts. To call the founder of Wahhabism “Al-Wahhab” or “Wahhab,” is to equate him with Allah. “Wahhab” does not exist as a

separate name in Arabic. He should be referred to by his actual name, Ibn Abd Al-Wāhhab, meaning, “son of the servant of the bestower.” This is not objectionable because the rest of his family, including his father and brother, renounced their relationship to him and opposed him for his extremism. His evil should not reflect on them.

Salafism has nothing to do with “emphasiz[ing] the transcendent unity of God.” All Muslims believe in “the transcendent unity of God.” Salafism has to do with “reforming” the practice of the religion. Wāhhabis are distinguished by their view that special honors to the Prophet Muhammad, such as celebration of his birthday or inscription of his name in mosques, along with prayers to the dead, erection of gravestones and tombs, prayers for intercession through holy persons or saints, preservation of historic buildings, and many other practices prevalent in traditional Islam constitute *shirk* or polytheism. This is based first on the Wāhhabi belief that these practices supposedly imitate the Christian worship of Jesus as a divine being; second on the Wāhhabi claim that erecting a gravestone or preserving a building is the same as erecting and worshipping an idol. Wāhhabis who assert that Salafism involves “emphasiz[ing] the transcendent unity of God” are engaging in propaganda. It is deeply unfortunate that the OIGDOJ should have fallen for this disinformation.

The same paragraph went on to assert that “Salafi” also can be used to describe all Muslims, not just Wāhhabis. This is really an outrageous error. No Shia Muslim would ever describe him or herself as a “Salafi,” because Shias reject the caliphate of Abubakr, the first caliph and a leading example of the *aslaf*; because they reject the standard interpretation of *hadith* accepted by Sunnis; and for other reasons as well. Salafism does not exist among Shias. Many Sufis would indignantly reject any attempt to describe

them as Salafis, as the term has been used since the 19th century, when Sufis were the main opponents of the Salafis; and Sufis are the main enemies of Wāhhabism today. Most important, as written in a recent volume by CIP Executive Director Schwartz [23], “Ottoman Muslim theologians, who had rejected the pretensions of the Wāhhabis, argued that it had never been acceptable for Muslims to compare themselves in virtue to the Prophet and the *aslaf*. A more accurate term than ‘Salafis’ would be ‘*Islahis*,’ meaning reformers.”

The author of the OIGDOJ *Review* could not distinguish between “*Salafis*” and “*muwahiddun*,” a difference so elementary that failure to grasp it betrays either complete ignorance, or deliberate acceptance of Wāhhabi obfuscation, or confusion, or haste in the preparation of the *Review*. Khaled Abou el-Fadl, considered a “stealth Islamist” and whose works are controversial to say the least, was quoted in the *Review* as follows: “all puritanical groups in the Muslim world are Salafi in orientation but not necessarily Wāhhabi.” [24] This is a complete falsehood. Pious Shias are extremely puritanical, very often much more so than any Sunnis including Wāhhabis, and would never allow themselves to be described as “Salafi in orientation.” Khomeinist Shias accepted the “revolutionary” doctrine of one “Salafi,” Sayyid Qutb, because it resembled their own tradition of protest against rulers they considered unjust. [25] This has nothing whatever to do with Salaf, Salafis, or Salafism *per se*.

The OIGDOJ *Review* stated that “FBI counterterrorism officials told us that Wāhhabism is not inherently violent or terroristic”. The OIGDOJ therefore privileges American state functionaries of limited intellectual training against a vast corpus of Islamic scholarship, which declares the exact opposite: i.e. that Wāhhabism is indeed inherently violent and terroristic. Who knows

more about Islam, the FBI's civil servants, or anti-Wahhabi Islamic scholars?

The struggle of Ottoman-era religious scholars against Wahhabism generated an immense literature of fatwas and other writings against them. These included many titles eloquently expressing the anger the Wahhabis provoked among traditional scholars. Ata' Allah al-Makki turned his pen to *The Indian Scimitar on the Najdi's Neck*, referring to the origin of the Wahhabi movement in Najd, a barren region of inner Arabia. Al-Sayyid Ahmad ibn Zayni Dahlan, Mufti of Mecca and *Shaykh al-Islam* (the highest Ottoman religious authority) for the Hejaz region of western Arabia, died in 1886, after writing many works against them, including one with the mild heading *Pure Pearls in Answering the Wahhabis*. His contemporary, Dawud ibn Sulayman al-Baghdadi al-Hanafi returned to the more combative mode, with a work generally known as *The Most Strenuous Jihad* or *Ashadd al-Jihad*, calling for sustained resistance to Wahhabi blandishments. Al-Sayyid al-'Alawi ibn Ahmad ibn Hasan ibn al-Qutb al-Haddad also favored the cutting edge in polemics: he composed *The Sharp Sword for the Neck of the Assailant of Great Scholars* as well as *The Lamp of Mankind and the Illumination of Darkness Concerning the Refutation of the Errors of the Innovator From Najd by Which He Had Misled the Common People*. These volumes represent but a few of some 80 anti-Wahhabi classics, every one of which stresses the violence and terrorism of the movement. Ibn Abd Al-Wahhab's own brother Suleyman wrote a book in opposition to him, with the piquant title *Divine Thunderbolts*. Perhaps the most famous anti-Wahhabi work is Jamal Effendi al-'Iraqi al-Sidqi al-Zahawi's *True Dawn in Refuting Those Who Deny the Seeking of Intercession and the Miracles of Saints*. Al-Zahawi was one of the great Iraqi poets of the 19th century. His book has been translated and

published in English as *The Doctrine of Abl al-Sunna Versus the 'Salafi' Movement*. [26] It is, in effect, a chronicle of Wahhabi massacres, devastation, and other incidents of bloodletting and vandalism that would seem beyond belief were there not so many other accounts to corroborate it.

