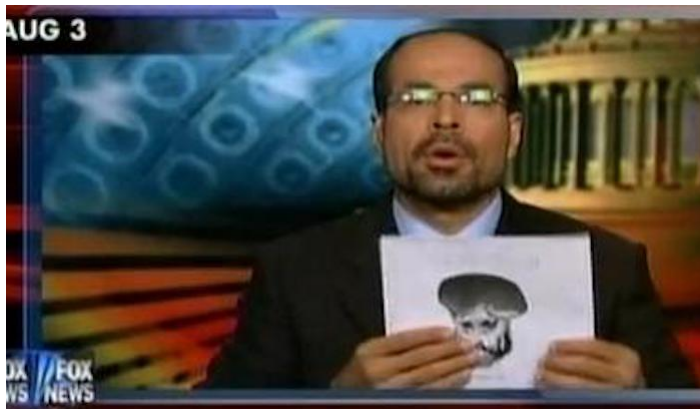


Iowa's Governor and General Assembly Take a Stand Against Antisemitism, and CAIR Takes Offense

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On March 23, 2022, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds sign into law *Iowa House File 2220, an Act relating to antisemitism in the State of Iowa*.^[1] This bill stated:

For purposes of this chapter, “antisemitism” means the working definition of antisemitism adopted by the international holocaust remembrance alliance on May 26, 2016, and includes the contemporary examples of antisemitism identified by the international holocaust remembrance alliance...In reviewing, investigating, or deciding whether there has been a violation of any relevant policy, law, or regulation prohibiting discriminatory acts, the state shall take into consideration the definition of antisemitism set forth in this chapter for purposes of determining whether the alleged act was motivated by discriminatory antisemitic intent.

(It is interesting to note that when this bill was passed on February 23, 2022, in the Iowa House of Representatives, Representative Ako Abdul-Samad, a Muslim convert, was among those voting against it.^[2])

On March 25, 2022, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) issued a press release titled “CAIR Condemns Anti-Free Speech Bills Signed into Law by Iowa Governor as ‘Doomed and Unconstitutional.’” House File 2220 was one of those bills, and CAIR claimed that it

establishes the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of anti-Semitism, which encompasses criticism of Israel, into Iowa law. [3]

Did the Iowa General Assembly really pass a law prohibiting the criticism of Israel?

Here is the IHRA’s “working definition of antisemitism” that was passed at a Plenary Session in Bucharest, Romania on May 26, 2016:

Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities. [4]

The IHRA was very careful to point out:

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. [My emphasis] Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

IHRA also pointed out that:

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.

Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective...

So IHRA is quite explicit that “Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews.” Despite CAIR’s claim, IHRA’s definition of antisemitism has nothing to do with the state of Israel, as a state, being criticized just as any other state could be. So why should CAIR be concerned about House File 2220? Could it be because of what Islam teaches about Jews?

CAIR’s Koran

Let’s start out by considering CAIR’s Koran. For many years CAIR has been distributing a Koran translation, *The Message of the Qur’an*, that CAIR claims enhances “the understanding of Islam in America.”^[5] This translation was done by Muhammad Asad, a Muslim convert.^[6] As of 2016 CAIR had distributed over 130,000 copies of this Koran.^[7] What does CAIR’s Koran have to say about Jews:

Chapter 5, Verse 41

O APOSTLE! Be not grieved by those who vie with one another in denying the truth: such as those who say with their mouths, “We believe,” the while their hearts do not believe; and such of the Jewish faith as eagerly listen to any falsehood, eagerly listen to other people without having come to thee [for enlightenment].

Asad explained this verse:

Although this verse is, in the first instance, addressed to the Prophet, it concerns all followers of the Qur’an and is, therefore, valid for all times. The same observation applies to the people of whom this verse speaks: although it mentions only the hypocrites and the Jews, it refers, by implication, to all people who are prejudiced against Islam and willingly lend ear to any false statement about its teachings...^[8] According to CAIR’s Koran, the Jews are prejudiced against Islam “and willingly lend ear to any false statement about its teachings...”

Chapter 5, Verse 51

O YOU who have attained to faith! Do not take the Jews and the Christians for your allies: they are but allies of one another – and whoever of you allies himself with them becomes, verily, one of them; behold, God does not guide such evildoers.

