

Muslim-American Leader Who Praised Oct 7 Says Over 40 Muslim Members of US Congress Can Be Elected Within 10 Years

The executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), Nihad Awad, who has stated he was “happy” that Gazans “broke the siege” on Oct. 7, recently said that he believes 40-50 Muslims could be elected to the United States Congress within 10 years.

In a sermon at an Islamic center in Texas last month, Awad said that Muslims should coordinate to defend Islam in the public sphere, stating that Muslims “must dedicate professional resources to inform the public systematically about this faith.”

“Brothers and sisters, Islam deserves more from us,” Awad said. “Islam deserves a scientific approach to inform the public about Islam.”

Arguing that “Hollywood has produced over 1,000 movies scientifically designed to portray [Muslims] as the villain,” Awad called upon Muslims “to be as scientific. The Muslim community today is not scientific in designing its future.”

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He argued that “if we commit to do this, four years from now, the Muslim community will have 4,000 new journalists, we will have 4,000 filmmakers, 4,000 lawyers, 4,000 students of political science, 4,000 students of history. The next year we

will have another 4,000.”

He continued: “Fifteen years from now, the Muslim community will have 50,000, an army of these people.”

“They will design our image, they will protect the truth and the news, most likely many of these people will run for public office and they will become lawmakers...We can have, in ten years, at least 40-50 members of Congress, in the U.S. Congress,” Awad claimed.

The CAIR executive previously made headlines with his comments regarding the Oct. 7 Hamas invasion and attack on Israel’s southern Gaza border communities.

“The people of Gaza only decided to break the siege, the walls of the concentration camp, on October 7th,” Awad said in a convention last November, just a month after the terror attack.

“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, that they were not allowed to walk in,” Awad added.

He further characterized the massacre of Israeli men, women and children as self-defense – a right he said Gaza has, but Israel does not.

“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.”

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After widespread backlash, including from the Biden administration, Awad issued a statement saying his views were taken out of context.

“Targeting civilians is never an acceptable means” of self-defense, Awad said, and that he has “again and again condemned the violence against Israeli civilians on Oct. 7th and past Hamas attacks on Israeli civilians.”

Awad claimed he was celebrating “the average Palestinians who briefly walked out of Gaza and set foot on their ethnically cleansed land in a symbolic act of defiance against the blockade.”

His statement did not condemn Hamas attacks on military targets, however.

In 1994, Awad said he was “in support of the Hamas movement more than the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization].”

The CAIR website defended Awad by stating the comment “was made in March 1994, before CAIR was formed,” that “Hamas did not commit its first suicide bombing until October 1994,” and that “Awad and CAIR have consistently denounced violence by Hamas.”

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