The lazy pseudo-research embodied in the OIGDOJ *Review* was demonstrated in the final passage on page 4 [.pdf version], where it was stated that "extreme Shiite Islam could be just as radical and as much of a terrorism threat as extreme Wahhabism/Salafism." So it turned out that the OIGDOJ had to admit that not all puritanical Muslims, much less all Muslims, may be described as Salafis. The *Review* also misidentified the Moorish Science Temple.

The *Review* reported that "An FBI counterterrorism analyst stated that the immense wealth associated with extreme Wahabism/Salafism makes the religion appealing to inmates who are seeking financial support and assistance when they leave prison." [27] It should be noted that the main forms of such support and assistance has consisted of free *hajj* trips and opportunities for training as imams and chaplains in Saudi Arabia.

3.2 Determining the Role of Wahhabi Prison Chaplains

Given the unpromising beginning of the *Review*, in its approach to so basic and simple an issue as the typology of Wahhabism, it was no wonder that the OIGDOJ's *Review* never addressed the essential matter: how to determine who really is a Wahhabi among the prison chaplains, and what to do about it. The *Review* seemed to partake of an extraordinary naivete when it stated, "[U.S. Justice Department Bureau of Prisons (BOP) chaplains] said that strict Wahhabism would not survive in prisons because it is too exclusionary to appeal to the inmates." [28]

One would have to be extremely ignorant of the experience and character of Islam among African Americans in general and those incarcerated in particular not to recognize the absurdity of this statement. While it is unfortunate, it is fact that many African Americans, and many within the corrections system, as we believe is demonstrated by the empirical discussion of prisons included here, are drawn to Islam precisely because it is perceived as exclusionary and separatist, and confers on inmates a special, more honorable status, worthy of exceptional respect. The corpus of ideological Islamist rhetoric supporting exclusionary and separatist attitudes, or, better put, rejectionist attitudes toward U.S. society and its institutions, is extremely large, and this does not apply only to NOI preaching. With exclusionary and separatist perceptions of Islam already rampant in this section of the population, the close fit with Wahhabism is obvious.

Here, however, the OIGDOJ *Review*, as elsewhere, engaged in self-contradiction, since this comment is footnoted as follows:

“The chaplains stated that inmates who identify themselves as Wahhabis or Salafis generally espouse Prison Islam rather than true Wahhabism or Salafism.”

As we have specified in the present CIP report, a gang phenomenon exists, called “Prison Islam.” But this extraordinary footnote by OIGDOJ gave away a great deal: that Wahhabis may conceal themselves within “Prison Islam,” but that Wahhabi chaplains consider it part of their mission to distinguish between it and “true Wahhabism or Salafism.” This is, above all, an admission that the chaplains employed by the U.S. Justice Department Bureau of Prisons (BOP) view themselves as defenders of and missionaries for Wahhabism.

The *Review* also included these absurd comments:

“The Chief of the Chaplaincy Services Branch... said that because Saudi Arabia has diplomatic relations with the United States, she did not believe Muslim chaplain candidates who have studied in Saudi Arabia should be excluded from BOP positions. She also noted that Saudi Arabia is the religious center of Islam and offers many professional schools that can prepare Muslims for ministry.” [29]

Professional schools that can prepare Muslims for ministry exist all over the Muslim world and the suggestion that their geographical location in the Saudi kingdom or their number there somehow privileges Saudi schools deliberately omits the fact that Saudi Arabia is the headquarters of Wahhabism, where it is the official cult. In addition, although Mecca is the object of the *hajj* pilgrimage, Saudi Arabia is NOT “the religious center of Islam.” Islam has no sole religious center in terms of theology or teaching. Given that American imams or chaplains training in Saudi Arabia would first have to learn Arabic, we should note that other countries where Islamic training would require study of Arabic and/or another foreign language, but in which such training is available, include Senegal, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Egypt, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Yemen, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Turkey (training in Turkish with reading in Arabic), Bosnia-Herzegovina (training in Bosnian with reading in Arabic), Macedonia (training in Macedonian or Albanian with reading in Arabic and Farsi), Iraq, Iran (training in Farsi with reading in Arabic), Pakistan (training in Urdu with reading in Arabic), Kazakhstan (training in Kazakh with reading in Arabic), Uzbekistan (training in Uzbek with reading in Arabic), India (training in Urdu with some English and with reading in Arabic), Bangladesh (training in Bengali with reading in Arabic), Malaysia (training in Bahasa Malaysia with reading in Arabic), and

Indonesia (training in Bahasa Indonesia with reading in Arabic). All these countries have facilities to prepare Islamic clerics that can in no way be considered inferior, Islamically, to those in Saudi Arabia. Training for clerics is also available in such Western languages as French and Russian.

Nor is the issue of diplomatic relations with the U.S. a reliable standard. The U.S. has diplomatic relations with Syria, and many clerics working in the U.S., as well as academic experts, have studied in Damascus, yet Syrian Islam is intertwined with support for organizations like Hamas and legitimization of suicide terrorism. Many Islamic schools in Yemen, the Emirates, Sudan, Somalia, or Pakistan should be considered inappropriate for the credentialing of chaplains in American prisons, even though these countries have diplomatic relations with the U.S. By contrast, certain schools in Iran, which have adopted a posture of partial opposition to the present clerical regime there, have trained and certified prominent Shia imams in the U.S., some of them quite public in their support of U.S. policies in, e.g., Iraq, even though Iran does not have official diplomatic relations with the U.S.

