

A WINDOW ON THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD IN AMERICA
An Annotated Interview with DHS Advisor Mohamed Elbiary

Ryan Mauro THE CLARION PROJECT

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Foreword

The Center for Security Policy is pleased to publish this informative interview with Mohamed Elbiary, a prominent Muslim advisor to the Department of Homeland Security. It is particularly instructive insofar as Elbiary is a prime-mover behind two of the Obama administration's most dangerous policies: (1) normalizing relations with domestic and foreign Islamist groups, including the Muslim Brotherhood, and (2) severely restricting enforcement of the nation's laws governing material support for terrorism.

At a moment when the Egyptian military is striving to dismantle the infrastructure of the Muslim Brotherhood in that country—including its political arm, the Freedom and Justice Party—it is incumbent upon Americans to consider what it and other Islamists who share an agenda of imposing shariah worldwide are doing here. An important window into the latter is provided by Elbiary's career and activism, first as a Texas-based terrorism consultant and founder of the (now-defunct) Freedom and Jus-

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tice Foundation in Plano, and more recently in his capacity as a member of the Department of Homeland Security's Advisory Committee and its Countering Violent Extremism Working Group.

Elibiary's official functions have been the focus of congressional and media attention, particularly in light of his controversial associations with leading American Islamists. These include the radical Assembly of Muslim Jurists of America and convicted Hamas fundraiser Shukri Abu Baker.

Troubling as such connections are, the implications of the policies Elibiary has espoused are even more worrying. For example, Elibiary's promotion of the narrative that the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamists are "moderates" appears to have been influential in encouraging the Obama administration's blindness to what is, in fact, an unbroken continuum between the ideology and goals of the Muslim Brotherhood and al Qaeda.

Moreover, Elibiary has insisted that even the most basic information about the doctrinal drivers of jihadist terror be purged from U.S. government training materials. Pursuant to the guidance he has helped President Obama promulgate, even quoting the Brotherhood's own written statements can be portrayed as "Islamophobia."

It is crucial for American citizens and their representatives to become engaged in a policy discussion about the true nature of the Muslim Brotherhood and its agenda. The Center for Security Policy hopes that this substantive interview—conducted by national security analyst Ryan Mauro, together with annotations from Mr. Mauro and the Center—will make plain the perils associated with the "civilization jihad" being waged by the Brotherhood in America, with help from well-placed advisors to the Obama administration like Mohamed Elibiary.

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Introduction

The conflict that the West finds itself in is not about a single organization like al-Qaeda or a single tactic like terrorism. These are merely the symptoms of the Islamist ideology—a political-religious belief system that views *shariah* as the Allah-approved form of governance for humanity, with its implementation throughout the globe as a divine, legal imperative.

Since 9/11, though, Islamists—most prominently, the Muslim Brotherhood—have sought to narrow our awareness of the scope of the conflict. They would have us believe that “moderate” and “mainstream” Islamism is an alternative and antidote to al-Qaeda and its violent jihadism.

In order to accomplish this, the Brotherhood needs to obscure its true character and achieve the sort of makeover that will appeal to, or at least encourage acquiescence in, the non-Islamic West and particularly the United States. That, in turn, requires that its critics be silenced, marginalized and suppressed. Consequently, the Muslim Brotherhood and its apologists routinely portray their opponents as “Islamophobes,” even when the latter are simply citing the Brotherhood’s own statements and internal documents.

Muslim Brotherhood-associated individuals and their friends have had far-reaching influence in recent years on US policy, both domestic and foreign. The Obama administration’s support for the Brotherhood in Egypt is but one example of their success.

Few of these individuals have been as successful as Mohamed Elbiary, a Texas-based Muslim who has parlayed his ties to other Islamists into the role of outreach facilitator for state and federal agencies to the Muslim-American community. He is the founder of Lone Star Intelligence LLC and the Freedom and Justice Foundation, the latter’s name using a formulation that happens to have been subsequently adopted by the Muslim Brotherhood as the brand of its political party in Egypt.

Elbiary has secured senior advisory positions at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) including as a member¹ of the Secretary’s Homeland Security Advisory Committee, the Department of Homeland Security Countering Violent Extremism Working Group² and the DHS Faith-Based Security and Communications Advisory Committee.³

Mohamed Elbiary has been invited to testify before Congress on US counter-terrorism policy. He is also an Associate Member of the International Association of

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Chiefs of Police (IACP), a member of the Intelligence and National Security Alliance (INSA) and a member of the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC).

In September 2011, then-FBI Director Robert Mueller awarded Mohamed Elibiary the Bureau's highest public service award for his involvement with several field offices in countering Homegrown Violent Extremism (HVE).

An indication of Elibiary's true colors can be found in a presentation he made in 2007 to the 4th Annual Assembly of Muslim Jurists of America (AMJA) Imam-training conference held jointly with the North American Imams Federation in California. Both are hardline Islamist groups. His presentation states:

- * "The Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt, Jordan, Tunis, etc. is a social movement for religious revival that seeks to Islamicize the society through cultural changing Dawah and that includes the political system, sound familiar? Yup you're right they are the Muslim world's version of the Evangelical Christian Coalition/Moral Majority movement."
- * "We must always resist the temptation to force one group such as Islamists to reform by adopting 'Liberalism' for example. That would be denying them their self-determination to structure their societies according to their public will."
- * "We should remember that them [Islamists] ruling their countries with Shariah law doesn't mean them coming to our country and using our planes to destroy our buildings."
- * It boasts of how his organization mobilized the Muslim community in Texas to "build expansive interfaith partnerships that include all of civic and political society in order to clarify the language used in the Global War on Terror (GWOT) in order to accurately define the enemy."

Elibiary received significant attention when Reps. Michele Bachmann, Trent Franks, Louie Gohmert, Tom Rooney and Lynn Westmoreland drew upon research conducted by the Center for Security Policy⁴ in writing letters about the US Muslim Brotherhood to the Inspector-Generals of the Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Defense Department, State Department and Justice Department. The June 13, 2012 letter to the Department of Homeland Security⁵ specifically mentioned Elibiary, naming him as one of three DHS advisors with "extensive ties to the Muslim Brotherhood, other Islamist organizations and causes." It also mentioned reports by investigative reporter Patrick Poole⁶ that Elibiary allegedly tried to leak confidential information for political purposes. Elibiary maintains that he was exonerated⁷ by the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security.

Elibiary granted me an exclusive, extensive and substantive interview via several lengthy email exchanges about the topic of the US Muslim Brotherhood, his personal associations and opinions. In our five-part interview, Elibiary made clear he speaks only for himself and not as a representative of the US government or any organization. The full text of the emails that constituted this interview appear at the Appendix. The annotations that accompany quotes from our interview by Elibiary (which are indented throughout) are mine.

At the outset, Elibiary establishes himself as a senior DHS advisor who:

- * Began as a teenager a tight friendship with a self-described Islamist named Shukri Abu Baker, who later was convicted of financing Hamas through his US Muslim Brotherhood entity, the Holy Land Foundation;
- * Donated to the Holy Land Foundation monthly since his first encounter with Baker until the Foundation was shut down by the US government;
- * Defends the innocence of this Hamas financier and depicts his prosecution as a case of political persecution;
- * Opposes the largest terrorism-financing prosecution in US history and the overall targeting of the US Muslim Brotherhood network;
- * Admits knowing the Muslim Brotherhood “social network” (as he calls it) in a “much more personal manner than the Average White Guy...”
- * Supports a partnership with Islamists, particularly the Muslim Brotherhood, in the US and abroad.

