

Anti-Muslim Filmmaker Gets Year in Prison

The California man behind an **anti-Muslim film** that roiled the Middle East was sentenced Wednesday to a year in prison for violating his probation stemming from a 2010 bank fraud conviction by lying about his identity.

U.S. District Court Judge Christina Snyder immediately sentenced Mark Basseley Youssef after he admitted to four of the eight alleged violations, including obtaining a fraudulent California driver's license.

None of the violations had to do with the content of *Innocence of Muslims*, a film that depicts Mohammad as a religious fraud, pedophile and a womanizer. The movie sparked violence in Libya and other parts of the Middle East, killing dozens.

Youssef, 55, was arrested in late September, just weeks after he went into hiding when deadly violence erupted in Libya and other parts of the Middle East in response to the movie.

Enraged Muslims had demanded severe punishment for him, with a Pakistani cabinet minister even offering \$100,000 to anyone who kills him.

Federal authorities were seeking a two-year sentence for Youssef, who remains held without bail.

Youssef served most of his 21-month prison sentence for using more than a dozen aliases and opening about 60 bank accounts to conduct a check fraud scheme, prosecutors said.

After he was released from prison, Youssef was barred from using computers or the Internet for five years without approval from his probation officer.

Federal authorities have said they believe Youssef is

responsible for the film, but they haven't said whether he was the person who posted it online. He also wasn't supposed to use any name other than his true legal name without the prior written approval of his probation officer.

At least three names have been associated with Youssef since the film trailer surfaced—Sam Bacile, Nakoula Basseley Nakoula and Youssef. Bacile was the name attached to the YouTube account that posted the video, which depicts Mohammad as a religious fraud, pedophile and a womanizer.

Court documents show Youssef legally changed his name from Nakoula in 2002, though when he was tried, he identified himself as Nakoula. He wanted the name change because he believed Nakoula sounded like a girl's name, according to court documents.

Among the violations Youssef denied were obtaining a fraudulent California driver's license, telling federal authorities that his role in the film was limited to writing the script and using the "Nakoula" name throughout his bank fraud case. Prosecutors recently sought transcripts from a pair of 2009 hearings in the bank fraud case where Youssef told two judges that his true name was Nakoula Basseley Nakoula.

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