The OIGDOJ *Review* had high praise for the role of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) as a certifying and legitimating body, but ignored the origins of ISNA, which was set up in 1981 by the Muslim Students' Association of the U.S. and Canada (MSA). MSA, in turn, had been established in 1963 by the Muslim World League, an international Wahhabi body, headquartered in Saudi Arabia and created only a year before that. The chain of Wahhabi control from the previously-mentioned World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY), which preaches hatred against Shia Muslims as well as against non-Wahhabi Sunnis and non-Muslims in general, to ISNA, is undeniably clear.

While the OIGDOJ *Review* danced around the issue of how to detect Wahhabism

in chaplains, it ignored the one means the BOP has to track Wahhabi influence in prisons: the use and distribution of copies of *Qur'an*, the Islamic holy book, printed in English in Saudi Arabia. The terms *Koran* and/or *Qur'an* seemed never to appear, even once, in the *Review*. Until the assumption of the throne by Saudi King Abdullah ibn Abd Al-Aziz, a reformer, the Saudi/Wahhabi edition of *Qur'an* [30] was widely distributed, usually for free, and differs significantly from the traditional translation of *Qur'an*, in a way that should be of great concern to corrections officers. That is, the Saudi/Wahhabi *Qur'an* — and let it not be forgotten that in Islam *Qur'an* is taught as a direct divine message — includes interlinear interpolations that give the text an inherently hateful and extremist meaning.



For example, the first *Surah* or chapter of *Qur'an*, known as *Fatiha* or The Opening, is recited as a prayer by all observant Muslims, several times daily and in every service. (Traditional, non-Wahhabi Muslims also recite *Fatiha* as a prayer for the dead.) There are three commonly used, normative English translations of *Qur'an* (Yusuf Ali and M.M. Pickthall for Sunnis, H.H. Shakir for Shias) and their translation of *Fatiha* is shown below:

YUSUF ALI: In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

PICKTHALL: In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

SHAKIR: In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

YUSUF ALI: Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds;

PICKTHALL: Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds,

SHAKIR: All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

YUSUF ALI: Most Gracious, Most Merciful;

PICKTHALL: *The Beneficent, the Merciful.*

SHAKIR: *The Beneficent, the Merciful.*

YUSUF ALI: *Master of the Day of Judgment.*

PICKTHALL: *Master of the Day of Judgment,*

SHAKIR: *Master of the Day of Judgment.*

YUSUF ALI: *Thee do we worship, and Thine aid we seek.*

PICKTHALL: *Thee (alone) we worship; Thee (alone) we ask for help.*

SHAKIR: *Thee do we serve and Thee do we beseech for help.*

YUSUF ALI: *Show us the straight way,*

PICKTHALL: *Show us the straight path,*

SHAKIR: *Keep us on the right path.*

YUSUF ALI: *The way of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace, those whose (portion) is not wrath, and who go not astray.*

PICKTHALL: *The path of those whom Thou hast favoured; Not the (path) of those who earn Thine anger nor of those who go astray.*

SHAKIR: *The path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favors. Not (the path) of those upon whom Thy wrath is brought down, nor of those who go astray.*

The final *aya'* or sentence of *Fatiba* appears as follows in the Wahhabi edition of *Qur'an*:

“The way of those on whom you have bestowed Your Grace, not (the way) of those who earned Your Anger (such as the Jews), nor of those who went astray (such as the Christians).”

The indicated interpolated text is further supported by tendentious footnotes and other commentaries, there and elsewhere in the volume, that reinforce the extremist character of the Saudi/Wahhabi interpretation of Islam. The publication and distribution of the Saudi/Wahhabi English-language *Qur'an* is itself a problem for the American prison system. Under no circumstance should these editions of *Qur'an* be certified for use in

American correctional institutions. They have the undeniable effect of conveying to the reader that Islam is fundamentally hostile to Jews and Christians, that this hostility is intrinsic to its scripture, indeed, is mandated by its scripture. The effect of the use of this text, particularly by individuals new to the Islamic religion, is incalculably destructive.

BOP chaplains must be questioned on their use of the Saudi/Wahhabi edition of *Qur'an*, and any among them who use it should be immediately suspended from their duties.

The use of Saudi/Wahhabi editions of *Qur'an* leads inexorably to the obvious conclusion of any discussion of Islamic chaplaincies in the U.S., whether in the corrections system or, let it be noted, in the armed services: the need for pluralism. The U.S. government must consider the implications of Wahhabi extremist teaching for the possible encouragement or recruitment of terrorist sympathizers. Wahhabi teaching is itself dangerous. But more dangerous than Wahhabi teaching *per se* is the monopoly by Wahhabi or “Salafi” advocates or sympathizers in American institutional Islam. The Wahhabi monopoly over chaplaincies reinforces tendencies toward exclusionism, rejectionism, terrorism, and even black separatism in new Muslims (“converts”), as well as born Muslims, who then have no exposure to Islamic alternatives to Wahhabism.

It is necessary for the federal BOP and other bodies with responsibility for Islamic prison chaplains to regulate such activities in a way that will assure that Islam as preached or served in prisons guarantees its followers and prospective new members personal choice in their style of Islam. No prison or armed services body would suggest that all Christians under its jurisdiction be compelled to attend the services of a single communion or sect; indeed, corrections systems have gone to considerable lengths to provide for

pluralism among Christian believers. For Muslims in prison, the need for pluralism is not merely the right thing to do if we believe in American values of religious liberty; it is also a necessary measure in combating extremism and, even recruitment to terrorism.