1. Elibiary and the Holy Land Foundation

We began by discussing the Holy Land Foundation, a US Muslim Brotherhood entity that was shut down for financing Hamas. Five of its officials, including its leader, Shukri Abu Baker, were convicted. This was the largest terrorism-financing trial in US history, making it central to any discussion of the US Muslim Brotherhood. It was during this trial that the 1991 US Muslim Brotherhood strategic plan written by a top Muslim Brother, Mohamed Akhram, was introduced into evidence. It was entitled *The Explanatory Memorandum on the General Strategic Goal of the Group in North America*⁸ and had as an attachment a list of twenty-nine of the Brotherhood’s “organizations and the organizations of our friends.”

The Justice Department’s roster of unindicted co-conspirators⁹ in the Holy Land case included many individuals and organizations associated with the Muslim Brother-

hood, including: the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and the North American Islamic Trust (NAIT). A federal judge upheld these designations in 2009¹⁰ citing “ample” evidence linking them to Hamas, but ruled that it was an error to make the list of unindicted co-conspirators public. Three appellate court judges confirmed that designation with respect to NAIT in 2010.

Mauro: Do you have any connection to the Holy Land Foundation (HLF)?

Elibiary: For background, I grew up in Dallas prior to the building of the Dallas Central Mosque in Richardson, and well over a decade before any of the founders of the Holy Land Foundation (HLF), the Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP) or any other associated entity moved into the Dallas Muslim community. My only connection to HLF was as a donor, and I published an op-ed¹¹ on November 1, 2007 in the *Dallas Morning News*, prior to HLF’s conviction, publicly outlining that experience.

In order to understand the significance of Elibiary’s 2007 op-ed¹² that he mentions above, it is necessary to understand the background of the Holy Land Foundation and its CEO, Shukri Abu Baker, who is now in prison along with four co-conspirators for financing Hamas.

Shukri Abu Baker’s first conversation with Elibiary was political, focusing on the alleged mistreatment of Palestinian civilians by Israel. Elibiary was so moved by the experience that he donated the first \$50 he ever put into his bank account to the Holy Land Foundation and donated monthly thereafter until the US government shut it down in 2001. Elibiary freely admits his intimate knowledge of the US Muslim Brotherhood network: “[O]ur government is playing a post-9/11 script it played in the 1960s against the Mafia, but this time against a social network it calls the ‘International Muslim Brotherhood.’ People like me know of the brotherhood group in a much more personal manner than the Average White Guy, who has no more insight than what’s available in the media.”

The influence of this “social network” was strong enough in Elibiary’s life to prompt him to write a letter in 2006¹³ defending Brotherhood theologian Sayyid Qutb, one of the main inspirers of Osama Bin Laden. He wrote, “I’d recommend everyone read Qutb, but read him with an eye to improving America not just to be jealous with malice in our hearts.”

In another statement, he agreed with the Islamist (specifically al-Qaeda) opinion that the West oppresses Muslims. In 2004, he wrote,¹⁴ “Just because I listen to Osama bin Laden’s tapes and agree that the West routinely insults Muslim dignity, that doesn’t make me al-Qaeda. By listening, I gain a better understanding of a philosophy I wish to counter.”

Elibiary (cont’d): I disclosed how, as a 16-year old teenager, I was solicited to become a donor, and my journey investigating what happened after the government closed HLF. After sharing about my investigation, I concluded with a warning against the strategy being deployed against HLF and a broader Muslim Brotherhood (MB) network, in the eyes of the government, as if they were an organized criminal syndicate akin to the mafia.

I viewed this strategy in 2007 as counterproductive to our national interest and instead called for an honest dialogue between the US and Islamists to find common ground and turn the page on the past.

Elibiary opined in the 2007 article that the US government’s prosecution of the Holy Land Foundation is a mistake like believing that there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq: “This global war on terror needs a new strategy, because we’re destroying ourselves more than al-Qaeda ever could.” The fundamental error, in Elibiary’s view, is that the US government is treating Islamists as enemies (though he agrees that Hamas is a terrorist group).

Elibiary went on: “... Mr. Baker told me during our coffee the day before the jury verdict: ‘How does America expect to be able to reach a middle ground with overseas Islamists against the violent extremists when it can’t even dialogue with its own Islamists at home?’” In other words, Baker identified himself as an Islamist. His illegal financing of Hamas may have been concealed from us, but not his ideological orientation.

Elibiary wrote that HLF CEO Baker is a victim of political persecution. “I found the Shukri Abu-Baker in whom I placed my trust 15 years ago to be an open book and not what has been fed to the media and the jury by our government. I found, much like the jury decided when presented with all the evidence, absolutely nothing ‘criminal’ and a case largely built on associations to convict First-Amendment-protected rights, whether we share those views or not.”

In a separate editorial in 2010¹⁵, Elibiary reacted to the guilty verdict in the Holy Land trial by again framing it as political persecution and warned of retribution:

“...Using the law to force compliance with unjust foreign policies by our government will simply trigger civil disobedience.”

In the next section, Elbiary gets closer to making explicit his attack on the foundation of the war on terror—but it is unclear whether those he is advising at the Department of Homeland Security know of it. At the heart of his critique is a desire to ensure that Islamist organizations in America never again face prosecution for material support for terrorism.

His comparison between the Justice Department’s treatment of the Mafia and its approach to the Muslim Brotherhood highlights some similarities between the two, but fails to note critical differences. Both organizations operate in great secrecy as they engage in various illegal activities. The Muslim Brotherhood, however, in contrast to organized crime, is an ideological organization. The criminal acts of the Brotherhood involve: (a) material support for groups and individuals committing acts of terrorism, (b) working toward the desire to fundamentally change the nature of American government and society, or (c) both.

In the following section of the interview, Elbiary stands with the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), claiming it to be an innocent “community organization,” on the grounds that it is not involved in criminal activity. Here again, Elbiary is arguing that the US government should not consider as subversive the group’s Islamist links or its efforts to insinuate shariah inside the United States.

Again, a bit of background is in order: CAIR’s predecessor, the Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP), was a known US Muslim Brotherhood entity with a pro-Hamas agenda. (Indeed, IAP was listed in the attachment to the Brotherhood’s *Explanatory Memorandum*.) In 1993, the US Muslim Brotherhood’s secret Palestine Committee, a secret body set up to support Hamas, held a meeting in Philadelphia that was wiretapped by the FBI. Participants included founders of CAIR, who explicitly discussed the need to create a new organization for the Islamist cause. CAIR was born the next year.

Federal prosecutors named CAIR an unindicted-conspirator in the Holy Land trial, specifically listing it as an entity of the US Muslim Brotherhood’s Palestine Committee. In a 2007 court filing, federal prosecutors said, “From its founding by Muslim Brotherhood leaders, CAIR conspired with other affiliates of the Muslim Brotherhood to support terrorists...the conspirators agreed to use deception to conceal from the American public their connections to terrorists.”¹⁶

Yet, here we have a senior DHS advisor actively defending and, as we will see, protecting the organization.

Mauro: Why did you disagree with the strategy deployed against the HLF and other Muslim Brotherhood front groups that the US government identified in 2007 court filings?

Elbiary: After the HLF was closed by President George W. Bush via an executive order in September 2001, I travelled to multiple states and met privately with a number of community leaders to understand what had been going on in order to figure out what the government's concerns were.

Years ago, I even sat through presentations at the FBI by the HLF case's investigative agents, reviewed myself thousands of pages of government evidence, discussed the matter privately at length with multiple HLF defendants, and as I mentioned in my 2010 congressional testimony,¹⁷ even discussed the ramifications of these matters upon community organizations such as CAIR with multiple national security officials including with FBI Director Mueller on one of my visits to FBI-HQ's Strategic Information and Operations Center.

Transcript from my 2010 Congressional testimony: "CAIR is a community organization...developed over the years by the community and does community civil rights work. Now, the founders, leaders, any individuals having association problems or have done anything criminal should be indicted. But the organization should exist. The organization should be left alone. We have a standard in this country for criminal activity, and that is the standard we should uphold for CAIR just like everybody else."