Asad explained that “allies” meant “friendship”:

According to most of the commentators (e.g. Tabari), this means that each of these two communities extends genuine friendship only to its own adherents – i.e., the Jews to the Jews, and the Christians to the Christians – and cannot, therefore, be expected to be really friendly towards the followers of the Qur'an. [9]

According to CAIR's Koran, the Jews cannot be genuine friends with the Muslims.

Chapter 5, Verse 82

Thou wilt surely find that, of all people, the most hostile to those who believe [in this divine writ] [Muslims] are the Jews as well as those who are bent on ascribing divinity to aught beside God...

According to CAIR's Koran, Jews are among those "most hostile" to Muslims.

Chapter 98, Verse 6

Verily, those who [despite all evidence] are bent on denying the truth – [be they] from among the followers of earlier revelation or from among those who ascribe divinity to aught beside God – will find themselves in the fire of hell, therein to abide: they are the worst of all creatures.

Asad explained that those who had received "earlier revelation" included the Jews. [10] So according to CAIR's Koran, Jews are among "the worst of all creatures" and "will find themselves in the fire of hell."

CAIR's prophet Muhammad

The Koran states that Muhammad spoke for Allah (4:80), all Muslims are to follow Muhammad's teachings and commands (59:7), and Muhammad is the timeless model in all of his actions for Muslims (33:21).

Here are some things CAIR's prophet had to say about Jews:

1. Narrated Abu Hurairah: Allah's Messenger said, "The Hour will not be established until you fight against the Jews, and the stone behind which a Jew will be hiding will say, 'O Muslim! There is a Jew hiding behind me, so kill him.'" [11]

2. Muhammad said, "Kill any Jew that falls into your power." [12]

3. Abu Huraira reported that Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) had said: Do not greet the Jews and the Christians before they greet you and when you meet any one of them on the roads force him to go to the narrowest part of it. [\[13\]](#)

4. Muhammad said that the Jews were grave robbers:

'Uqba bin 'Amir said, "I heard him [Muhammad] saying that the Israeli used to dig the grave of the dead (to steal their shrouds)." [\[14\]](#)

5. Muhammad even said that Jews would be accompanying the anti-Christ:

Anas b. Malik reported that Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said: The antichrist would be followed by seventy thousand Jews of Isbahan wearing Persian shawls. [\[15\]](#)

6. Muhammad also wanted to expel Jews from the land:

Narrated Abu Hurairah: While we were in the mosque, the Prophet came out and said, "Let us go to the Jews." We went out till we reached Bait-ul-Midras. He said to them, "If you embrace Islam, you will be safe. You should know that the earth belongs to Allah and His Messenger, and I want to expel you from this land. So, if anyone amongst you owns some property, he is permitted to sell it, otherwise you should know that the earth belongs to Allah and His Messenger." [\[16\]](#)

And here are some other things Muhammad had to say about both Jews and Christians:

1. Muhammad said that on the Day of Resurrection, mountains of sins would be removed from the backs of Muslims and put onto the Jews and Christians:

Narrated Abu Musa: Allah's Messenger said: On the Day of Resurrection, my Ummah (nation) will be gathered into three groups. One sort will enter Paradise without rendering an account (of their deeds). Another sort will be reckoned an easy account and admitted into Paradise. Yet another sort will come bearing on their backs heaps of sins like great mountains. Allah will ask the angels though He knows best about them: Who are these people? They will reply: They are humble slaves of yours. He will say: Unload the sins from them and put the same over the Jews and Christians; then let the humble slaves get into Paradise by virtue of My Mercy. [\[17\]](#)

2. Muhammad even said that Jews and Christians would take the place of Muslims in Hell:

Abu Burda reported on the authority of his father that Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) said: No Muslim would die but Allah would admit instead of him a Jew or a Christian in Hell-Fire.^[18]

3. *It was narrated from 'Amr bin Shu'aib, from his father, from his grandfather, that the Messenger of Allah ruled that the blood money for the People of the Book is half of that of the blood money for the Muslims, and they are the Jews and Christians.*^[19]

4. And on his death bed Muhammad said this about Jews and Christians:

It has been narrated by 'Umar b. Al-Khattab that he heard the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) saying: I will expel the Jews and Christians from the Arabian Peninsula and will not leave any but Muslims.^[20]

Conclusion

The definition of antisemitism in House File 2220 focused on “a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews,” and included examples such as “making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews...” It is no wonder that CAIR is against House File 2220.

According to CAIR's Koran: 1) The Jews are prejudiced against Islam “and willingly lend ear to any false statement about its teachings...”; 2) Jews cannot be genuine friends with Muslims; 3) Jews are among “the most hostile” to Muslims; and 4) Jews are among “the worst of all creatures” and “will find themselves in the fire of hell.”