3.3 Justice Department BOP Inspector General's 2004 Recommendations

The 2004 OIGDOJ *Review* concluded with the following recommendations, among others, to which we have interlineated CIP comments:

Screening of Religious Services Providers

OIGDOJ: The BOP should screen all religious services providers' doctrinal beliefs. Currently the BOP does not screen religious services providers' religious and doctrinal beliefs. Instead, it relies on the candidates' endorsements to certify that they will minister to inmates of all faiths and provide appropriate religious services in a prison setting. However, it is essential to the security of the BOP that candidates who have extreme views and who pose a security threat not be allowed into the prisons.

CIP Comment: CIP fully concurs with the need to screen Muslim religious services providers' doctrinal beliefs, as a safeguard against the infiltration of radical Islamist agitation.

OIGDOJ: We recommend the BOP take steps to examine all chaplains', religious contractors', and religious volunteers' doctrinal beliefs to screen out anyone who poses a threat to security. For example, the BOP could ask chaplains, contractors, and Level 2 volunteers doctrinal questions in their interviews and require them to submit a

statement of faith with their applications. We recommend that the BOP [Office of General Counsel] examine this issue to determine what screening procedures are legally permissible. The BOP's screening of candidates' religious and doctrinal beliefs should be for security purposes only, not to assess the purity of candidates' views or serve as an approval or endorsement of their religious beliefs. The BOP also should develop a list of criteria to use when screening individuals. At the least, this list should include: 1) endorsement of violence, 2) support of terrorism or other anti-U.S. activities, and 3) discrimination against other inmates or exclusion of other inmates from religious services, whether based on race, religion, or other discriminatory factors. In addition, the BOP should consider requesting that OPM [U.S. Office of Personnel Management]'s background investigations examine chaplains' past statements and conduct in religious communities.

CIP Comment: CIP agrees with the need for a list of criteria to use when screening individuals. The suggestions of the OIGDOJ, however, appear to us incomplete. Endorsement of violence, support of terrorism and other anti-U.S. activities, and discrimination against other inmates (the latter particularly in the previously-mentioned Shia case) are merely the foundations of radical ideology. Inquiries must encompass whether chaplains promote a vision of aggressive Islamization of the U.S. and other non-Muslim societies, call for institution of *shariah* (Islamic law) as a parallel legal system with jurisdiction over Muslims in non-Muslim countries, justify disobedience to American law (a rather elementary principle in dealing with both correctional inmates and

radical Islam), and promote a supremacist view of Islam. The system of screening should be made simple but sophisticated, which would be much less difficult than it might seem. Knowledgeable outside experts, including individuals recommended by CIP and other moderate Muslim groups, should be assembled in a special federally-empowered body to develop an adequate questionnaire, supplemented by face-to-face interviews.

OIGDOJ: The BOP should require all chaplain, religious contractor, and religious Level 2 volunteer applicants to be interviewed by at least one individual knowledgeable of the applicant's religion. This individual could be a BOP chaplain, BOP official, or member of an interfaith chaplain advisory board created by the BOP for the purpose of interviewing chaplain candidates. However, if the BOP creates an interfaith chaplain advisory board, members of the board must be screened sufficiently to ensure they do not hold views contrary to BOP policy, including advocating violence, supporting terrorism, or discriminating against people of certain races or religions.

CIP Comment: In line with CIP's previous comments, interviews with individuals "knowledgeable of the applicant's religion" are necessary, but insufficient. DOJ should have specified that interviewers possess knowledge beyond the elements of the applicant's religion, i.e., specialized understanding of the ideology of radical Islam, and especially Wahhabism, emphasizing its promotion of aggressive Islamization, introduction of *shariah* (Islamic law), disobedience to American and other Western laws, and Islamic supremacism.

OIGDOJ: The BOP should require panel interviews for all religious contractors and Level 2 volunteers. Because of the extensive contact contractors and volunteers have with inmates, we recommend the BOP require contractor and Level 2 volunteer applicants to be interviewed thoroughly by a panel consisting of a chaplain, a security officer, and a human resources official from the BOP institution where the applicants will work. The BOP likely will be able to screen contractors and volunteers more adequately if they are given more thorough interviews such as the panel interviews given to chaplain candidates.

CIP Comment: CIP supports thorough interviewing but does not accept that interviewers should be drawn from within the existing ranks of BOP personnel. A proposed special body of outside experts as previously described should have main responsibility for this task.

OIGDOJ: The BOP should implement further security screening requirements for religious services providers. The BOP should ask chaplains and religious contractors whether they have ever received funds from foreign governments. The BOP should ask contractors and Level 2 volunteers to report the professional, civic, and religious organizations in which they hold membership. In addition, the BOP should verify chaplains' foreign travel to determine whether they have spent a significant amount of time in a country that does not have diplomatic relations or treaties with the United States.

CIP Comment: This represents the focal point for any effective review of Islamic prison chaplaincies in the U.S. "Receiving funds

from foreign governments” points directly to the problem of Saudi sponsorship for Wahhabi prison chaplaincies in the U.S. While Muslim chaplains should not be prevented from making *hajj* pilgrimages to Saudi Arabia, the financing of such trips should be monitored, and acceptance of free *hajj* tickets to the Saudi kingdom considered a conflict of interest for Muslim chaplains in U.S. correctional institutions.

OIGDOJ: The BOP should encourage chaplains to seek information about contractor and volunteer applicants from their local communities. We recommend that the BOP encourage chaplains at institutions hiring contractors and volunteers to seek information from their local communities about individuals applying to be religious services contractors or volunteers.

CIP Comment: CIP cannot express confidence in vetting of chaplains, contractors, or volunteers through reports from local Muslim communities in the U.S., which are often, if not typically, dominated by Wahhabi clerics. Interviews by an outside expert body will, we believe, prove more effective in preventing the infiltration of radical Islamists into prison chaplaincies.