In addition to several years ago hosting FBI Directorate of Intelligence officials in my living room for discussions with Muslim community leaders untangling the HLF's legacy problems, I hosted in my home privately multiple prominent civic leaders like the Regional Anti-Defamation League Director to address concerns the Jewish community had stemming from HLF.

In his defense of the Holy Land Foundation, Elbiary and other opponents of the laws prohibiting material support for terrorism allege a systematic government effort aimed at "destroying the American-Muslim community's charitable nonprofit infrastructure."

This is, of course, a myth. Charitable organizations associated with any group are encouraged to operate freely, so long as they do not run afoul of US counter-terror statutes or other laws. For Elibiary, that is precisely the problem.

Elibiary (cont'd): I found that all the truly security-related concerns the US government or other American communities had stemming from counterterrorism trials like HLF were resolvable without destroying the American-Muslim community's charitable nonprofit infrastructure.

Next, in discussing the reception his ideas have received with the Brotherhood itself, he uses the phrase, "Islamic movement leaders." In their internal and external communications—most dramatically in their own *Explanatory Memorandum*—the Brotherhood and its offshoots like Hamas routinely identify themselves as part of the "Islamic Movement."

Mauro: What kind of reaction did you receive for voicing a different course of handling the US Muslim Brotherhood concerns stemming from the HLF trial?

Elibiary: Naturally, the alternative approach I outlined in my op-ed was welcomed by some and demonized by others as either too naïve of how truly evil the Muslim Brotherhood was or as too soft on fighting terror.

Those that welcomed it included many Islamic movement leaders and the Muslim Brotherhood's official website itself, *IkhwanWeb*, republished my *Dallas Morning News* op-ed on their own without contacting me. Similarly there were folks, within different parts of the US government, who privately let me know they thought my recommended course was the best thing for the country.

There were also two protagonist constituencies who naturally did not welcome my middle-of-the-road compromise offer to turn the page. There were material support to terrorism prosecution hawks, both inside the US government and outside in conservative networks, who viewed my public messaging with suspicion.

Similarly, there was a camp within my own Muslim community that viewed my recognition, even if implicit, of wrongdoing by Muslim community members in an attempt to turn the page with the US government (which many viewed as at war with Islam and/or too pro-Zionist) as a betrayal of Islam and the Palestinian cause. With both camps I have, over the years, spent many hours privately discussing and

working through their objections without ever polemically demonizing them in public as some of their supporters have done to me.

Elbiary appears here to be suggesting a compromise between those advocating a doctrinal analysis in the war on terror and Brotherhood-linked American Muslim groups, many of which would financially support designated terrorist organizations. In setting up such a dialectic, he equates those who wish to prosecute funding terrorist activity with those who would fund that activity. To expropriate his earlier Mafia example, Elbiary seems to posit a kind of equivalence between the FBI and the crime syndicates it chases. Of course, there are those whose views are outside his consideration. (In a later section of this interview, for example, Elbiary derides Muslim reformers whom he views as adversaries.)

Elbiary (cont'd): Non-Muslim critics of my approach raise concern about my work because they see me engaging broadly and very rarely marginalizing any American-Muslim group, but frankly if they ever spoke to me or reviewed my civic engagement history back when I ran the Freedom and Justice Foundation, then they'd see that I believe in a big-tent approach to civic engagement for the greater good and brotherhood amongst Muslims in the political space.

Elbiary goes on to attack the 'frame' through which we see the war on terror, decrying the idea of ideological battle at the root of both the Second World War and the Cold War.

Elbiary (cont'd): In the rare opportunities when I speak to such skeptical audiences, I explain to them how political propaganda demonizing the Muslim community broadly as a front for something sinisterly subversive overseas or superimposing the Cold War or World War Two's frame upon the Muslim-majority nations as if we're re-fighting communism or Nazism is not working for us, and a better alternative way of strategically-engaging and modeling our founding constitutional values exists.

While the struggle we are engaged in today is with neither Nazism nor communism, the people we fight in this war certainly have a cogent belief system that is at odds with America's national security interests and that would destroy and replace our core constitutional system of government. Describing that system of belief or ideology is something Elbiary would prevent at all costs. What he calls for, though, is even

more serious and alarming in scope; in suggesting an “alternative way of strategically-engaging and modeling *our founding constitutional values*.” What is he really calling for?

2. Elbiary and the Muslim Brotherhood

In Part 2 of our interview, Elbiary flatly states that neither he, nor any direct relative, is a member of the Muslim Brotherhood. But what does it mean to be a “member” of the Muslim Brotherhood? Groups known to be US Muslim Brotherhood entities similar demur when asked about their ties to the organization.

It must be understood that the Muslim Brotherhood is more than a political party. It often refers to itself as the “Islamic Movement.” In the excellent Norwegian documentary, *Freedom, Equality and the Muslim Brotherhood*,¹⁸ filmmaker and narrator, moderate Muslim Walid al-Kubaisi¹⁹ explains, “The Muslim Brothers’ leader says it is not essential that you are a registered member of the organization.”

A senior Brotherhood leader is then shown explaining his group’s presence in the West. He states that Brotherhood supporters do not have to declare themselves as members and should advance its agenda within the confines of the law when in non-Muslim countries. “*Those who believe in the Muslim Brothers’ fundamental idea is a Muslim Brother...* This person should serve the country he lives in and comply with the laws and regulations by the Muslim Brothers’ principles,” he says in the film.

Based upon the available information, I am unable to determine whether Elbiary technically qualifies as a “member of the Muslim Brotherhood” or as a “Muslim Brother.” But his strong affiliation with the Muslim Brotherhood network in America and affinity for the “fundamental idea” of the Brotherhood should give us pause. At the very least, he’s a Muslim Brotherhood supporter and therefore, his position at the Department of Homeland Security should be unsettling for all who understand the Brotherhood’s mission of destroying America from within, and its decades-long subversive efforts to just that.

Mauro: You have been accused of having connections to the Muslim Brotherhood by some members of Congress and media outlets here and overseas, like the Egyptian magazine *Rose El-Youssef*²⁰. What is your connection with the Muslim Brotherhood?

Elbiary: I granted one mainstream media interview to the *Huffington Post*²¹ last summer during Rep. Bachmann’s controversial public call up-

on the Department of Homeland Security Inspector General to investigate whether I might be influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood.

In that interview, I publicly revealed that neither I, nor any direct relative of mine both here in the US and in Egypt, has ever been a member of the Muslim Brotherhood or has ever been an unindicted associate in any Muslim Brotherhood-related investigation either in the US or in Egypt. That includes all the Holy Land Foundation-associated investigations.

I was busy working in the private sector and starting my family pre-9/11, so I was not active within the Muslim community or played any role pre-9/11 with the Holy Land Foundation (HLF) or any other organization.

Plus, as the son of an Egyptian military officer, nephew of other Egyptian military academy officers and extended relative to yet other currently serving officers; my pedigree was certainly well-vetted for any Muslim Brotherhood connections by Egyptian intelligence agencies in the Sadat and Mubarak administrations which brutally suppressed the Muslim Brotherhood. All that is in addition to the security vetting I received by the Department of Homeland Security, FBI and other intelligence community agencies when I received my US classified security clearance.

So, bottom line, I'm not a member of the Muslim Brotherhood or any other secret society out there for that matter. I simply find it counterproductive to American national security interests to treat the Muslim Brotherhood like the mafia, Nazi party, fascists, communists or any other entity we politically ostracize. Some have mistakenly interpreted my public messaging as pro-Islamist simply because it wasn't anti-Islamist, but that is their mistake and not mine.

In the next question, you can see Elbiary's efforts to disinform Americans about the Muslim Brotherhood. Elbiary states that the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood is non-violent and explicitly denies that it is *jihadist*. To make this case, he must ignore its recent history running Egypt. He must also completely disassociate the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood from its Palestinian wing, Hamas.

