



The Incredibly Shrinking War on Terror

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It is fitting that any president, especially the first (real) black president, celebrate the 45th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as the Obama Justice Department did last month. The selection of an Arab as a prime speaker seems curious for many reasons, not least because [Arabs are classified as "white."](#) Eric Holder's choice of [James Zogby](#), a longtime apologist for Palestinian terrorism and dedicated foe of effective homeland security measures, [to address the gathering](#) seems to signal a deeper reality at the core of the Obama administration: its ever-shrinking conception of the War on Terror.

Jim Zogby, the brother of pollster John Zogby, co-founder of the [American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee](#), and founder of the [Arab American Institute](#) (AAI), is the most visible spokesman of the Arab-American community. Zogby is "white," not black; Christian, not Muslim; Lebanese, not Palestinian; and, like all who get invited to address such gatherings, elite, not dispossessed. Yet he spoke as though the suffering of 200 years of slavery had been bred into his DNA. He talked of Arab-Americans marching and staging sit-ins for civil rights, being denied a separate ethnic identity in white America, and balkanizing after viewing "the TV series 'Roots,'" which "crystallized this broader cultural change."

Big Brother and the Holder Company

He soon got to the heart of his speech: casting himself and his ethnicity as victims of a repressive, right-wing intelligence establishment. Beginning in the 1970s, "law enforcement agencies not only did not help; they were a problem...From FOIA discoveries, we have learned the extent of harassment—from Operation Boulder in the Nixon era, and the broad surveillance of Palestinian student organizations in the 70's and 80's."

Operation Boulder imposed the grand burden of a [five-day waiting period](#) for Arab immigrants seeking to obtain a visa while the FBI and other federal agencies ran a background check – the same waiting period President Clinton [instituted](#) for law-abiding American citizens before purchasing a handgun. As one anti-Nixon coordinator [recorded](#), "In the two months following the Palestinian assault against Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympic games in September 1972, 78 Arabs were deported from the United States. Hundreds, perhaps thousands more, were interrogated, photographed, and finger-printed by FBI and INS agents." Although the FBI surveilled some Arab organizations during this time, particularly those with close ties to foreign activists, this was not a part of Operation Boulder, which ended with a whimper in 1975.

Yet stories of persecution need a narrative of redemption. Zogby extended that hosanna to the Democratic Party, and to Eric Holder, in particular. "I say Jesse Jackson helped us knock on the door, Ron Brown opened it, and Bill Clinton welcomed us in and sat us at the table," he said. "When, in the 1990's, we experienced problems with widespread subjective airport profiling...it was Al Gore, Janet Reno, Eric Holder and Bill Lan Lee who brought us in for a series of meetings that helped us work through and resolve many of these critical issues." He added, "If it had not been for the advances we made during the 1990's...I do not think we would have been able to withstand the challenges we faced in the aftermath of 9/11."

Mr. Zogby is being modest; without the access he gained to Eric Holder and others in the Clinton administration, it is conceivable there may have *been* no 9/11. In the mid-90s, Vice President Al Gore drew up a series of recommendations for airline safety, which, though too modest to prevent the hijackings, were never implemented. The 9/11 Commission explained Clinton and Gore no longer required airlines to screen passengers' carry-on luggage, as they had before 1997, "[\[p\]rimarily because of concern regarding potential discrimination.](#)" Zogby, the AADC, and CAIR stoked those fears during the Clinton administration and, with others, made Governor Bush [concerned over "secret evidence"](#) in 2000. Post-9/11, Zogby became a founding member of the FBI's Arab American Advisory Committee. Presumably, this continues to be part of his repartee with Holder and co.

...As candidate Obama promised it would be nearly two years ago. In December 2007, the then-freshman senator [told AAI](#) he opposed "racial profiling," adding, "when I'm president, the rights of every American will be fully respected and protected." September 10th, here we come.

Mr. Zogby and his organizations continue to clamor against "spying" on Muslim groups, despite the large number of [Muslim Student](#)

[Association](#) members [implicated in terrorism](#). But then both he and his representatives have a long history of whitewashing terrorists. He [stated](#) that [Abdurrahman Alamoudi](#) – who [attended a conference with al-Qaeda](#), professed his support of Hamas and Hezbollah, and was convicted of illegally accepting Libyan funds – was a victim of "McCarthyism." Similarly, then-[ADC](#) President Hussein Ibish [dismissed](#) the charges against [Sami al-Arian](#) (who also was eventually found guilty) as a "very, very ugly post-9/11 McCarthyism." Perhaps the most [astounding obfuscation](#) came from of Zogby's AADC co-founder, former U.S. Senator James Abourezk, D-SD, who [told](#) Al-Manar TV, "the Arabs who were involved in 9/11 cooperated with the Zionists, actually. It was a cooperation."