Reliance on Staff Muslim Chaplains

OIGDOJ: The BOP should more effectively use the expertise of its current Muslim chaplains to screen, recruit, and supervise Muslim religious services providers. The BOP should utilize its Muslim chaplains more effectively by having them review the applications, references, and endorsements of potential Muslim chaplains, contractors, and volunteers. We also recommend the BOP consider having at least one Muslim chaplain

serve on the interview panel for Muslim chaplain candidates.

CIP Comment: CIP must emphasize its concern that given the present Wahhabi monopoly in Islamic prison chaplaincies, inclusion of currently-employed chaplains would contribute to a circular process in which alleged radicals would be tested by those in agreement with their ideology, and could be protected in their position by such sympathizers.

CIP also notes the following OIGDOJ statement:

OIGDOJ: BOP is experiencing a hiring freeze on Muslim chaplains because it will not accept endorsements from any Islamic organizations until it receives information on those organizations from the FBI. In addition, no other national organization besides the ISNA is authorized to endorse Muslim chaplains. Moreover, the BOP will not hire chaplains who have endorsements from national organizations about which the FBI has derogatory information.

CIP Comment: CIP emphasizes its view that this statement and other admissions in the *Review* regarding investigation of ISNA, provide a recognition of the extremist ideological character of ISNA, regardless of previously indicated ambivalence on this matter.

CIP notes that the OIGDOJ *Review* also calls for “evaluat[ion] of the feasibility of having correctional officers provide intermittent supervision to all chapels to supplement the supervision provided by chaplaincy staff... [and] the cost, legality, and feasibility of audio and video monitoring to include all worship areas and chapel classrooms.” These seem to be obviously prudent measures in a correctional environment.

The OIGDOJ *Review* includes a

statement with which CIP takes strong exception: “Inmates are radicalized primarily by other inmates.” While this claim may be accurate in discussing black nationalism, the NOI, and related phenomena, we do not believe it to be the case regarding the Wahhabi form of radical Islam. Rather, we believe Wahhabism is introduced into prisons by Wahhabi chaplains, and that cessation of the employment of such chaplains and abatement of their activities will significantly lower the level of Islamist radicalism in prisons. OIGDOJ has additionally included some elementary recommendations with which CIP agrees: “The BOP should provide its staff with training on Islam,” and “The BOP should include in contractors’ SOWs [scope of work] the themes and topics on which they should focus.” Again, CIP and other moderate Muslim organizations can provide background material, briefings, and even full instruction for such staff. Finally, OIGDOJ called for enhanced cooperation between BOP and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Joint Intelligence Coordinating Council (JICC), and the Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTF). Such improved relationships appear implicit in effective law enforcement practice.

3.4 U.S. Justice Department Bureau of Prisons Response to Inspector General’s 2004 Review

On July 12, 2004, the Office of the Director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons (ODBOP), Harley G. Lappin, released a response to the foregoing OIGDOJ *Review*, including BOP comments on the recommendations made in the latter document. [31] The BOP Director concurred with many of the recommendations made in the *Review*.

The Director stated that the BOP’s Office of General Counsel (OGC) would examine screening procedures to determine the constitutional permissibility of investigation of doctrinal beliefs, as well as attitudes toward violence, terrorism, subversion of the U.S. government, and beliefs

supporting discrimination based on race, religion, or national origin.

The Director further stipulated that candidates for chaplaincies should be interviewed by institution chaplains, and that “interview” responses that elicit questionable information will be forwarded to [a] religion-specific SME [‘subject matter expert’] drawn from the ranks of currently-employed chaplains], and the local JTTF.

The Director rejected an OIGDOJ recommendation that Level 2 volunteers and contractors be interviewed, on the ground that such prospective interviewees totaled 10,000 in 2004, or some 100 for each federal correctional institution.

BOP further expanded an OIGDOJ recommendation to provide that endorsements of chaplains by local Islamic organizations be screened through local JTTF offices

The BOP’s Director agreed with all other OIGDOJ recommendations.

3.5 Center for Islamic Pluralism Comment on U.S. Justice Department Bureau of Prisons Response to Inspector General’s 2004 Review

CIP rejects the BOP Director’s recommendation that interviews of candidates for chaplaincies be conducted first by institution chaplains, with referral to “subject matter experts” (SMEs) required only when questionable information has been elicited.

CIP also rejects the recommendation that SMEs be drawn from the ranks of currently-employed chaplains, and proposes instead that SMEs be recruited from a wide range of Muslim community leaders representing mainstream Sunnis (*Ahl as-Sunnah Wa’al Jama’ah*), Shias (*Ahl ul-Beyt*), and long-established Sufi groups, and that such SMEs be employed in a permanent review body of outside experts, such as previously described.

CIP additionally rejects the Director’s objection to interviews of all Level 2

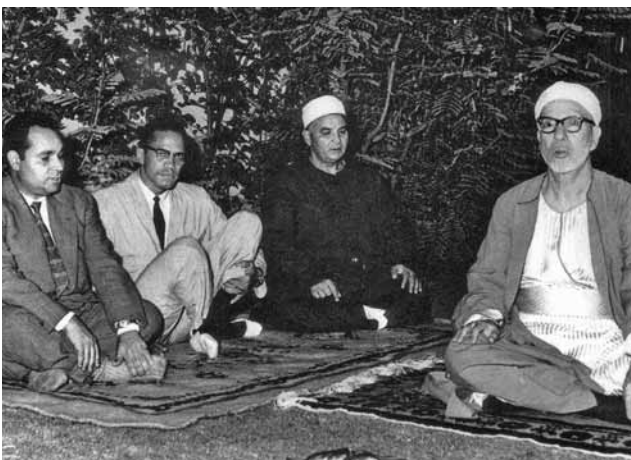
volunteers and contractors because of large numbers. Numbers of interviewees and other bureaucratic considerations must not interfere with protection against extremism.