In fact, the difference between the parent organization and its franchise is only one of circumstances. The Brotherhood follows a doctrine called "gradualism,"²² an incremental, adaptable approach towards *jihad*. In January 2013, the *Clarion Project* re-

ported on a video showing Hamas leaders pledging allegiance²³ to the Brotherhood and, specifically, its *jihad*. And, of course, the American Muslim Brotherhood privately has described²⁴ its “work in America as a kind of grand jihad...in eliminating and destroying the Western civilization from within.”

It must be emphasized here that Elibiary’s views regarding the Muslim Brotherhood are being expressed by someone who is influential within the Obama administration’s policy-making process. We are not engaging in an academic exploration of Islamism that is confined to a classroom.

Supporters of the US Muslim Brotherhood often deny its existence. Elibiary sets himself somewhat apart here by admitting that it has existed in America “for a very long time.” He insists, however, that it is of no concern because it operates within the law.

Mauro: What is your view of the Muslim Brotherhood?

Elibiary: I do not view the Muslim Brotherhood as a single global syndicate or *tanzim*, as it is referred to in Arabic. Muslim Brotherhood members naturally exist everywhere at this point, but that’s not a problem in and of itself because there have been MB members inside the US abiding by the law for a very long time.

In every country, one can find areas of similarities amongst the MB-like or even -affiliated Islamist movement there, but one can also find a great deal of differences driven by local dynamics in how they operate and what objectives they’re pursuing. Bottom line, there are many Muslim Brotherhoods and not necessarily one Global Muslim Brotherhood group. I am aware of different initiatives by MB over the decades to stand up to its international *tanzim*, as well as how some other nations’ MB have or continue to have influence over their *tanzims* residing here inside the US, but all these are minor efforts and not currently a threat to our national security.

MB in Egypt is a pragmatic, non-violent and generally pluralistic socio-political movement by Egyptian cultural standards. It is not accurate to paint MB-Egypt as dogmatic, violent or autocratic, much less more sensationalized terms like dictatorial, totalitarian or *jihadist*.

Again, Muslim Brotherhood doctrine has always been explicitly *jihadist*—and, indeed, “dictatorial” and “totalitarian”—in character; this ideological foundation extends from its founding until today. If the Brotherhood can be described as anything, however, it should

be “dogmatic.” Its two most prominent ideologies, founder Hasan al-Banna and Sayid Qutb, concerned themselves with the proper way of “Islamizing” a society steeped in unbelief. The insight essential to both their visions (and, what would be Brotherhood doctrine well into the 21st Century) is the concept of imposing Islamic law in “stages” or, as Qutb called them, “Milestones.” More than a mere tactical concern, these *Milestones* (described in Qutb’s book of the same name) were designed to correspond with the method of immersion used to introduce the religion and legal system to the first generation of Muslims in Mohammed’s time. In addition to tactical concerns, the Brotherhood’s desired end-state—a Caliphate governed by Islamic law—clearly would be considered totalitarian. Elbiary’s description of the group is inaccurate, and he depends on the unfortunate ignorance of those he advises.

Elbiary (cont’d): MB-Egypt is not entirely transparent, but that is not entirely its fault because it is operating within a police state. I believe that MB-Egypt will democratize and liberalize its decision-making gradually as the Egyptian state security services grant it more freedom to operate within the law as a civic non-governmental organization.

With only two years post the Mubarak era, I believe that MB and its political arm, the Freedom and Justice Party, has by and large acted responsibly, if not always effectively, during the democratic transition period that Egypt is in the very early stages of.

While it will ultimately be up to the Egyptian people what form of governance and political system they want for their country, I believe we in the US should help them within limits as a neutral party. I do not and have never believed that democracy or any semblance of freedom for Egyptians would be possible without the political mainstreaming of the MB.

In the preceding passage, Elbiary praised the toppled Egyptian regime of Muslim Brotherhood’s Freedom and Justice Party for acting “by and large responsibly” during its time in power. Its president, Mohammed Morsi, rewrote a constitutional declaration to give his office sweeping, in-fact “dictatorial” authority. In November 2012, Morsi pushed through a Constitution that restricted basic rights and freedoms, undermines women and minorities and—as was its intent—solidified authoritarian Islamic law in Egypt.²⁵ After exempting his decrees from judicial review, he had the support of his party in an attempt to force the resignation of thousands of secular judges who would be hostile to the imposition of shariah.²⁶ In addition, during the first Muslim Brotherhood-led regime in that nation’s

history, violence against women and Christians in Egypt increased; once Morsi was removed from power, the Brotherhood unleashed a new wave of terror against Coptic Christians.²⁷ Since this interview was conducted, a local office of the Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party urged attacks on Coptic churches,²⁸ accusing them of violating the *dhimmi* pact that considers them second-class citizens according to Islamic law.²⁹

Elbiary (cont'd): I am fully aware of how controversial my viewpoint is within certain circles. However, despite the hundreds of complaints public citizens have recently sent to the Department of Homeland Security, articles written in American and Egyptian media outlets, as well as complaints by certain Congressmen; I felt this was the right position for me to publicly express the past several months, as it became obvious Egypt was headed for a major crisis of governance.

Our country is the largest military aid supplier to Egypt, so we have a moral responsibility in my opinion as Americans to speak up when we see that military might being turned upon civilian Egyptian democracy advocates, be they secular or religious.

Currently I do not assess any national security concerns to the US homeland from the MB, but I can clearly see a political challenge for the United States and a geopolitical challenge for allies of ours in the neighborhood, such as Israel and the Royal Family of Saudi Arabia, should the MB succeed politically in Egypt. MB-Egypt is truly a grassroots organization and like many other similar social networks native to the Mediterranean region from southern Europe to North Africa, they are also a patronage network with a healthy appetite for hard negotiations.

Fresh from praising the Brotherhood in the passages above, Elbiary next comes down explicitly in favor of the disastrous Muslim Brotherhood-engagement policies put into practice by the Obama administration since its inception in 2009. What he proposes is a kind of "realpolitik" foreign policy—albeit one that would completely discount the true character of what is a thoroughly ideological movement. It would enlist the United States as the enabler of *shariah*-fueled anti-American movements worldwide.

Notice that, in the previous passage, Elbiary correctly cites the threat his suggested policies would represent to our current allies in the region. He nonetheless presses for the advance of Islamists' interests in the region.

Elbiary (cont'd): Some anti-Islamist US national security analysts attempt to preempt this dynamic by saying that we should disrupt or undermine the MB in Egypt through a variant of the Cold War's contain-

ment strategy so we then wouldn't have to deal with them in the future. I fall in the camp that believes this is a fool's errand and misguided strategy that will end with the US undermining its already diminished leadership in the region.

So, ironically, to increase US influence in the post-Mubarak Egypt and safeguard American interests and allies in the region, our government needs to deepen our strategic engagement with MB to increase partnerships in areas of mutual benefit to both of our nations. As counter-intuitive and controversial in certain corners as that sounds, this strategy is what is best for our national interests and allies in the Middle East region a decade out and longer.

3. Elibiary's Relationship with American Islamists

The takeaway from this section is how Elibiary has close relationships with a wide array of American Islamist groups, even if he claims that he has disagreements with some of their views. As mentioned in Part 1, internal US Muslim Brotherhood documents identify many of these groups as "our organizations and the organizations of our friends." The Justice Department similarly labeled a number of groups, including the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), the North American Islamic Trust (NAIT), and a list of individuals as belonging to the US Muslim Brotherhood. And a federal judge found the government's evidence convincing concerning ties between the Muslim Brotherhood's Palestinian franchise, Hamas, and CAIR, ISNA and NAIT.³⁰

Mauro: What is the extent of your relationship with groups like the Council on American-Islamic Relations, Islamic Society of North America, North American Islamic Trust, Islamic Circle of North America, International Institute of Islamic Thought, Muslim American Society and the Assembly of Muslim Jurists of America?