Neither Abourezk nor Zogby have any trouble with Americans who seek to cooperate with Palestinian terrorists. Zogby has [written against](#) "criminalizing attempts to send money to Hezbollah or support it." Defending Hezbollah and Hamas is an ongoing effort of AADC. As [DiscoverTheNetworks](#) notes:

[In 1994](#), then-ADC President Hamzi Moghrabi [said](#), "I will not call [[Hamas](#)] a terrorist organization. I mean, I know many people in Hamas. They are very respectable...I don't believe Hamas, as an organization, is a violent organization." Two years later, his successor, Hala Maksoud, defended Hamas' partner in Mideastern terrorism, [Hezbollah](#). "I find it shocking," Maksoud said, "that [one] would include Hezbollah in...[an] inventory of Middle East 'terrorist' groups." In 2000, new ADC President Hussein Ibish [characterized](#) Hezbollah as "a disciplined and responsible liberation force."

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Zogby's invitation seems emblematic of Obama's narrowing focus in the War on Terror: it seems to include only those elements of the *jihadi* movement that will not pretend to negotiate with him. The president's real zeal is expressed in zinging Israel. Obama also foreshadowed this in his 2007 AAI speech, where he [stated](#), "we also have to do more to bring a measure of stability in the broader Middle East. Our neglect of the Middle East peace process has fueled despair and extremism."

Thus, the president has strong-armed Benjamin Netanyahu into accepting, in principle, a Palestinian state, although Bibi has [voiced concerns](#) about increasing violence, and a more prominent role for Fatah (the "peaceful" Palestinians) in it. Obama State Department appointee Rosa Brooks has likewise excused [Hamas](#), [writing in the L.A. Times](#) this January that the terrorist army "is weak, and its weapons – terrorism, homemade rockets – are the weapons of the weak." These weapons "have killed only a handful of Israelis." She contrasted this with Palestinian casualties, adding, "Arab and Islamic anger over Palestine continues to fuel anti-Western and anti-U.S. terrorism around the globe." But Brooks came up with a solution: "Only the U.S. – Israel's primary supporter and main financial sponsor – can push it to make the hard choices necessary for its own long-term security, as well as the region's." Brooks is right that the future of the United States and Israel are intertwined, but for the wrong reason. David Horowitz has [rightly stated](#), "Israel is the canary in the mine. What happens to this small, vulnerable nation will eventually happen to America itself." But for the Obama administration, Israel is the aggressor, not the victim.

As we know, Obama's War on Terror does not encompass the war in Iraq, which he assures the nation [we will exit Iraq in August 2011](#), come hajj or high water. Tehran, too, gets a pass for attacking our troops across the border. Obama [offered muted criticism](#) as Iranian secret police brutalized and arrested [2,500 democratic protesters](#) of the nation's rigged election and has had nothing to say about their show trials late last month. In fact, he still wants to meet with Iran's leaders, and hand them a "[civilian](#)" nuclear reactor. He has [intensified negotiations with Syria's Bashar al-Assad](#), though he extended sanctions for one more year. Damascus [all but escorted foreign jihadists to the Iraqi battlefield](#). Syria is a consumer of North Korean technology, believed to have [received weapons technology](#) and aid in constructing the [now-decimated al-Kibar nuclear reactor](#) from the DPRK. (There are also the small matters of its [support for Hezbollah and Hamas](#), and its [continual undermining of the Cedar Revolution](#).)

The Obama administration's battle horizon does not even include all elements of the Taliban, whose foot soldiers are currently killing U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan. The president has expressed interest in [negotiating with the "moderate" Taliban](#) – an entreaty Taliban spokesman Qari Mohammad Yousuf logically [dismissed as "illogical."](#)

Even al-Qaeda agents caught on-the-ground in certain nations may be in a legal gray area. Obama personally [told the New York Times](#) in March, "There could be situation...where, let's say that we have a well-known al-Qaeda operative that doesn't surface very often, appears in a third country with whom we don't have an extradition relationship or would not be willing to prosecute, but we think is a very dangerous person." Obama's rock hard decision? "I think we still have to think about how do we deal with that kind of scenario." In the War on Terror, he's still [voting "present."](#)

A Kinder, Gentler John Kerry

In the *NYT* interview, Obama even voiced concerns about the hypothetical al-Qaeda operative's "habeas corpus" rights – although officials later rushed to clarify he intended to extend these only to Guantanamo Bay detainees. Americans voted last November for a candidate who would track down al-Qaeda operatives into the farthest reaches of "Paw-ee-stawn" and bomb their bases with or without

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Islamabad's permission. They got a warmed over version of John Kerry, who viewed the war as "[primarily a law enforcement and intelligence operation.](#)" By contrast, Obama eschews law enforcement and coercion. He has faith his boundless personal warmth and innate goodness can charm and pacify the heads of terrorist states. If he could find any.

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