CIP additionally rejects the Director's objection to Recommendation 3, calling for interviews of all Level 2 volunteers and contractors on grounds of large numbers.

3.6 OIGDOJ Analysis of BOP Response to Review

The Office of the Inspector General of the Justice Department issued an immediate analytical response to that produced by the BOP. [32] OIGDOJ indicated an "unresolved" difference with BOP regarding the interview process for chaplaincy candidates, in that BOP suggested a first interview by an institution chaplain, followed by review by an SME.

The OIGDOJ stated, "While we agree with the BOP's plan to designate SMEs for religious services providers' religions, we believe that the SMEs, or other individuals knowledgeable of the applicants' religions, should be involved from the outset in the interview and screening process of candidates for religious services positions. Otherwise, it is less likely that an institution chaplain will be able to assess from candidates' responses whether they hold views contrary to BOP policy, and thus unlikely that the institution



Cairo, August 1964. Malcolm X attends the Organization of African Unity conference and meets with Sheik Abdel Rahman Tag, future rector of Al Azhar, the first Muslim university in the world

chaplain will forward the candidates' responses to the SME for further review. For example, a candidate who advocates violence for religious reasons likely will not answer affirmatively the direct question, 'Do you advocate violence for religious reasons?' Therefore, we believe the BOP will have to discern candidates' true beliefs from nuances in their responses. We believe these nuances can best be identified and assessed by an SME or other individual knowledgeable of the applicant's religion."

The OIGDOJ "closed" the difference with BOP's objection to a recommendation for wide-scale interviews, based on the large number of prospective interviewees. OIGDOJ stated OIGDOJ stated, "Although the BOP has concluded that its current resources do not permit it to conduct panel interviews for all religious contractors and Level 2 volunteers, we agree that the steps it has taken in response to other recommendations will help to address the concerns underlying this recommendation."

The OIGDOJ discussed the important criterion of "funds from foreign governments" in examining the security status of chaplaincy candidates as follows:

"While the BOP's response addresses our recommendation regarding further security screening of contractors and volunteers, it does not address whether chaplains will be required to report whether they ever have received funds from foreign governments or whether the BOP will verify their foreign travel... To close this part of the recommendation, we request the BOP inform us... how it plans to determine whether chaplain candidates ever have received funds from foreign governments, and how it plans to verify chaplain candidates' foreign travel."

The OIGDOJ also expressed its concern about

the limitation of SME duties to a single currently-employed chaplain, as follows:

“in our review we found that one Muslim chaplain knew BOP contractor Warith Deen Umar in a professional setting several years before Umar joined the BOP, and the chaplain could have informed the BOP that Umar did not hold mainstream Islam values had he known at the time of Umar’s application that the BOP was considering hiring him as a contractor. We believe that the BOP can benefit significantly from the collective knowledge and experience of its current Muslim chaplains. We also believe that the BOP’s procedures for the recruitment, screening, and supervision of Muslim religious services personnel should draw on the expertise of more than one of its chaplains.”

OIGDOJ finally agreed with all other BOP responses to the recommendations in the original *Review*.

3.7 Center for Islamic Pluralism Comment on OIGDOJ Analysis of BOP Response to *Review*

CIP judged as positive OIGDOJ’s analysis of BOP’s response but maintains our opposition to the limitation of SME standing to currently employed chaplains. CIP also notes that no followup studies or other documents have been issued by the U.S. Justice Department. [33]

4. U.S. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT BUREAU OF PRISONS INVENTORY OF PRISON CHAPEL HOLDINGS IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS LITERATURE

4.1 DOJ-BOP Inventory of Islamic Religious Literature in Federal Prison Chapels

The 2004 U.S. Justice Department’s *Review* recommended “The BOP should conduct an

inventory of chapel books and videos and rescreen them to confirm that they are permissible under BOP security policies. The BOP should consider maintaining a central registry of acceptable material to prevent duplication of effort when reviewing these materials.” The Center for Islamic Pluralism requested, under the U.S. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) that the Bureau of Prisons inventory of Islamic religious literature held in federal prison chapels be turned over to CIP for analysis. The BOP completed and released its inventory to CIP on May 30, 2008. [34]

The BOP inventory of Islamic religious holdings in federal prison chapels comprises 23,386 individual print, video and audio items, in a form totaling 399 pages. CIP expresses its appreciation for the cooperation demonstrated by BOP in this matter.

Preliminary analysis of the inventory is disturbing. Prison Muslim chapel library holdings show a marked preponderance of Wahhabi and other fundamentalist Sunni literature and NOI materials. Shia and Sufi works are generally absent, as are works on broader aspects of Islamic history and culture.

Among the authors available to incarcerated Muslim readers, contemporary fundamentalist popularizers, including jihadist radicals, are startlingly well-represented. Taking into account erroneous spellings in the inventory, it includes only a half dozen copies of the Wahhabi edition of the *Qur’an*.

But it shows at least 280 works by Abdullah Hakim Quick, a Wahhabi-lining fundamentalist in South Africa. Quick’s listing includes videos preaching hateful attacks on Baha’is, as well as Ahmadis, a heterodox Muslim group, plus titles like *Muslims Under Siege* and *The Importance of Da’wa in Times of Crisis*, and pseudo-historical claims for an early Muslim presence in the Americas. The inventory further encompassed 250 items by another South African extremist, the late Ahmed Deedat, who became notorious as an

anti-Christian preacher, with such piquant titles as *Da'wa or Destruction*, as well as ferocious attacks on Salman Rushdie.