Elibiary: As a Texas-based Muslim community leader who's done work in a couple of dozen states, I have naturally interacted with leaders from all these and other mainstream Muslim community groups, including speaking to their constituencies. I don't have any special relationship with any of them, but I am generally friendly with these and all other organizations servicing the community.

When I have found common ground with these or other community-based groups, I have cooperated with them on civic engagement projects; and where I've disagreed with their positions, I have offered their leadership my criticism in private and proceeded to do my own work.

This statement appears to understate dramatically the extent of Mohamed Elbiary's cooperation with Muslim Brotherhood fronts, even as it promotes the Brothers' narrative that theirs are "mainstream" organizations. For example, Elbiary has appeared publicly with Jamal Badawi,³¹ an unindicted co-conspirator³² in the Holy Land trial owing to his active fundraising for the group. His name appears in a 1992 US Muslim Brotherhood³³ directory.

Badawi's website³⁴ says he is "active" in the Islamic Society of North America, a US Muslim Brotherhood entity that, like CAIR, was an unindicted co-conspirator³⁵ in the Hamas-fundraising trial. ISNA's website listed him as a "Member at Large" of its board until the website was renovated this year. In 2009, Badawi referred to³⁶ Hamas terrorists as "martyrs." In 2010, Badawi endorsed³⁷ the "combative jihad" of Palestinians and Muslims who face "unprovoked aggression or to resist severe oppression."

Badawi is also a founder of the Muslim American Society, which federal prosecutors said in 2008³⁸ was "founded as the overt arm of the Muslim Brotherhood in America." In 2004, Abdurrahman Alamoudi, a convicted terrorist and formerly secret member of the US Muslim Brotherhood, said³⁹ "Everyone knows that MAS is the Muslim Brotherhood." In a recent documentary⁴⁰, Alamoudi infers its ongoing existence, writing, "I am, I hope, still a member of the Muslim Brotherhood organization in the USA."

Even more illuminating is Elbiary's characterization of his efforts to assist such Muslim Brotherhood organizations in their dealings with US law enforcement agencies.

Elbiary (cont'd): For example, multiple media outlets have publicized that, perhaps more than any other, I have labored to build up community cooperation with the FBI and law enforcement post-9/11. Some of these organizations you mentioned, frankly only a few years ago, adopted a public boycott position towards the FBI. So that was one example where our grassroots messaging to community activists were 180 degrees apart, and so I shared my views with their leadership in private and didn't turn the disagreement into a public matter.

As a result, I disclosed in my 2010 congressional testimony⁴¹ and CNN published in 2009,⁴² that when the “Virginia 5” disappearance to Pakistan situation happened and the families went to the Council on American-Islamic Relations, CAIR called my cell phone in Dallas and agreed to let me immediately liaison in the FBI.

Elibiary criticizes the labeling of “mainstream Muslim community organizations” as Islamists or Muslim Brotherhood legacy groups. Yet, as we have seen, the Muslim Brotherhood itself has established in its internal documents that the Brothers consider many of these “community” groups as “our organizations and organizations of our friends.” Indeed, Elibiary refers to them as Brotherhood-linked throughout this interview.

Importantly, Elibiary’s own, albeit now-defunct organization, the Freedom & Justice Foundation, itself had links with Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated groups. He defends these groups, as a public relations problem for them is a PR problem for him. But the *Global Muslim Brotherhood Daily Report*⁴³ documents that many of his organization’s Advisory Council members have served as officials with CAIR, ISNA and even the Muslim American Society (MAS), which as we have seen, the US government considers to be “the overt arm of the Muslim Brotherhood in America”⁴⁴ His Advisory Council also has affiliations with the Islamic Association of North Texas and its Hamas-linked Dallas Central Mosque. Both are connected to the US Muslim Brotherhood and the Holy Land Foundation, the *GMBDR* reports.⁴⁵

One affiliation of Elibiary’s that *is* mentioned is his fellowship with the American Civic Leadership Institute from 2008 to 2009. The organization’s list of speakers⁴⁶ includes Elibiary and Islamists like Zaid Shakir, who justifies attacks on US soldiers and preaches that the US Constitution is inferior to shariah because it grants equality to Muslims and non-Muslims. Alumni include several officials from Brotherhood-linked groups like CAIR and ISNA.

Mauro: How was your organization, the Freedom and Justice Foundation, accepted by these controversial groups?

Elibiary: Since beginning my community advocacy post-9/11, I have always held a high degree of confidence in the American Muslim community and its patriotism. Therefore, since even before registering the Muslim community nonprofit I co-founded, the Freedom and Justice Foundation (F&J), I reached out to dozens of community leaders from across many local North Texas Muslim congregations, as well as national organizations and convened a meeting with five dozen of them in a

Dallas-area hotel to lay out my plans. I invited everyone to join us as we would set out to interconnect Texas Muslim communities and build state-level interfaith community alliances and public policy influence.

In the six years that F&J directly coordinated state-level advocacy by Texas Muslim communities, different community organizations accepted us as a big-tent independent group at different paces. For example, the Houston chapter of CAIR was initially very encouraged and supportive of our Texas Muslim Legislative Day at the State Capitol initiatives, more than, say, the Dallas chapter of CAIR.

Similarly with the Muslim American Society (MAS) chapters, some like in San Antonio were supportive of F&J's civic engagement efforts from the start while other MAS chapters were either slow coming on board or opposed to our efforts for a number of years. Along the way, I'd meet with many community leaders and share our centrist vision for the state of Texas all the way out to 2040.

Elibiary makes no mention of the Muslim American Society's connections with the Muslim Brotherhood. For example, in 2004, the Society's then-Secretary General said that, "Ikhwan [the Brotherhood's name in Arabic] members founded MAS...."⁴⁷ As noted above, convicted al-Qaeda financier and longtime Muslim Brother Abdurrahman Alamoudi confirmed this in 2012, saying, "everyone knows that MAS is the Muslim Brotherhood."⁴⁸

Elibiary promotes himself as an interlocutor with various factions of the Texas Muslim community. Comments like those below doubtless promoted the image of a valuable outreach agent that resulted, among other things, in his award from FBI Director Mueller and his appointment to various governmental advisory boards.

Elibiary (cont'd): Being a community of over a half-million Texans and from every background, I naturally ended up learning a lot about the schisms amongst Muslims globally. As an example, in FJF's second year after having passed Texas' first Muslim-related law with the aid of a Jewish legislator, I reached out to the Salafi community and brought one of their senior clerics to give the first Friday Muslim congregational prayer literally inside the Texas State Capitol.

I would end up having to address concerns by Texas Shia Muslim activists for including Salafi Muslims, and when I agreed to speak to Shia Muslim audiences or accept an invitation from my governor to attend a private banquet for the Agha Khan, leader of Ismaeli Muslims, I would

end up having to similarly address concerns amongst some Sunni Muslim community leaders.

Another problematic Muslim group with which Elibiary acknowledges having close ties is the Assembly of Muslim Jurists of America. He states that he “spent a week with dozens of very senior Salafi scholars” from the group discussing Islamic jurisprudence. The *Clarion Project* has shown that AMJA is an extremist organization by almost any definition.⁴⁹ Its fatwas call for the gradual establishment of *Sharia Law* in America using deception; marital rape; *jihad* against Israel and ban Muslims from joining the FBI or serving the US military in a combat capacity.

As mentioned in Part 1, Elibiary’s organization gave a pro-Islamist presentation at an AMJA conference in 2007 that compared the Muslim Brotherhood to Evangelical Christian groups.

In this interview, Elibiary elaborates on his role in bringing a senior Salafi cleric “to give the first Friday Muslim congregational prayer literally inside the Texas State Capitol.” It is unclear if this Salafi cleric was from AMJA.

Elibiary (cont’d): If we truly, as Americans, believe in our system of governance and Constitution as the best mankind ever created, then why would we fear allowing everyone to transparently bring their ideas forward in the public square to debate?