CAIR's prophet spoke disparagingly of Jews, including saying that Jews were grave robbers and were worth only half of a Muslim.

It is unfortunate that CAIR based its opposition on the erroneous claim that House File 2220 prohibited the criticism of Israel, instead of being willing to admit that its opposition was more likely based on the fact that there are claims about Jews found in the Koran and in the teachings and example of Muhammad that Muslims believe to be true, but which non-Muslims would likely consider to be “mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews.”

Dr. Stephen M. Kirby is the author of six books about Islam. His latest book is *Islamic Doctrine versus the U.S. Constitution: The Dilemma for Muslim Public Officials*.

- [1] <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/perma/032920228728>.
- [2] *State of Iowa House Journal*, Wednesday, February 23, 2022, p. 358, https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/HJNL/20220223_HJNL.pdf#page=10.
- [3] Ismail Allison, "CAIR Condemns Anti-Free Speech Bills Signed into Law by Iowa Governor as 'Doomed and Unconstitutional,'" *CAIR Press Release*, March 25, 2022, https://www.cair.com/press_releases/cair-condemns-anti-free-speech-bills-signed-into-law-by-iowa-governor-as-doomed-and-unconstitutional/.
- [4] "About the IHRA non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism," *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance*, <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism>.
- [5] *The Message of the Qur'an*, trans. Muhammad Asad, (Bristol, England: The Book Foundation, 2003).
- [6] Muhammad Asad was born Leopold Weiss, "the grandson of an Orthodox Rabbi," in 1900 in Lwow (Lvov), in what is now Poland. He learned Arabic in his early 20's and converted to Islam in 1926. He died in Spain at the age of 92. See *The Message of the Qur'an*, pp. iv-v.
- [7] Laurie Jaghliit, "CAIR's Quran Project UPDATE and Partnership Opportunity," *CAIR*, April 13, 2016, https://www.cair.com/press_releases/cairs-quran-project-update-and-partnership-opportunity/.
- [8] *The Message of the Qur'an*, n. 51, p. 175.
- [9] *The Message of the Qur'an*, n. 72, p. 179.
- [10] *The Message of the Qur'an*, n. 3, p. 1103.
- [11] Muhammad bin Ismail bin Al-Mughirah al-Bukhari, *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, trans. Muhammad Muhsin Khan (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 1997), Vol. 4, Book 56, No. 2926, p. 113.
- [12] Muhammad ibn Ishaq, *The Life of Muhammad (Sirat Rasul Allah)*, trans. Alfred Guillaume (Karachi, Pakistan: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 369.

[13] Abu'l Hussain 'Asakir-ud-Din Muslim bin Hajjaj al-Qushayri al-Naisaburi, *Sahih Muslim*, trans. 'Abdul Hamid Siddiqi (New Delhi, India: Adam Publishers and Distributors, 2008), Vol. 6, No. 2167, p. 439.

[14] *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Vol. 4, Book 60, No. 3452, p. 413.

[15] *Sahih Muslim*, Vol. 8, No. 2944, p. 366.

[16] *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Vol. 4, Book 58, No. 3167, p. 248.

[17] *110 Ahadith Qudsi: Sayings of the Prophet Having Allahs Statements*, 3rd ed., trans. Syed Masood-ul-Hasan (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 2006), No. 8, titled *Superiority of the believers in the Oneness of Allah and the punishment of Jews and Christians*, pp. 19-20.

[18] *Sahih Muslim*, Vol. 8, No. 2767R1, p. 269.

[19] Muhammad bin Yazeed ibn Majah al-Qazwini, *Sunan Ibn Majah*, trans. Nasiruddin al-Khattab (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 2007), Vol. 3, No. 2644, p. 521. It is interesting to note that the 14th Century Muslim scholar Ibn Kathir had this to say about that statement by Muhammad:

No opinion that opposes this ruling could stand correct, nor is there an authentic Hadith to contradict it.

Abu al-Fida' 'Imad Ad-Din Isma'il bin 'Umar bin Kathir al-Qurashi Al-Busrawi, *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* (Abridged), abr. Shaykh Safiur-Rahman al-Mubarakpuri, trans. Jalal Abualrub, et al. (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Darussalam, 2000), Vol. 1, p. 485.

[20] *Sahih Muslim*, Vol. 5, No. 1767, p. 189.