U.S. federal prison libraries also offer some 200 volumes by the Indian jihadist Abu'l Ala Mawdudi (1903-79). The inventory features approximately 200 products by the eccentric Turkish Islamist Harun Yahya, who is known for donating books printed in numerous languages around the world, many of them based on anti-Western conspiracy theories. It also lists some 185 works by a prominent North American fundamentalist, the Egyptian-born Jamal Badawi, 175 titles by Imam Siraj Wahhaj, the preacher best known for spreading Wahhabism among black Americans, and 125 by Jamal Zarabozo, an American Sunni radical of white origin. Each of these selections exceeds the number of 105 federal correctional institutions. Zarabozo is the compiler of an outrageously retrograde 1996 collection of Islamic *fatwas* on the status of women, which is, of course, available to reinforce anti-female attitudes among Muslim convicts in American prisons.

The selection of books on Islam available in American prisons lacks any semblance of pluralistic thought, and even slights the most famous classics of Islamic thought. Prison libraries should serve to educate and broaden the intellect of the incarcerated, not to reinforce extremist views. The inventory shows only a dozen volumes by the 12th century Muslim philosopher Ibn Rushd (Averroes), renowned throughout the world as a commentator on Aristotle. It lists less than a half dozen copies, altogether, of texts by the philosopher Alfarabi, the great Sufi Ibn Arabi, and the historian Ibn Khaldun, and not a single book by the Islamic polymath Ibn Sina (Avicenna).

The prison library register does encompass 50 volumes by the greatest Islamic theological figure after Muhammad and the defender of Sufism, al-Ghazali, and more than 25 copies of selections of the Sufi poet Rumi.

But other classic Sufi authors are lacking. Shia writers are only sporadically represented, with no more than a dozen copies of Shia classics like *The Peak of Eloquence*, comprising the commentaries of the caliph Ali, son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad and inspirer of the Shia sect. Chapel collections include some 50 English and Spanish editions of the *Qur'an* issued by the Shia publisher Tahrike Tarsile *Qur'an*. But these *Qur'ans* do not substitute for works explaining Shia doctrine.

The inventory shows 33 works by Yusuf al-Qaradawi, whose manual of sharia, *The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam*, is widely read by Sunnis. This means that approximately one in three prison Muslim chapel libraries includes this volume, which is habitually used to introduce new Muslims to fundamentalism.

In addition, one finds 30 copies of writings by Sayyid Qutb (1906-66), a leading earlier light of the Muslim Brotherhood. Prison libraries house 27 entries for the English edition of Ibn Abd Al-Wahhab's *Kitab al-Tawhid (The Book of Monotheism)*, the "classic" work of Wahhabi doctrine, which is incomprehensible to anybody other than a serious Islamic scholar or a person guided through an indoctrination process, and related texts on Ibn Abd al-Wahhab. The incidence of this specialized text, which is generally unknown to Muslim believers, mainstream clerics, and academics, is illustrative. *Kitab al-Tawhid* is found in the libraries of roughly 25 percent of federal prisons.

The 2004 Justice Department Inspector General's *Review* called for screening out unacceptable materials from Islamic chapel libraries. While many more of the books and videos included in the BOP's inventory, including the propaganda of Farrakhan's Nation of Islam, are objectionable, and others are, at least, ambiguous enough to require further analysis, the sample of extremist propaganda described herein comprises materials that should be removed forthwith and banned from further entry into prisons.

The conclusion we draw from an examination of the BOP Islamic chapel library inventory is that Islamic chaplaincies in the U.S. federal correctional system constitute an “interstate *medresa*” for the inculcation of radical Islam among the most vulnerable and some of the most dangerous elements in American society: correctional inmates, including many violent offenders with repeated convictions. The need for action to remedy this situation remains urgent.

5. APPENDIX: BRITISH PRISONS AND RADICAL ISLAM

5.1 Islamist radicalization in prisons is not limited to the United States.

Other Western countries, such as the United Kingdom, are also experiencing inmate indoctrination in jihadist and Islamist ideology.

A television documentary produced by UK Channel 4’s program *Dispatches*, titled *From Jail to Jihad* [35], reports on street gangs and inmates as part of an underworld permeated with a radical and dangerous interpretation of Islam. Traditional Islam is distorted by extremist clerics in Britain as in the U.S., while, like many African Americans, British and other European Muslim communities live in socially-insulated enclaves. This aggravates frustration and alienation among young Muslims.

England, with its rigid social and economic structure, now sees the emergence of Islamic extremism as an extensive subculture challenging the country’s national identity and security. The British Muslim population consists mainly of immigrants from South Asia and their descendants. Many first or second generation Muslims are tied to Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India even while seeking opportunity and freedom in Britain.

According to the Channel 4 documentary, Muslims comprise

approximately 11 percent of the UK prison population, while they make up 2.5 to three percent of the total British population. This datum alone illustrates the alienation of British Asian Muslims from the broader society.

In the UK as much as in the U.S., ex-inmates engaging in Islamist *da’wa* or recruitment after leaving prison are an important element of the radical movement. Inside H.M. Prison Brixton in London, officials express their concern about Islamic extremism. As in the U.S., British correctional staff are untrained in distinguishing between radical and moderate Islam. British officials do not wish to appear oppressive in dealing with Islamic extremism; they fear any aggressive action may cause a backlash creating more radicalization.

Also as in the U.S., the UK’s black non-Muslim population is a major target for radical recruitment. Many who are approached are former members of street gangs. Inside UK prisons young inmates are told that Islam justifies their criminal activities if they are directed against non-Muslims, including lawbreaking ranging from robbery to killing. Gang members, having become Muslims, may target drug dealers and steal from them to support the underground Islamist movement.