A number of years ago, at the height of tensions across the US vs. Islam divide with hundreds of Muslims dying daily in American-occupied Iraq, I spent a week with dozens of very senior Salafi scholars at an Assembly of Muslim Jurists of America meeting, discussing in classical Arabic, relations with our country from an Islamic Jurisprudence perspective.

Being a young man presenting before such an audience, which naturally included a number of scholars with publicly-available fatwas not very friendly to US relations, I found that properly engaged and debated, we Americans can build effective partnerships across a number of Islamic movements towards shared interests.

By contrast with his many associations with Muslim Brotherhood and like-minded organizations, Mohamed Elibiary has an adversarial relationship with Muslim reformers. In this interview, he defends Islamists while sharply criticizing their Muslim opponents. His opposition to Muslim reformers likely influenced the DHS training

guidelines⁵⁰ that warned that “trainers who are self-professed ‘Muslim reformers’ may further an interest group agenda instead of delivering generally accepted unbiased information.”

Elbiary (cont'd): That’s my way. There are other Muslim advocates of reform who have instead publicly chosen to politically-demonize, in conservative media outlets, mainstream Muslim community organizations as “Islamists.” Labeling these or other Muslim community organizations as either “Muslim Brotherhood-associated” or “Muslim Brotherhood-legacy” in my opinion is counterproductive and has largely marginalized those “anti-Islamist” activists in Muslim communities and mainstream media outlets, thereby leaving many to question what their value is after all is said and done to the real cause of reform.

In short, Elbiary evinces a clear affinity for and pattern of activism on behalf of Islamists and hostility towards Muslims who oppose them and their shariah agenda for America. Most Americans would find unbelievable the idea that their government regards such an individual, and others like him, as its preferred interlocutors with Muslim American community.

4. Elbiary’s Influence and “Islamophobia”

In this part of the interview, Elbiary admits that the US Muslim Brotherhood existed in the late 1980s and early 1990s, but tries to downplay its presence and influence in subsequent years. For proof, he cites its internal communications complaining about the group’s inability to control the Muslim-American community. When I pointed out that those communications were decades ago, Elbiary asserts that subsequent developments have made “the concept of a US Muslim Brotherhood becomes even more of an absurd overreach.”

Mauro: Why do you think concern about the US Muslim Brotherhood, whose existence was proven during the Holy Land Foundation trial, is “Islamophobia” and what do you think should happen as a result?

Elbiary: American Muslim Brotherhood leaders themselves, as far back as the late 1980s and early 1990s in publicly-available documents from the HLF trial, lament the fact that the American Muslim community had grown way too large for them to influence it. Add to that another

nearly three decades of further growth and the concept of a US Muslim Brotherhood becomes even more of an absurd overreach.

In other words, Elbiary would have us believe that, if the Muslim Brotherhood operates at all in America, it is of no consequence. What is truly an “overreach” is the idea that, because the US Muslim Brotherhood network once complained it did not enjoy as much Muslim support as it would like, the group amounts to nothing today. As has been discussed previously, most of the organizations the Brotherhood has identified as its own and affiliated entities still exist. And many of those associated with these organizations back when Elbiary acknowledges they were Brotherhood groups are still active in the Muslim American community.

For instance, a 2009 Hudson Institute study⁵¹ examined the Islamic Society of North America, the largest Brotherhood front in the United States. It concluded, “All but one of the individuals listed on the ISNA founding documents remain active either in ISNA or one of its affiliated organizations.” The study also noted that ISNA and other Brotherhood affiliates “continue to exist in their original form.” In addition, a 2004 *Chicago Tribune* investigation⁵² provided a similar expose by giving its readers “a rare look at [the] secretive [Muslim] Brotherhood in America.”

Elbiary (cont’d): Plus, as part of my engagement with Muslim communities across the country, I have met privately with all the major national Muslim organizations regularly demonized as “front groups” for the Muslim Brotherhood and gained from them all a very clear understanding of their perspectives on Islamism/Political Islam in our country. In my opinion, these community organizations are in 2013 operating as American organizations fully within the bounds of US law for the benefit of the American Muslim community and broader American society.

If it’s a matter of recognizing and addressing legitimate security concerns about the “US Muslim Brotherhood,” you’d be hard pressed to find someone who’s done more substantively on the topic than I have over the past decade.

As the FBI’s own press release⁵³ about some of my work stated, I’ve been building up community-based partnerships with law enforcement since 2003. One can’t do that in the Dallas-based environment where I grew up without first addressing the mess left behind by HLF. Therefore, it’s illogical to ever accuse me of being dismissive of legitimate “concerns about the US Muslim Brotherhood” as simply “Islamophobia.”

What Elbiary seems to be saying here is basically “trust me.” He assures us he is sensitive to “legitimate concerns” about the US Muslim Brotherhood. He has met with what have been considered to be Muslim Brotherhood front groups and satisfied himself about their “perspectives on Islamism/Political Islam in our country.” He believes that they are “operating as American organizations fully within the bounds of US law.”

But Elbiary’s goes on to make clear that he thinks some aspects of US law should not apply to these organizations—namely, the prohibitions on material support for terrorism. He goes on to describe the interference he has run with the US government on behalf of Muslim Brotherhood entities in America. The implication seems to be that the US government was preparing to indict components of the US Muslim Brotherhood network besides the Holy Land Foundation—and, that he played a role in stopping it from happening.

Elbiary (cont’d): The bottom line is that my decade-plus track record is clear to anyone with an objective eye. In my career, I have both advocated in defense of the Muslim community as well as directly pioneered the at-times dangerous counter-ideological work associated with several of our nation’s biggest homegrown terrorism investigations.

Post-9/11, I decided to respond by assisting our government counter threats to the homeland from al-Qaeda and its associated allies. Simultaneously, I helped my community pick up the pieces and safeguard its nonprofit organizations, in order to protect its liberties, after the HLF’s closure and eventual conviction.

A segment of our fellow Americans see those two goals as mutually exclusive. I naturally disagree with that assessment and my track record indicates that. I staked out a flag early after HLF was closed that, due to some mistakes made before 9/11 by community members, the criminal trial should be allowed to proceed and the criminal justice system’s verdict respected. But the corollary to my position was that if the Muslim community leadership and the government can mutually reconcile and turn a new page, then the targeted national Muslim community organizations should be allowed to proceed anew.

This passage is instructive in several respects. In it, Elbiary makes plain his work in promoting the false narrative that “the threat to the homeland” comes only from “al Qaeda and its associated allies.” This characterization of the threat has as its corollary the contention that the Muslim Brotherhood and its front organizations he has described as “mainstream” must be viewed not as the problem but as part of the solution.

To that end, he has worked to “safeguard [his community’s targeted] nonprofit organizations” after the HLF verdicts and to encourage the government to allow them to “proceed anew.”

Elbiary seems to be alluding to his efforts to protect American Islamists from further prosecution in connection with material support for terrorism. This substantiates reporting in April 2011 by counterterrorism expert Patrick Poole⁵⁴ that the Justice Department stopped planned indictments of HLF co-conspirators, including a founder of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, several officials with the International Institute of Islamic Thought and the now-defunct SAAR Group.

In the following comments, Elbiary describes how he accomplished this feat by professing a “middle-of-the-road position” that acknowledged America’s “legitimate security concerns about Muslim Brotherhood-associated networks,” yet worked to ensure that such networks could raise funds for their favored “charities” without fear of prosecution. Never mind that such charities would include Brotherhood organizations and activities that appear to involve material support for terrorism.

Elbiary (cont’d): Staking out that middle-of-the-road position that would satisfy all of the government’s legitimate security concerns about Muslim Brotherhood-associated networks providing material support to terrorism and the organized Muslim community maintaining certain nonprofits and their civic engagement capabilities, naturally was not acceptable to absolutists at both ends of the spectrum.

