



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

December 12, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As a Senior Member of the House Committee on the Judiciary and the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, I write to express special concern regarding the White House's collaborations with the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) as well as what are obvious attempts to both conceal the truth and erase it from public view.

As you must know, CAIR has a checkered history. It is widely known that CAIR maintains close and continuous ties to the Muslim Brotherhood. Indeed, the Department of Justice in *United States of America v. the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development* – a case of a terror finance scheme that benefited Hamas – CAIR was named by our government as an unindicted co-conspirator.¹

Despite this troubling record, Ambassador Deborah Lipstadt, the White House Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism, said in June of this year that CAIR should not be judged on this past but on its actions going forward.²

By any measure, this cannot be reconciled with even a passing familiarity with CAIR's history as its future actions going forward are utterly predictable. That is why it is fundamentally

¹ *United States of America vs. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, Attachment A*, accessed December 11, 2023, https://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/case_docs/423.pdf

² *White House removes CAIR from national strategy on antisemitism*, Jewish News Syndicate, December 7, 2023, Accessed December 11, 2023, <https://www.jns.org/white-house-removes-cair-from-national-strategy-on-antisemitism/>

unsurprising to learn that CAIR Executive Director Nihad Awad reportedly told an American Muslims for Palestine convention in November:

*“The people of Gaza only decided to break the siege, the walls of the concentration camp, on October 7. And yes, I was happy to see people breaking the siege and throwing down the shackles of their own land, and walk free into their land, which they were not allowed to walk in. And yes, the people of Gaza have the right to self-defense, have the right to defend themselves, and yes, Israel, as an occupying power, does not have that right to self-defense.”*³

That a statement like this and its unmistakable endorsement of the slaughter of October 7th would be made by senior CAIR leadership were all but inevitable. The White House may well be embarrassed by its past association with CAIR, but the remedy for this is to tell the truth, not erase it and hope no one notices.

Yet that is exactly what the White House has sought to do. According to the *New York Post*,⁴ on May 25, 2023, the White House’s official Fact Sheet entitled “Biden-Harris Administration Releases First Ever U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism” was issued with CAIR specifically included as an organization committed to “counter[ing] antisemitism and build[ing] cross-community solidarity”. That reference remained until at least 1:51 p.m. on December 7 according to the *Jewish News Syndicate*.⁵ By the next day, the Fact Sheet had been taken offline, the reference to CAIR had been removed and the document replaced in a craven attempt to whitewash history.

The White House should welcome the opportunity to admit that Mr. Awad’s recent comments are further proof that your collaboration with CAIR was a mistake, not furtively change the past and represent it as the truth in the future.

With this in mind, I ask that you please respond to the following by January 5, 2024:

1. What is the official explanation by the White House for taking down from your website a months-old document – that was generated by your staff – editing it, and replacing a new and different version online without any indication or explanation to the public that this had taken place?

³ Nihad Awad, speaking at a convention held by the the American Muslims for Palestine, November, 24 2023, cited by the Middle East Media Research Institute, accessed on December 12, 2023, <https://www.memri.org/tv/cair-exec-director-nihad-awad-amp-happy-gaza-october-seven-victorious-israel>

⁴ Josh Christenson, *White House cuts ties with CAIR on antisemitism strategy after director says Hamas attacks made him ‘happy’*, *New York Post*, December 7, 2023, accessed December 11, 2023, <https://nypost.com/2023/12/07/news/cair-head-says-he-was-happy-about-hamas-october-7-attacks-claims-aipac-controlling-the-us-government/>

⁵ *White House removes CAIR from national strategy on antisemitism*, *Jewish News Syndicate*

2. Is this common White House practice? Are you aware of any other public-facing documents prepared by the White House that have also been similarly secretly altered?
3. What legal authority does the White House possess to edit public documents and represent them at a future date as the original material?
4. Does the White House recognize federal laws that govern public documents and its obligations to comply with the Presidential Records Act, which clearly states that all records created by Presidents and Vice-Presidents be turned over to the National Archives and Records Administration at the end of their administrations?
5. Please provide any and all text messages, emails, and formal correspondence between all White House personnel and CAIR.
6. Please provide any and all visitor logs to the White House that include any official or affiliate of CAIR – as well as all White House staff who coordinated, approved, or met with – any official or affiliate of CAIR.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darrell Issa', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Darrell Issa
Member of Congress

cc: Representative James Comer, Chairman, House Committee on Oversight and Accountability