Terrorist training camps are a part of the indoctrination process, where jihadist recruits are taught to use explosives and celphones as detonators. They are also taught to strip, load, and reassemble firearms.

The abuse of Islam by militants and radicals within the Muslim community should primarily be dealt with by moderate Muslims. Government programs, whether in the U.S. or the UK will only establish short-term measures to address the growing problem. Muslims must condemn radical Islam and its effort to undermine Western society.

6. CENTER FOR ISLAMIC PLURALISM CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Center for Islamic Pluralism (CIP) firstly addresses itself to Muslims incarcerated in the U.S. correctional systems, who resent and resist aggression by Wahhabi chaplains. CIP invites any such Muslims to contact CIP at its Washington, DC address, describing their experiences and giving expression to their complaints. Any such communications will be kept strictly confidential. CIP notes that other moderate Muslim groups have received such complaints but failed to act on them.

CIP secondly proposes to develop a standard packet of Islamic books for donation to chapels and libraries U.S. correctional institutions.

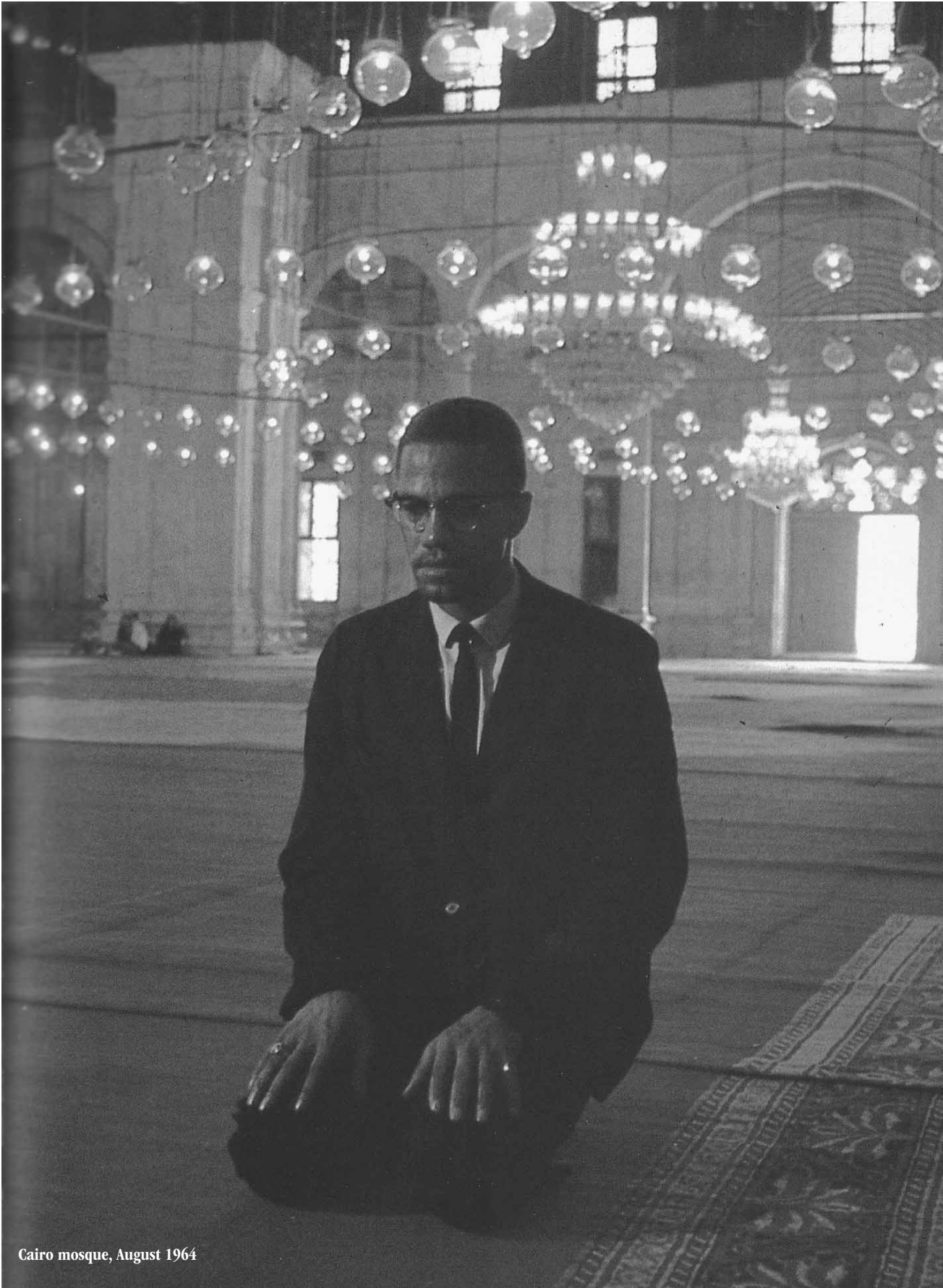
CIP, thirdly, calls on the U.S. Justice Department to review its recommendations from 2004 and to issue a supplemental review accounting for the proposed reform of the process.

Finally, CIP concludes this report with a question. Given that the OIGDOJ *Review* and subsequent official documentation repeatedly admitted the existence among prison Muslim religious service providers of dangerous attitudes toward violence, terrorism, subversion, and discrimination, why has the Department of Justice failed to adequately discuss dismissal of such personnel now employed, rather than simply screening future hires? Wahhabi clerics should be removed from employment at all U.S. and UK correctional institutions. There is no other solution.

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