There were those voices in the Muslim community who wondered if I might be a sellout because I wouldn’t join the HLF’s Hungry for Justice Coalition and instead staked out an independent public messaging line in the media. Similarly, there were voices in the anti-Islamist advocacy community, including their law enforcement and media allies, who frankly continue to see that, because I won’t accept the marginalization and eventual indictment of the HLF unindicted co-conspirator community organizations, that I can’t be fully trusted in a post-9/11 Global War on Terror.

Naturally, I have been happy to see, by and large, the United States government arrive at a similar endpoint as I staked out a decade ago in Dallas. As has been reported in multiple conservative media outlets over the past few years, the long-desired HLF 2.0 trial for the unindicted co-conspirators is no longer going to happen.

So with the HLF 1.0 trial's appeal process now complete and no more HLF-associated "US Muslim Brotherhood" trials coming, an honest and frank discussion should publicly happen between all the parties so our country can move forward.

Mohamed Elbiary's willingness—however expedient, transitory or insincere it may have been—to acknowledge "legitimate national security concerns" about the Brotherhood's networks puts him at odds with most of his ideological allies in Muslim activism—and, indeed, the mainstream media and far-left activists as well. They default to viewing the mountains of court-admitted evidence of the Brotherhood's web of influence in America as little more than a conspiracy theory. As we shall see, however, he seems perfectly prepared later in the interview to embrace this narrative and use it as a cudgel against his critics.

Turning to "Islamophobia," this term is all too often used as a political weapon and fundraising appeal. Of course, there have been some incidents of discrimination and hatred towards Muslims. But the sustained use of the "Islamophobia" term was being used by Islamists long before September 11, 2001.⁵⁵

In fact, according to Abdur-Rahman Muhammad, a former member of an influential US Muslim Brotherhood entity called the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), he attended a group meeting in the early 1990s where the Islamists present discussed using the term against their opponents. He later said, "This loathsome term is nothing more than a thought-terminating cliché conceived in the bowels of Muslim think tanks for the purpose of beating down critics."⁵⁶

It is instructive that Mohamed Elbiary is perfectly prepared to use Islamophobia toward that end.

Elbiary (cont'd): Islamophobia or anti-Muslim bigotry as I prefer to call it, today in "God's greatest nation" as Michael Medved says, to me comes in three varieties. The first form of Islamophobia is simply an irrational bigotry towards anything Islam- or Muslim-related, and that's a very small percentage of our population that I don't really worry about because it's driven by a diminishing emotional radicalization dynamic.

The second form of Islamophobia is a Western civilization phenomenon, aptly coined "anti-Semitism on training wheels" by Suhail Khan, a former Bush White House official, during his debate with Frank Gaffney of the Center for Security Policy at the Harbor League years ago.⁵⁷

This form is strongly rejected by Jewish community leaders because it smacks of a “Protocols of Elders of Zion”-type narrative about Muslims trying to take over the world. It tells Americans that Islamic theology is uniquely a threat to our way of life and therefore needs special preventative legal measures, just as in centuries past, Western anti-Semites used to make the same arguments of Jews and their faith as being incompatible with enlightened European Christian values.

The third form of Islamophobia treats the 2013’s organized American Muslim community as a counter-intelligence subversive front group for the international Islamist movement known as the Muslim Brotherhood. This approach treats the American Muslim community with undeserved and unfair suspicion, and marginalizes a sizable portion of our fellow citizens out of the political mainstream, like a pariah.

I, more than most, have gone out of my way to sit down with fellow Americans who find themselves concerned about Muslim Brotherhood associations within the American Muslim community to help them find peace of mind after separating fact from fiction.

Unlike some other Muslim community leaders who’ve wholesale labeled all Americans in this category as similar to the “anti-Semitism on training wheels” second category of “Islamophobia,” I have privately gone out of my way to speak graciously with those who’ve most viciously attacked me publicly as a subversive threat myself to our national security and offered to clarify their misunderstandings in this area.

Mohamed Elbiary’s parsing of the kinds of people he believes should be described as Islamophobes or anti-Muslim bigots is a classic example of an influence operation. By affecting an air of reasonableness and an openness to “clarify [others] misunderstandings” in order to “separate fact from fiction.” Elbiary has sought to deflect scrutiny from the abundant evidence that Islamist doctrines, organizations and activities do, indeed, constitute a threat to the United States. It is not unreasoning to fear such a threat; indeed, there is a legitimate basis for doing so and for striving to counter it.

Speaking of influence operations, in October 2011, Patrick Poole broke the story⁵⁸ that Elbiary was suspected of trying to leak confidential information for political purposes. The Director of the Texas Department of Public Safety confirmed that Elbiary downloaded the documents in question. Elbiary has claimed that he was cleared of any misconduct. And, indeed, when questioned about the charges by Congressman Louie Gohmert, Secretary Napolitano appeared to deny Poole’s story. Yet, she was respond-

ing to a question about whether Elibiary tried to leak “classified” information. Poole never asserted that the documents were classified; he said they were marked “Law Enforcement Sensitive.”

In addition, in response to Elibiary’s contention that a DHS investigation had exonerated him, Poole told the *Clarion Project* that the Department of Homeland Security: “At no time was I or my source ever contacted by anyone at DHS. How could they have done an investigation with only one side being heard?”

To hear Elibiary tell it, Patrick Poole and Rep. Gohmert would appear to fall into one or the other of his categories of “Islamophobes.”

Elibiary (cont’d): For example, in early 2011, after completing my speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC), I approached Patrick Poole, a terrorism investigative reporter, and handed him my business card offering to talk and explain things after his public broadside of me in Andrew Breitbart’s *Big Peace* news site for helping the Department of Homeland Security with its Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) policies.

I never heard from Patrick until 8 months later when he emailed me requesting my response to his charge against me of mishandling classified intelligence, a charge I would later be publicly cleared of a few months later in a congressional hearing after an investigation by our government.

Similarly with Texas Congressman Louie Gohmert, as he personally recalled our interaction on a conservative talk radio program, I privately walked up to him in June 2012 at the Texas GOP Convention and offered to answer any of his concerns about my work. Unfortunately, the Congressman declined my offer and proceeded to, within about a month in partnership with Congresswoman Michele Bachmann, Congressman Trent Franks and others, to fire off a letter to the Inspector General of DHS requesting I get investigated for Muslim Brotherhood influence.

The questions Reps. Bachmann, Gohmert and their colleagues asked the Inspectors General to investigate remain unanswered. In light of what has happened in the interval in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Syria and elsewhere that has helped expose the Islamists’ true nature and agenda, they deserve responses, now more than ever.

5. Elbiary and US Policy

In Part 5, Mohamed Elbiary reasserts his claim that Islamists and their ideology are not problems, and that the threat is only from irreconcilable violent Islamists like al-Qaeda. He insists that the root cause of terrorism and Islamic extremism is not the Islamist ideology, but legitimate gripes against Western policy.

It follows that the solution lies in reconciliation with supposedly non-violent Islamists like the Muslim Brotherhood. And the Obama administration has embraced this theory wholeheartedly.

In our opinion, it is both prudent and necessary to look instead to the public words of Islamists, like those shown in the Clarion Project's several documentary films and, not least, the 1991 strategic plan of the Muslim Brotherhood in North America⁵⁹ which described its "work in America is a kind of grand jihad in eliminating and destroying the Western civilization from within."

Mauro: Why don't you support the marginalization of the Muslim Brotherhood and its affiliated groups?

Elbiary: President Obama has certainly expressed publicly the importance of strategic engagement for our national interest in multiple speeches, and to a lesser extent, so has Senator McCain, whom I endorsed on FOX News early in the 2008 election as a Texas Republican state convention delegate. So this is an area where I think our government's policy is ahead of where the national political discourse is in the conservative media.

Having served for more than a decade in various Republican Party of Texas positions, as well as with Dallas-based roots in the conservative movement going back two decades, I clearly see that Christian social conservatives as well as Jewish conservatives concerned about Israel's future are simply fearful to the point of psychological paranoia on how to deal with the rising Islamic movements across the globe.

It's my hope that interviews like this will help address concerns and help elevate our national political discourse around these topics to catch up with national realities.

Elbiary is transparently deflecting the key question by touting his success in penetrating not only the Obama administration's highest councils but also the Republican Party and conservative movement in Texas. We can only surmise the extent to which

such access has helped misinform those with whom he has been interacting on the DHS Secretary's Advisory Council and in GOP circles.

One indication of that influence, however, can be found in Elibiary's description of his role on the Department of Homeland Security Advisory Council.

Mauro: As a member of the DHS Secretary's Homeland Security Advisory Council, what recommendations have you made?

Elibiary: The Secretary's Homeland Security Advisory Council (HSAC) has approved over 100 official recommendations during the past four years and about 90% have either been already implemented or are in the process of implementation by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). As a member of the HSAC, I voted along with my colleagues to pass on all those recommendations to Secretary Napolitano for consideration. The Secretary then signs off on what she agrees with and orders its implementation.

Those recommendations cover many areas that DHS works in from counter-terrorism to cyber-security, from immigration enforcement by ICE to disaster resiliency by FEMA, from border enforcement by CBP to Infrastructure Protection by NPPD. An example of a direct recommendation the HSAC offered and the Secretary approved was the cancellation of the post-9/11 color-coded terrorism alert system we used to see everywhere and its replacement with a more effective National Terrorism Advisory System.

Another impact came about in the aftermath of Elibiary's recognition by the FBI Director at the Bureau's Training Academy at Quantico, Virginia on September 8, 2011. Within days, a series of articles – one of which was accompanied by photographs taken on a cell phone in the Academy's library – began appearing in *Wired Magazine*. They expressed outrage at the offensive nature of the FBI's training curriculum and materials concerning the connections between Islamist supremacism, jihad and terrorism.

On October 4, 2011, Elibiary joined other Islamist activists and leftists in writing Director Mueller demanding that the FBI's training materials be purged of such offensive material. Fifteen days later, he was among 59 individuals and groups who wrote then-Homeland Security Advisor to the President John Brennan insisting that the purge be extended to the training and trainers involved with the military, the intelli-

gence community and homeland security/law enforcement community, as well. On November 11th, Brennan agreed.

This document purge was accompanied—and enhanced—by another effort for which Elbiary takes some credit: the promulgation of new Countering Violent Extremism training guidelines issued by the Department of Homeland Security. The *Clarion Project* published an analysis of those guidelines in May 2013⁶⁰, pointing out how they restrict training related to the US Muslim Brotherhood and non-violent Islamist tactics. Indeed, these guidelines effectively require the approval of “partners” in the American Muslim community (i.e., the sorts of “mainstream” groups Elbiary promotes, despite their ties to the Muslim Brotherhood) before trainers can be engaged and the training undertaken.

In addition to Mohamed Elbiary, other controversial members of the DHS Advisory Council involved in crafting these guidelines included Mohamed Morsi, the president of the Islamic Society of North America. ISNA was the very first group listed in the Brotherhood’s 1991 roster of “our organizations and organizations of our friends.” Here’s how Elbiary describes this effort.

Elbiary (cont’d): The area that has earned me the most amount of anti-Islamist media criticism has been my role assisting DHS and the broader administration craft a framework and later a strategy for Countering Violent Extremism (CVE). I helped write parts of the initial HSAC-CVE document President Barack Hussein Obama was briefed on in the Oval Office, and some in the anti-Islamist media were upset with the approach we took.

Honestly speaking, these CVE recommendations have enjoyed mainstream professional support across the law enforcement and intelligence communities, not least because they enhance homeland security’s effectiveness in a constitutionally-compliant manner as I explained in my post-Boston marathon attack op-ed⁶¹ in the *Washington Post*. While there is still more work to do across the Homeland Security Enterprise to improve CVE coordination, like many practitioners in the field, I am happy with the progress achieved thus far.

Others may share Elbiary’s happiness with the progress made to date in ensuring that counter-terrorism personnel are rendered ignorant of the Brotherhood character, origins and agenda. But they are unlikely to be “practitioners in the field” who are trying to thwart Islamists’ civilization jihad in America.

When invited to make a concluding statement, Mohamed Elibiary once again touted his credentials, claimed that he has been thoroughly vetted both from a security standpoint and politically and insisted that there will be no prosecution of Islamists organizations like the Holy Land Foundation's unindicted co-conspirators.

Elibiary (cont'd): Rising to become the youngest American to ever serve on a prestigious body like the Secretary's Homeland Security Advisory Council is frankly a testament to the strength and resilience of our nation's meritocracy. With too many luminaries and nationally prominent policymakers to list here, including Governor Mitt Romney himself, having served or continuing to serve on the Council; I'm naturally humbled at having been given the opportunity to serve and interact with some of our nation's top national security officials the past few years.

Personally I hold no hatred towards any conservative, anti-Islamist or pro-Israel activists who've attacked me over the past few years as somehow a subversive threat to our country's national security. I've generously given hundreds of media interviews, testified before Congress and met with many national security officials from both the Bush and Obama Administrations. So at this point I'm about as security and bi-partisan politically vetted as anyone can become.

I've often hoped that a day would come when an honest and frank conversation can begin between conservatives concerned about Islamism/Political Islam and Muslims concerned about anti-Muslim bigotry (i.e. Islamophobia). It is my sincere hope that this interview helps conservatives concerned about these issues reciprocate by opening the door for a civil dialogue with mainstream American Muslims to move our country forward and close the door on the HLF related past.

Focusing on the behavioral indicators of ideologically-motivated violent extremism, as I have advocated, is an opportunity for the conservative movement to broaden its base, safeguard the US Constitution, advance effective national security policy and counter the scourge of bigotry. Now that it is clear to all those who have monitored the HLF-related investigations and trials, that the issue of the unindicted co-conspirators is now a CLOSED matter and there will NOT be an HLF 2.0 trial, perhaps now is the time for us, especially conservatives, to consider launching that long-delayed constructive public dialogue about where our nation goes from here in 2013.

By a “constructive public dialogue,” Mohamed Elbiary seems to mean more of what is evident from his remarks in this interview: an opportunity for Islamists to pursue unchecked their bid to build infrastructure, raise funds and proselytize in America, while those who oppose their agenda are silenced or otherwise neutralized.

The question readers must ask themselves is this: Is it appropriate for the Department of Homeland Security to have as a senior advisor someone like Mohamed Elbiary with close ties to identified US Muslim Brotherhood entities and an ill-concealed determination to advance their cause in government councils, political circles and elsewhere.

In this interview, Mohamed Elbiary stands by his opposition to the prosecution of the Holy Land Foundation, a US Muslim Brotherhood entity that was led by a long-time friend and to which he had personally contributed for years. Furthermore, he admits to having helped “safeguard” these US Muslim Brotherhood entities, evidently from future prosecution in connection with material support for terrorism. During Elbiary’s tenure with the DHS Advisory Council, the Department has issued training guidelines that protect these entities from scrutiny and preclude education about the non-violent tactics they use to promote their Islamist agenda. Many of the counterterrorism personnel instructed under these guidelines and the circumscribed training curriculum they allow will be in the front lines of our nation’s defense for decades to come.

In the end, this annotated interview and the questions it raises and addresses – both in the words of Mohamed Elbiary and with additional, relevant information – is not about one individual. It is about the wisdom of our government embracing the Muslim Brotherhood, whether as a “moderate” partner overseas or as the leadership of the Muslim community here at home.

I want to thank Mohamed Elbiary for the time and effort he put into this interview. It has made possible a window into the Muslim Brotherhood in America and, I hope, set the stage for a course correction with respect to our dealings with this dangerous organization and its operatives.

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